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**December 11, 1986**

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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December 11, 1986

# Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

Warming spirit  
and body, too



## On the cover



ABN photo / Millie Gill

While much of the world turns its thoughts to receiving presents at Christmas, Christians focus on giving because they understand "the reason for the season." Members of Central Church, North Little Rock, decorated a tree with donated pieces of outerwear Sunday, Dec. 7. Then they collected the "decorations" and sent them to the Arkansas Baptist Home for Children at Monticello, where their kindness warmed bodies as well as hearts.

## In this issue

### 9 missionary, daughter murdered

A Southern Baptist missionary in Liberia and her 10-year-old daughter were murdered in their home only three days before Southern Baptists at home began their annual week of prayer for foreign missions. A Liberian man has confessed to the murders.

### 12 'foundation' for peace

The SBC Peace Committee has adopted three statements and eight recommendations which it hopes will lay a "foundation for reconciliation" in the denomination.

### No Dec. 25 issue

The Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine will not publish an issue on Thursday, Dec. 25, one of four such weeks each year. The Dec. 18 ABN will feature the regular "Helpline" section, as well as double Sunday School lesson commentaries.

## North Pulaski Association votes to employ DOM

The North Pulaski Association has taken the first step toward employing its first director of missions and formed a committee to launch the search process.

The association, which numbered 38 member churches in 1985 and covers Pulaski County north of the Arkansas River, was reportedly still in the process of drafting a

job description and prospect profile but would be ready to look at resumes in the near future.

Resumes may be sent to Search Committee Chairman Ron Raines at Second Baptist Church, 1117 N. James St., Jacksonville, AR 72076. He may be contacted by telephone at 982-2803.

## Once again, rumors are unfounded

A rumor linking the Proctor & Gamble company's moon and stars trademark to satanism has resurfaced in some areas. In an effort to provide facts concerning the matter, ABN editor J. Everett Sneed obtained the following statement from Pamela Sussman, company spokeswoman for Proctor & Gamble:

"The completely ridiculous and false story about Proctor & Gamble's moon and stars trademark has been resurfacing in some areas. This is the same lie that was spread in 1981-82 and again in 1984-85. And that is the false allegation that Proctor & Gamble's moon and stars trademark is a satanic or cult symbol which signifies some connection with satanism or devil worship. Some also have erroneously claimed that the president of Proctor & Gamble appeared on a talk show to discuss the company's connection with Satan.

"There is absolutely no truth in any of this. . . the president of Proctor & Gamble has never appeared on a talk show to discuss

satanism. Further, our moon and stars trademark is more than 100 years old and represents only Proctor & Gamble. This trademark was the outgrowth of an early Proctor & Gamble product called 'star candles.' . . We filed law suits in 1982, 1985, and again this year against a number of people who were intentionally spreading this lie and will do so again if necessary.

"Frankly, we felt we had the spread of these falsehoods under control after the broad scale media attention given to the problem in 1982 and again in 1985. Unfortunately, the stories have been resurfacing and taking on a new life in some areas. When this happens we believe the best way to deal with the situation is to ask for the help of the clergy in getting the truth to those people who may be contributing unwittingly to the further spread of this outrageous lie."

In addition, the company stated that the trademark's basic design has not changed since it was registered with the U. S. Patent Office in 1882.

## P.J. Flammung named to Peace Committee

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Peter James Flammung, pastor of First Church of Richmond, Va., has been elected to the Southern Baptist Convention Peace Committee, replacing Cecil E. Sherman of Fort Worth, Texas.

Flammung's election was announced Nov. 25 by Harold C. Bennett, president and treasurer of the SBC Executive Committee, following a mail ballot of the 70-member Executive Committee.

"It was necessary for the Executive Committee to name a new member to the Peace Committee," Bennett told Baptist Press. Bennett explained the action which created the 22-member Peace Committee contained the provision that any vacancies would be filled by the Executive Committee "at its next meeting."

He explained Charles Fuller, chairman of the Peace Committee, "requested a successor be elected as quickly as possible in order to be able to participate in the next meeting. He felt if the election was delayed until the February meeting of the Executive Committee, by that time the Peace Committee would have almost completed its work."

Bennett also said the provision requires that the filling of any such vacancy maintain the (political-theological) balance on the

Peace Committee.

Flammung, who says he is a "moderate" in the denominational controversy, replaces Sherman, a "moderate-conservative" leader who resigned Oct. 22, saying he could no longer serve on the group.

The Richmond pastor told Baptist that while he shares "some of the same perspectives" with Sherman, "we are very different personalities."

He added he had accepted the election "because I was asked. I think the situation is so important that anyone who really cares about the convention would be inclined to do whatever they could. I would have been pleased had they named someone else, but out of stewardship of my love for the convention, I did not feel I could turn it down."

Flammung added: "I would guess probably my main concern as a spectator or bystander during this process has been primarily mission-oriented; that this conflict not disturb our global mission and educational ministries. I think neither side is apt to support over the long term endeavors which they have no voice in. I would hope that some solution could be worked out so that both sides could continue to enthusiastically support our mission and educational and healing endeavors."



A little girl asked a man to pick a flower for her. Immediately upon his plucking the flower from the plant, she smiled and handed it to the man and said, "Now put it back." This, of course, is impossible. A flower cannot be returned to its stem. Neither can a word spoken ever be recalled to the lips.

Words are dangerous. Once they wing their way, they are gone forever. An individual may be sorry and apologize for what he has said, but the damage can never quite be repaired.

The Scripture reminds us frequently of the danger of words. The writer of Proverbs said, "Who so keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from trouble" (Prov. 21:23). The apostle Paul admonished, "Let no corrupt communication (worthless speech) proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying (benefiting), that it may minister grace (unmerited favor) to the hearers" (Eph. 4:29). In this verse the apostle sets forth both the negative and positive aspects of Christian speech. He admonishes Christians to abstain from worthless speech and to say those things that will provide a blessing or unmerited favor for others.

What does the Bible mean by "worthless speech?" This would cover at least three kinds of speech: indecent speech, deceiving speech, and slanderous speech.

Indecent speech has to do with obscene and filthy stories. It is likely that most Christians are more likely to accept filthy stories or stories that are suggestive of immoral conduct today than they were a few years ago. Television, movies, and magazines all use suggestive language which would have caused many of us to blush in times past, but now we hardly give it a second thought.

The prophet Isaiah cried, "Woe is me! For I'm undone; because I'm a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips" (Is. 6:5). The Lord gave Isaiah a complete victory and his once-deviled lips boldly proclaimed God's message. This same transformation can take place in the life of any Christian who will ask God for the victory.

Closely kin to the filthy story is profanity. Again, society has impacted upon Christians so that we accept profanity more easily than we did in times past. The words of the Ten Commandments are clear, as the Decalogue states, "Thou shall not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain" (Ex. 20:7).

My high school English teacher insisted that an individual who had to resort to profanity had a poor command of the English language. So the profane individual is violating God's law and showing his own lack of ability to use our language.

A second area of "worthless speech" is that which is designed to deceive. We speak of "white lies" and "black lies," but an untruth by any color is a lie.

Some psychologists insist people cannot get along without lying. After probing the inside facts on honesty these individuals feel honesty is not always the best policy. The truth is that one lie always leads to another. As the old adage reminds us, "Oh what a tangled web we weave, when first we practice to deceive."

The Scripture admonishes us, "All liars shall have their part in the lake of fire that burneth with fire and brimstone" (Rev. 21:8). Again the apostle Paul instructs us, "Wherefore put away all lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members of one another" (Eph. 4:25).

A final category of "worthless speech" is that which is slanderous. Slander may be designed to put down someone we dislike or it may be the passing on of gossip. Gossips seldom have all of their facts right. Once an individual brands another by his gossip, the harm can never be undone. Paul said, "But why doest thou judge thy brother? Or why doest thou set at naught thy brother? For we shall stand before the judgment seat of Christ" (Ro. 14:10).

Slanderous speech is "worthless speech" of the worst kind because of the effect it has on others. Someone has well said, "Some Christians are very polished, everything they say casts a reflection on someone." These individuals appear sanctimonious and pious, but their speech betrays them. The half-brother of our Lord declared, "If any man among you seem to be religious, and brideth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, the man's religion is vain" (Ja. 1:28). It is totally inconsistent with the Christian pattern of life to talk God in one breath and to criticize our brother in another. God declares this kind of Christianity to be vain chatter.

Regarding slander, Shakespeare summed it up well: "Good name in man and woman, dear my Lord, is the immediate jewel of our souls; who steals my purse steals trash; 'tis something, nothing; 'twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands; but he that filches from me my good name robs me of that which not enriches him and makes me poor indeed" (*Othello*, Act 3, Scene 3, Line 155).

In the final analysis of "worthless speech," the problem lies deeper than we have mentioned thus far. It lies in the heart of the speaker. Our Lord said, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matt. 12:34). The elimination of worthless speech then is a close fellowship with Christ.

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## The Southern accent

William P. Oakley

### Reflections of a new member of the family

Some years ago I was walking along a farm road near a wooded area and saw something that has remained indelibly impressed on my mind. As I walked along, I glanced up into a nearby tree and saw a cocoon hanging from a limb. But that cocoon was different from any I had ever seen—it was in motion.

I sat down on a stump nearby and watched intently. Almost immediately there appeared a little head. Then with the help of weak legs and with serious struggle, there appeared a butterfly. As I continued to watch, the butterfly rested, its wings undeveloped. But, within minutes, the muscle system of the butterfly began to function properly. Within a few short minutes, the wings reached their full size. After a brief ex-

posure to the air, the wings beamed dry and firm. As I sat watching in amazement, the butterfly stretched its wings and flew away in all its red, yellow, and black beauty.

That experience was re-awakened in my memory recently when I became a part of the Southern Baptist College family. Although I have been with SBC only a short time, some distinct impressions have been etched in my mind.

One of those impressions is that the college is somewhat like the newly emerged butterfly. It has passed through several difficult stages of development and is now ready to fly. I am struck with the impression that a gentle breeze is blowing through her wings and the Lord's powerful purpose is tak-

ing shape in her experience. Just as the beautiful butterfly is destined to fulfill its pupose in God's divine and sovereign scheme of things, so Southern is emerging from one stage of development into another in which she will even more effectively fulfill her role in God's kingdom according to his divine scheme.

The stage is set. The circumstances are right. The excitement and expectancy are at flood stage. I praise the Lord daily for placing me in this family. My sentiment in these early, exciting days of my relationship with Southern is "let her fly."

**William P. Oakley is the development officer at Southern Baptist College.**

### Good and evil lures

Skilled fishermen know the importance of proper lures in making desired catches. Fishers of men recognize how important proper lures are in catching men. Christian lures such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Gal. 5:22-23) are indispensable.

Satan and those under his power also use lures in numerous ways. Probably the most demonic are the lures used by child molesters. Someone has estimated that there are 150,000 of them in our country. The number is growing as the problem of pornography expands.



Parker

Every parent and children's worker in Arkansas should have a copy of *Child Lures*, a guide for the prevention of molestation and abduction by Ken Wooden. He researched and wrote this as an outgrowth of his work as an investigative reporter for the ABC News program "20/20." The information is based on his interviews with convicted child molesters and murderers—the experts! Wooden addressed this serious problem last spring at the Christian Life Commission Seminar in Nashville, Tenn., and at the recent White House Conference Against Pornography.

The booklet can be obtained by writing Child Lures, Inc., 2119 Shelburne Road, Shelburne, VT 05482. They can be obtained for \$3 a copy or 11-150 copies can be obtained for \$2 a copy. You might also call 1-800-848-4040. —Robert A. Parker, director, Christian Life Council

### The president speaks

"Read the Bible Through" this year is a suggestion I hope will be implemented in many churches and by many individuals. A reading guide is available from the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, Support Services, P. O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203.



Hatfield

The guide will help individuals read selections from the Old and New Testaments in alternating periods. Following the guide will

help readers read through the Old Testament one time and the New Testament two times. The suggested period is December 1986 through November 1987. I suggest we have a great crowd present at the state convention next November who will have read the Bible through.

Some pastors are preaching from the selections of the week before. Read the Bible through this year, it will inspire and help equip believers to witness, study, and support missions.

Read the Bible through to continue the experience of "Renewal, Revival and Rejoicing." —Lawson Hatfield, president, Arkansas Baptist State Convention

### 'Interterm' courses scheduled at Ouachita

ARKADELPHIA—Ouachita Baptist University will offer three courses during the "Interterm" period between the fall and spring semesters.

"The 'Interterm' at Ouachita is designed to use the free time between semesters as an opportunity for innovative experiences and study," said Michael Arrington, acting vice-president for academic affairs at OBU.

Courses will be offered in the areas of political science, physical education, and communications.

The tuition will be \$75 per semester hour plus any fees. The university dormitories and cafeteria will not be open for "Interterm."

To register for a class, a student must contact the instructor and file complete registration forms with him prior to or at first meeting of the class. Students must pay tuition, and additional fees where applicable, to the OBU business office during office hours the day of registration. Registration material and other information on the "Interterm" are available from Arrington's office by writing P. O. Box 3755, Arkadelphia, AR 71923 or by calling (501) 246-4531, ext. 196, Mondays through Fridays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

### Global Circuit

the foreign mission prayer line will be in operation Nov. 28-Dec. 14

For the latest foreign missions information and prayer requests, dial

**1-800-44-FAITH**

Don Moore

## You'll be glad to know...

I promised you more about our recent convention. Here goes! Glendon Grober reported on the AMAR Partnership with Brazil. Construction projects to date have included eight educational buildings, 12 church buildings, one bookstore, and three pastors' homes. Purchases to assist Brazilian Baptist work are one car, one truck, one river boat, one bicycle for pastoral transportation, one printing press, and numerous pieces of property for new churches. Multiple training conferences for leadership, the starting of new missions and churches, and evangelistic meetings have been held but have not been tabulated at this time. They have gone equally well. Praise God for such great people in our churches who have given, gone and worked. God has tremendously used Arkansas Baptists.



Moore

We have a year to go in our partnership. Two hundred people are needed next October 21 - November 1, for a giant city-wide crusade in Manaus, a city of 1 million, 1,000 miles up the Amazon. Could you go? Could you make it possible for someone else to go? Think about it.

Here is another good report! Harry Trulove, your helper and friend with the Baptist Foundation, reported that they have just gone over \$14 million. That is money Arkansas Baptists have asked them to invest and manage with the proceeds going to their home churches or associations, one or more agencies or institutions of the Arkansas Baptist Convention, one of the mission boards, the Cooperative Program, or some other worthy cause. Isn't that great? None of the money earned is used for operational costs. That is paid for through the Cooperative Program. As good stewards, do you think a person is responsible for the assets they leave behind just as they are when they are here to manage them?

Another good report came from Drs. Grant and Nicholas. Our two schools report an enrollment of 1,885 this fall. Believe me, these young people are getting far more than a good education. What a wonderful trust and treasure we have in these two schools.

Don Moore is executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.



## Food and fellowship

Virginia Kirk and Jane Purtle

### Traditions — old and new

Traditions are a special part of a family celebration of Christ's birthday. Most of us continue to do things much like our parents and grandparents did. We prepare a certain cake to be served on Christmas day or we read Luke's account of Christ's birth at supper on Christmas eve. Very often, we start our own traditions after we establish a home.

In my family, we follow the example of my mother and invite others to share Christmas with us. She always asked a lonely neighbor and a friend or two to spend the day with us, from the early morning opening of presents through breakfast and Christmas dinner. Perhaps this tradition of visitors outside the family started long ago when the shepherds and wise men visited baby Jesus.

The food that we prepare on that special day also can become a part of our traditions. A few years ago in this column, we gave a recipe for Christmas breakfast casserole. Since then, my family expects it for breakfast on Christmas day. At least 10 years ago, Jane and I explored the process of making chicken and dressing in an effort to make one that tasted like our mothers'. Finally we made a dressing that seemed nearly like it. We published the recipe and have been getting requests for it ever since. It is served in our home on Christmas and Thanksgiving.

Perhaps it is time to again give that recipe for new readers who want a dressing like grandmother or mother made. This recipe for chicken and dressing can be easily modified for turkey. Just use the broth from the turkey and bake the dressing alone. If more broth is needed, used canned chicken broth, or make it from chicken bouillon cubes.

Boil a fryer in salted water until done, one hour or more. Bone chicken and save broth. In large bowl, mix cornbread (see recipe below); three or four slices of stale bread, crumbled; two boiled eggs, chopped; one raw egg; and one cup chopped celery (optional). Toss all together. Add at least five cups broth to make a thick, soupy consistency. Use hot water if you don't have enough broth. The old fashioned dressing was very moist. Pour into greased baking pan and place chicken on top. Bake approximately one hour at 350 degrees.

#### Cornbread for dressing

- |                           |                        |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| 1½ cups self-rising meal  | 1 large onion, chopped |
| 1½ cups self-rising flour | 2 eggs                 |
| ½ teaspoon soda           | 2 cups buttermilk      |
| 2 teaspoons rubbed sage   | ¼ cup bacon grease     |
| 1 teaspoon pepper         | approximate            |

Mix all ingredients except bacon grease. Stir well. Heat grease in large iron skillet or 9x13 heavy pan until very hot. Pour in mixture. Bake in 450 degree oven for 20-25 minutes or until well-browned.

Virginia Kirk, professor emeritus at Arkansas College, is a member of Batesville First Church. Jane Purtle teaches at Lon Morris College in Jacksonville, Texas. They have enjoyed cooking together for several years.

## Baptist leaders in state government to be honored

Baptist leaders in state government will be honored Sunday night, Jan. 25, at First Church, Benton.

Special recognition will be given to the leaders and their spouses at the evening worship hour beginning at 7 p.m. Don Moore, executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, will be the speaker. Further appreciation will be expressed at a fellowship dinner at the church immediately following the worship service.

ly following the worship service.

Randel Everett, pastor of the host church, is chaplain for the Arkansas House of Representatives. Representative Lacy Landers, a deacon in the church, is Speaker of the House.

The event is sponsored by the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, the Christian Life Council, and the Christian Civic Foundation of Arkansas.

by Millie Gill / ABN staff writer

## people

**Rick Davis** of Berryville began serving Dec. 1 as pastor of Oak Bowery Church, Conway.

**David T. Gipson** has joined the staff of Van Buren First Church as minister of youth and music. A native of Huntsville, Ala., he is a graduate of Samford University.

**Larry Anderson** is serving Antioch Church at Royal as youth director.

**Gene Chenault** has resigned as pastor of Scotland Church.

**John C. Robbins Jr.** has resigned as pastor of Monticello Second Church to serve as pastor of Bookcliff Church in Grand Junction, Colo.

**Charles Vance** recently began his 12th year of service as minister of music at Beech Street First Church in Texarkana.

**Bernice Smith** was the recipient of Henderson State University's "H" Award at the recent homecoming luncheon. This is the highest award given by HSU to former professors, alumni, and administrative staff members. Smith served HSU as assistant professor of English, dean of students, dean of women, and assistant to the vice-president of public affairs. She is a member and Sunday School teacher at Pulaski Heights Church in Little Rock.

**Ryan William Threet** of Mountain Home died Nov. 14 at a Chicago hospital following a liver and small intestine transplant. His funeral services were held Nov. 16 at Midway Church. He was the 17-month-old son of Mr. and Mrs. William Threet of Mountain Home. Other survivors include three brothers, Tyson, Cory, and Russell Threet, all of Mountain Home; a sister, Shanna Threet of Mountain Home; and his grandparents, Dr. and Mrs. Kenneth Threet of Lead Hill and Mr. and Mrs. Jack Brutton of Datil, N.M. Memorials may be made to Midway Church or Arkansas Children's Hospital.

**Raymond Baker** of Missouri is serving as pastor of Mary's Chapel, Blytheville.

**Joseph Parish** was licensed to the preaching ministry by Casa First Church Nov. 16. The presentation was made by Pastor Billy Harwell. Parish is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Dale Parish.

**Noel McDonnough** has resigned as minister of music and youth at Judsonia First Church, effective Jan. 1, 1987. He will continue his education at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

**Michael D. Helm** recently received an Alumni Profiles in Excellence Award during homecoming activities at Oklahoma Baptist University. The award is presented annually to 12 OBU alumni for excellence in their chosen profession, avocation, business, or life service. A 1968 OBU graduate and a 1973 University of Arkansas graduate, Helm is a member of East Side Church, Fort Smith, and is executive vice-president of Sparks Regional Medical Center in Fort Smith.

## briefly

**Monticello First Church** recently had Joyce Leavell Keeling, a member of South McGehee Church, in concert. She is the daughter of Marlin and Betty Leavell, members of Monticello First Church.

**Highland Heights Church** in Benton recently recognized Michael Lacy, Charlotte Wilson, Kevin Benefield, and Sean Sikes as Youth Appreciation Honorees for their outstanding work in the home, church, school, and community.

**Morrilton First Church** has completed payment on its parsonage, making the church debt-free.

**Jonesboro First Church** is launching a weekly Bible study for Internationals. Dr. and Mrs. Dick Baker will serve as leaders.

**Midway Church** at Palestine recently honored Pastor and Mrs. Danny Weatherford with an Appreciation Day. They were presented with a plaque and honored with a dinner.

**McCroby First Church** recognized Barbara Tommey Nov. 16 for her 29 years of service as church pianist. She also served several years as choir director. Pastor Randy Crews presented her with an appreciation plaque, and she was honored at an afternoon reception.

**Amity First Church** has added a Royal Ambassador Chapter to its missions education program and added another class to its Sunday School program.

**Jessieville Church** observed its 50th

anniversary of service Nov. 30.

**Park Place Church** in Hot Springs will ordain Glen Cornish to the deacon ministry Dec. 14.

**Calvary Church** in Texarkana recently reported baptisms had tripled in the last year, additions by letter had doubled, and the church had surpassed its goal for state missions. Robert McCarver is pastor.

**Fort Smith First Church** ordained Hal Henson, Jack Doshier, and Louis Davis to the preaching ministry Nov. 30.

**Little Rock Immanuel Church** 170-member sanctuary choir and orchestra will perform "The Glory of Christmas" Dec. 14 at 4 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. Lynn Madden, minister of music, will direct. Narrators will be Dave Woodman and B.J. Sams. Tickets are available through the church.

**Calvary Church** in Little Rock ordained Gene Bale, Rudy Jolley, and Milt Loftis to the deacon ministry Nov. 30.

**Thornburg Church** at Perryville ordained Everett Sexton to the deacon ministry Dec. 7.

**Hot Springs Central Church** Homebound Department achieved the Sunday School Standard recognition for its first year of service. The department was organized in September 1985 and has 28 members and 13 visiting teachers.

**New Hope Church** near Smithville ordained Gerald Cameron, Joe Wallis, and Danny Phillips to the deacon ministry Nov. 23. Pastor Truett Murphy was moderator.

**Brookwood First Church** in Little Rock is sponsoring a "Look on the Field" missionary conference Dec. 7-13. Speakers include H.E. Williams, William P. Steeger, Pastor Bradley A. Rogge, Marion "Bud" Fray Jr., Jason Lee, and Lehman Fowler. Activities include a Wednesday evening potluck supper and a Saturday morning men's breakfast.

**Keiser First Church** ordained Jack Miller to the deacon ministry Nov. 30.

**Benton Calvary Church** dedicated a new organ Nov. 23 with a recital presented by Albert Travis, associate professor of music at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

# Experience provides long-time pastor with good advice

by J. Everett Sneed

Dillard Miller, one of Arkansas' foremost Baptist statesmen, has served Baptists in many different ways. Positions held on the state level include president of the state convention, president of the Executive Board, vice-president of the Executive Board, chairman of the finance committee and chairman of the program committee. Altogether Miller, who was pastor of First Church, Mena, for 29 years, served approximately 25 years on the Arkansas State Executive Board.

Miller, who holds an honorary doctorate degree from Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia, served seven years on the SBC Stewardship Commission. He said, "I learned more about Southern Baptist work while on the Stewardship Commission than I did in any other period of my life."

Miller also had a chance to work with Stanley Williamson, the son of Edgar Williamson who was for many years the state Director of Sunday School work for Arkansas Baptists. Stanley Williamson was in charge of Stewardship Development. Miller was for a time Chairman of the sub-committee that worked directly with Williamson.

Miller was on the Board when James Lackey was elected the President of the Stewardship Commission and also when the President A. R. Fagan was elected.

Miller recalls that there was an effort during James Lackey's administration to eliminate the Stewardship Commission. He said that if it had not been for the statements of a few influential people the messengers would have possibly eliminated the SBC Stewardship Commission. Miller said, "With the passing of years the Stewardship Commission has certainly proven its value to Southern Baptists."

Miller discussed some of the elements that are involved in a pastor having a long tenure. He said, "It requires a lot of grit and grace to stay. It takes work on the part of both the church and the pastor."

"A pastor needs to stay fresh," Miller continued in his preaching and in his attention of pastoral duties. Every pastor will make mistakes as he tries new ideas. But, periodically I would go back to my people and say, "Would you please look at me as a new pastor and I will look at you as a new congregation. Let's keep our fellowship strong."

Miller emphasized the necessity of keeping church fellowship intact. He said, "Church fellowship is one of the most fragile things in the world. It doesn't take much to rupture it. A pastor always needs to be on the alert for those things that might create confusion within the church's fellowship."

There are some things that a pastor can't do anything about when it happens. Miller feels that it is unwise for a pastor to defend himself. He said, "Often it is best to just let the Lord take care of the problem."

Miller advises pastors to stay through their problems. He said, "Usually a pastor can break the back of a problem by just doing his job well."

Miller related that his pastor from the Rose Hill Church, Texarkana, Texas G. C. Ivins, who stayed at the church 21 years from age 54 to 75 said, "When problems come along I try to work harder and preach better until the Lord solves the problem."

Miller observed that some preachers make problems worse by trying to confront the problems too quickly. He said, "It's often better to just let the problem burn itself out."

Miller, also, gave advice to young preachers. He feels that it is essential that a young man called to preach get all of the training he can possibly obtain.

Second, he recommends that a young man called to the ministry should be a servant. He feels that he should get to know as many older successful preachers as he can. Miller recalls that, during state conventions and state evangelism conferences, he would seek out men like H. C. Lipford, L. M. Keeling (grandfather of Jimmy Draper), and O. M. Stallings. He said, "I got acquainted with them and each time I saw them I would remind them of who I was and I would try to listen to the suggestions that they gave. I sought to learn how they handled difficult situations."

Miller credits his home pastor with providing him a model to follow. He said, "Ivins served as pastor in an era when pastors had little or no staff. Ivins did it all and grew a large church. He used the Sunday School as his basic instrument for church growth."

Miller commends the people at First Church, Mena. He said, "When I went to First Church most of the people were older and they liked the low key approach that I had learned from Pastor Ivins and from Bernes Selph, who pastored First Church, Benton, for many years."

Since Miller's retirement he has served as interim pastor of First Church, Leary, Texas, Grannis Church, Grannis, Ark., and First Church, Ashdown. Miller feels that retired pastors can make a major contribution to the well being of churches by serving as interim pastor. He said, "If you want to help people you must get involved with them."

In Ashdown we are involved with the people four days a week in pastoral care ministry.

Finally, Miller discussed the care of pastors and church staffs. He said, "We do have a problem in proper care of pastors and staff members. Churches today often offer 'package support compensation' to pastors and staff people, but car expenses, insurances, and retirement are subtracted, there is not an adequate salary left."

"Churches should set a pastor's salary," Miller continued, "and then determine other benefit needs."



Dillard Miller

Miller emphasized that churches need to recognize that the work of a minister is the work of the church. As an example, he said that when a minister visits the hospital, it's not his work but the work of the church. The pastor simply happens to be the person who is there to minister in the name of the church.

Finally, Miller feels that churches should help their pastor and staff people emotionally. He said, "A pastor has a lot of emotional pressures on him. A church can help by being supportive. They should tell him periodically that they are supporting him and criticisms should be kept at a minimum. If a member feels that there is a real problem he should talk with the pastor about it. Usually a solution can be found."

Miller feels strongly that the pastor's children should never be told, "You should not do that because your father is pastor of the church." A pastor's son or daughter should determine what they should do by whether it is right or wrong.

Finally, Miller advises that, when a preacher is new on a church field, he move with caution. He said, "A church has a personality just as individuals do. A new pastor needs to work slowly with the church and gain the members confidence. He needs to remember that he is not going to change the personality of the church overnight. If he gains the members whole hearted confidence, he will generally have their approval and support."

Miller added a word of commendation to the churches he has served in interim positions.

J. Everett Sneed is editor of the Arkansas Baptist Newsmazine.



## South Dakota couple reaping harvest from searches

by Frank Wm. White

SISETON, S.D.—Raymond and Dorothy Longie spent last summer distributing Southern Baptist literature and Scriptures to families in this Northern Plains town of 3,000 people.

Now, as winter winds force snow across the South Dakota plains, the pastor and his wife from First Southern Church, Sisseton, plan to focus on teacher training and reaping a harvest from the summer's work.

Longie became pastor of the 10-year-old church in May. He and his wife immediately began distributing Scriptures and literature which had been donated by churches from Arkansas, Missouri, Texas, and other states.

The distribution project served to locate prospects and help establish an identity for Southern Baptists in the community.

Backyard Bible Clubs at Indian reservation complexes which surround the small community focused on families identified in the canvassing.

By early November, the Longies had contacted 364 homes in People Searches, distributed more than 1,000 Scripture portions and tracts and enrolled 22 in Sunday school from Backyard Bible Clubs and an after-school Bible class.

They slowed down their People Search efforts because they lacked trained teachers to work with the people who were attending when Sunday School attendance increased from 24 in May to 38 in October.

"There is no end to our prospect list of children who need to be in our Sunday School," Dorothy Longie said.

"The kids are there by the dozens. The task is to get them into Sunday School with trained teachers to lead them," Raymond Longie said.

"We're working to train our teachers and praying for more good, strong teachers," said Dorothy Longie.

*Dorothy Longie talks with children during an invitation following Thursday after-school Bible study at First Church, Sisseton, S. D. An invitation is presented after the Bible story in each of the weekly after-school sessions. Longie and her husband, Raymond, pastor of the church, have used People Searches and literature distribution to locate families for the church's outreach ministries.*

Sunday School teachers are enrolled in Sunday School leadership courses with goals of earning Sunday School leadership diplomas for their age groups.

A Thursday after-school Bible class provides an additional opportunity to teach children. A church bus picks the children up after school for the class which includes a Bible story and Bible study activities.

"We are focusing on children to cultivate a foundation for a Southern Baptist future here," Raymond Longie said.

Traditional Indian religion and a lack of understanding of who Southern Baptists are have made it difficult to gain acceptance in

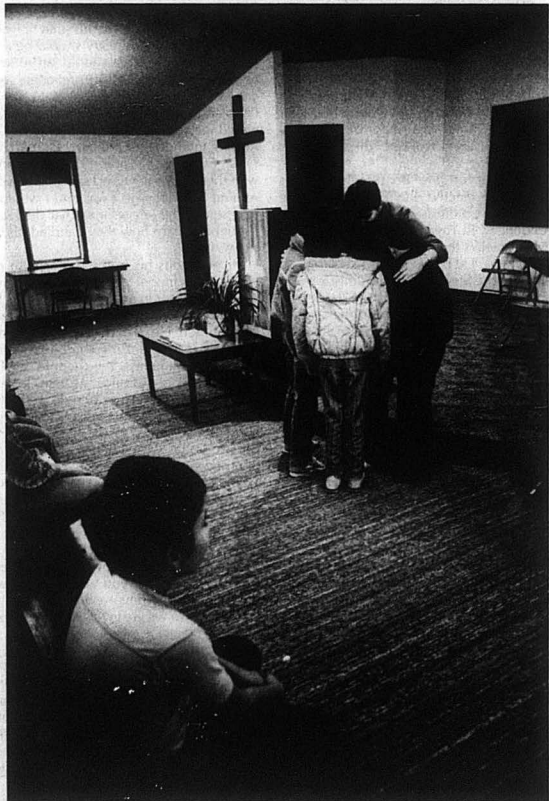
the community, he said.

But the children can be reached with love, Dorothy Longie pointed out. "They need a lot of love and will respond to anyone who gives it. We need to reach them while they are receptive."

They plan to create an awareness of the church with the distribution projects and involve families through the Sunday School and after-school Bible classes to help the church become established in the community.

**Frank Wm. White writes for the Baptist Sunday School Board.**

BSSB photo by Jim Weneman



# Missionary and daughter murdered in Liberia, man confesses

by Marty Croll

**YEKEPA, Liberia (BP)**— A Southern Baptist missionary and her 10-year old daughter were found murdered in their home in the northeastern Liberian town of Yekepa early Nov. 26.

Libby Tarlton Senter, 47, of Shelby, N. C., and her daughter, Rachel, 10, had been dead several hours when missionary Earl Williams, who lives nearby, entered their home and found the bodies.



Libby Senter



Rachel Senter

**YEKEPA, Liberia (BP)**—A 32-year-old Liberian man admitted the murder of Southern Baptist missionary Libby Tarlton Senter and her daughter after missionary George Senter told the man he forgave him and asked him to confess.

The Liberian, Benjamin M. Morris, was arrested Nov. 27, the day after he allegedly stabbed Mrs. Senter, 47, and her daughter, Rachel, 10. Police and soldiers apprehended Morris at a checkpoint in Karnplay, Liberia, about 30 miles from Yekepa and 20 miles from the border of Ivory Coast, a nation to the northeast.

A formal charge by Liberian authorities was expected soon afterward, but police first were seeking a written confession. A trial was expected to be scheduled after that.

Morris confessed verbally to Liberian officials the day after he was arrested that he committed the murders after Mrs. Senter intervened to prevent him from molesting her daughter.

His confession came after George Senter asked to speak with Morris privately. He told Morris he forgave him for what he had done to his wife and daughter.

"Looking face to face in Ben Morris' eyes, George expressed his forgiveness and asked Ben to make a confession," said Bradley Brown, administrator for the 67 Southern Baptist mission personnel assigned to Liberia. The conversation between Morris and Senter took several minutes and was punctuated by intermittent periods of emotional breakdown, Brown said.

"It was amazing," Brown said. "When George began to talk to him and tell him what he wanted him to do, very soon he began to cooperate and give the facts."

The murder represents only an isolated incident of a man who "gave himself over to wickedness," said Brown. "Liberians in this area feel terrible about it. There is an overwhelming expression of sympathy here." One Liberian man, who didn't know the family, broke down and cried while talking to Senter when he discovered that it was Senter's wife and daughter who had been killed.

Senter had driven to the capital city,

Monrovia, Tuesday morning, Nov. 25, to pick up his 15-year-old son, Philip, so the family could celebrate an American-style Thanksgiving holiday together in Yekepa. Philip and a handful of other missionary children attend American Cooperative School in Monrovia, about four hours away.

Missionary Earl Williams went into the Senter's home when Rachel did not appear to leave for the school she attends with his own child. Williams, pastor of Mount Nimba Baptist Church, and his family live across from the Senter's.

Senter of Gibson, Tenn., is assigned as a field evangelist and has been working to start and strengthen churches in about 20 villages around the town. Mrs. Senter, assigned as a church and home worker, was involved heavily in her husband's work. The Senter's had lived in Yekepa since their foreign missionary career began in 1980.

Morris, a Baptist seminary graduate, had been doing odd jobs for Senter and Williams, and both men had worked with him to help involve him in Baptist work around Yekepa. But apparently he had been unable to work himself into a meaningful personal ministry in any of the churches, Brown said. "We've found out now there obviously was some resentment that he wasn't able to come in and probably be assistant pastor or something of this sort at Mount Nimba Baptist Church," he said.

"During recent months Morris had visited regularly in the Senter's home, and he had even slept there. So it was not unusual that Mrs. Senter would let him enter when he came to the door at about 11 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 25, Brown said.

After the murder, Morris apparently took Mrs. Senter's keys and locked the home from the outside, Brown said. According to his own confession, Morris discarded the keys and his own clothes outside after changing into Senter's clothes, Brown said. Near the house, police later found the clothes, the Senter's passports and some letters from a Royal Ambassador group in High Point, N.C.

Baptist youth in the town of Karnplay, who knew Morris, identified him as he was caught apparently trying to flee the country.

## Liberians pay tribute to slain missionary

**YEKEPA, Liberia (BP)**—Thousands of Liberians streamed into Yekepa, Liberia, three days after the murder of Libby Senter to tell each other why they felt the Southern Baptist missionary was one of their own.

George and Libby Senter moved with their two children to Yekepa six years ago as newly appointed missionaries. They long ago decided in case either died on the mission field they wanted to be buried in Liberia as a Christian witness to the people.

The Liberians paid tribute to Mrs. Senter during a wake, funeral and burial on the grounds of Mount Nimba Baptist Church Nov. 29 and 30. They told of her willingness to identify with them by learning their language and staying overnight in their homes as she worked with her husband in surrounding village churches.

A procession of people from the Mano and Gio tribes accompanied the caskets as Liberians carried them out of the city's hospital morgue. The tribal people walked alongside the caskets for more than a mile.

Liberians started arriving at the church from throughout Nimba County for a wake lasting from 7:30 p.m. Nov. 29 until about 4 the next morning. They eventually packed the sanctuary and spilled outside onto church grounds and under a brush arbor. About 3,000 people attended the funeral service from 7:30 p.m. Nov. 30, watching as the bodies were buried atop a little knoll by the church.

Liberians told how Libby Senter loved the people of Nimba County. "They appreciated her effort at learning the Mano language, and the fact that she would go out regularly on Mondays and stay overnight with them, asking for no special treatment," Bradley Brown, the Liberian mission administrator, said.

One village pastor told the crowd with great emotion how his people had given her a name in the Mano language which meant "second," indicating she was only the second woman from outside their tribe who had tried to learn their language.

One contributor to the wake spoke of the daughter, Rachel, noting in her tribute Rachel's identification with the country. A teacher at the African Bible academy Rachel attended in Yekepa told about Rachel's answer to an assigned question, "How do you know you are a Christian?"

The teacher quoted Rachel as saying she knew she was a Christian because as she believed in Jesus Christ as her Savior, her "heart felt satisfied"—a phrase typical of Liberian speech.

Marty Croll is a staff writer for the SBC Foreign Mission Board.

# Dispersed Chinese Christians can reach world, Parks says

by Erich Bridges

TAIPEI, Taiwan (BP)—Chinese Christians scattered around the world could make a "tremendous impact" for the gospel in many nations, insisted Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board President R. Keith Parks.

"There are enclaves of Chinese all over the world, maybe stronger groups of Chinese in more countries than any other race," Parks said after a recent visit to eastern Asia. If Christians in overseas Chinese communities become committed to world evangelization, he told Chinese Baptists in Hong Kong and Taiwan, "you could influence most of the nations of the world, because you're everywhere."

Parks spoke at special church services in Hong Kong and Taiwan, where Baptists have been celebrating the 150th anniversary of the beginning of Baptist work in China.

Baptist missionaries J. Lewis and Henrietta Hall Shuck of Virginia, originally appointed by the Triennial Convention, reached Macao on the southern coast of China in 1836. They later moved to Hong Kong,

where she died in 1844. The following year, Shuck moved to Canton and joined Southern Baptists' newly formed mission board, making China the first foreign mission field for the Southern Baptist Convention.

Thus began more than a century of work carried out by hundreds of missionaries, including such legendary figures as Lottie Moon and Bill Wallace. The missionary era in China ended with the rise of communism, but many Christians in today's post-denominational church of China still value their Baptist heritage. Many others who went abroad helped extend Baptist work throughout Asia.

In Taiwan, observances of this year's anniversary have included Baptist rallies around the country. One of the themes is "Remember, Renew and Redeem"—remember the past, renew commitment and redeem society.

Taiwan Baptists have been praying for at least 150 people to commit themselves to vocational Christian service during the

celebrations. They topped that goal in November during a special service at Grace Baptist Church in Taipei, as more than 20 people joined others who already have made public commitments to service.

Parks, who spoke at the Taipei service, said he was moved by emotional expressions he rarely had seen in Chinese worship. "There were so many weeping in the decision-making time," he said. "It was a powerful service."

Admitting he knew little of their language, Parks told the Baptists he understood the word for "overseas Chinese" means or sounds like "China bridge."

"What if... all the overseas Chinese Christians became bridges into the communities of the world?" he asked. "You could have a real part in winning this world" to Christ.

Erich Bridges is a staff writer for the SBC Foreign Mission Board.

## Army of volunteers to conduct prison 'invasion'

by Orville Scott

DALLAS (BP)—On the 45th anniversary of the invasion of Pearl Harbor, an army of 20,000 volunteers will launch a prison invasion in more than 500 correctional institutions in 45 states.

Armed with Bibles and Christian concern instead of guns and bombs, the volunteers will spend the weekend of Dec. 5-7 behind prison walls, sharing their Christian faith with inmates.

"They will seek to reach that 90 percent of the inmates who don't go to chapel ser-

vices," said Paul Kramer of Dallas, administrator for Prison Invasion, the nationwide ministry effort.

Kramer, author of *Crime is a Choice*, a book to be distributed in the prisons, said Prison Invasion is the fulfillment of a dream for churches, chaplains and many converted ex-convicts who lead prison ministries.

Kramer served time and helped lead Bible study at the prison at Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery, Ala., with Chuck Colson, who formed Prison Fellowship after serving a sentence for involvement in Watergate.

"A great deal of credit for Prison Invasion goes to prison chaplains, those missionaries who don't get much recognition," Kramer said.

Ex-convict Paul Carlin of Crockett, Texas, a Southern Baptist minister who is director of Prisoners Bible Institute, a key sponsor for Prison Invasion in 24 Texas correctional facilities, said: "The tendency is to lock up

convicts and forget about them. But we can't forget about them, because most of them are coming back (to their home communities). How much better it is to have them come back as new people in Jesus Christ."

Kramer said the volunteers will go into the cells and cellblocks with the message that "Jesus Christ changes lives." Experience has shown that the average volunteer in a weekend will reach three inmates for Christ, he noted.

Several states have issued proclamations in support of Prison Invasion. Proclamations by the governors of Idaho and Oklahoma note that in contrast to the invasion of Pearl Harbor in 1941, "This invasion will not be with hate but love, not with violence but hope. Hope of a better tomorrow, spiritual, morally and socially."

Orville Scott is news and information director for the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

## Parker begins writing lesson commentaries

Robert Parker, director of the ABSC Christian Life Council, began last week writing commentaries on the Bible Book series lessons in "Lessons for Living."

Parker, an Arkansas native, has served as pastor for several churches in Arkansas and Kentucky and as the executive secretary-treasurer of Florida's United Christian Action. He also served as a naval reserve chaplain for 27 years.

He is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist College and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Parker and his wife, Thelma, have five children.



Parker

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# Appeal process resumes in suit against convention

by Marv Knox

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Legal proceedings have resumed in the appeal of a defeated suit against the Southern Baptist Convention and its Executive Committee.

Judge Robert Hall of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia ruled May 5 that the federal courts have no jurisdiction over action at the center of a suit brought by four laypeople against the SBC and the Executive Committee.

Robert S. and Julia Crowder of Birmingham, Ala.; Henry C. Cooper of Windsor,

Mo.; and H. Allan McCartney of Vero Beach, Fla., had asked the federal court to interpret SBC bylaws, to direct the SBC to comply with that interpretation and to vacate the 1986 SBC Committee on Boards, Commissions and Standing Committees.

Their suit revolves around the report of the 1985 SBC Committee on Committees, which made nominations to the Committee on Boards. Specifically, it focuses on a judgment by Charles F. Stanley, then president of the convention, who ruled out of order the proposal of a new slate of nominees for the Committee on Boards, which would have replaced the Committee on Committees' nominees. The plaintiffs claim their rights were violated and the bylaws broken by the procedures.

When Hall ruled the court did not have jurisdiction, the four plaintiffs filed notice of appeal with the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. Later, they asked attorneys for the SBC to sign an order that would dismiss the appeal and also strike from record the decision of the lower court. The SBC's attorneys refused, later explaining, "We were not about to agree that the lower court's opinion be wiped out."

Now both sides have filed briefs with the appeals court; the plaintiffs' was filed Oct. 27, and the SBC's was filed Nov. 26. Attorneys for the plaintiffs, the lawfirm of Bondurant, Mixson and Elmore of Atlanta, have 10 days from the latter date to respond. Then the court will decide if oral arguments will be presented and how the case will proceed.

"The issue on appeal is whether or not the district court could hear the Crowders' suit without violation of the First Amendment," said John E. Floyd, attorney for the plaintiff.

"The question in this case is whether the free exercise of religion would be impaired if a secular court told the Southern Baptist Convention how it must elect its committees," said James P. Guenther of the Nashville, Tenn., lawfirm of Guenther and Jordan, attorneys for the Executive Committee.

"We think the answer to that is clearly yes. The lower court agreed," Guenther continued. "The plaintiffs asked a U.S. district court judge to issue an injunction requiring

the Southern Baptist Convention to conduct its elections according to the judge's notion of how that ought to be done. The judge correctly declined to do that. He recognized that he represented the secular sovereign, and he had no jurisdiction over a dispute in the Southern Baptist Convention, which is a religious sovereign.

"It is as if a Tennessee court were asked to enforce the laws of Alabama."

Guenther said Judge Hall's ruling "follows the decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court which hold that the First Amendment forbids a court from taking jurisdiction over an ecclesiastical controversy. A decision to the contrary envisions federal marshalls acting as microphone monitors and a federal judge serving as parliamentarian of the Southern Baptist Convention."

"Although we respect the district court, we feel the ruling was erroneous," Floyd contended. "The district court's ruling was very broad. On its face, it appears to give a very broad prohibition to actions of the sort the Crowders have brought and leaves them with no remedy," since responses that were satisfactory to them could not be secured through SBC channels.

"It comes down to a question of whether rights of this type (which the plaintiffs claim were denied by Stanley's ruling) are enforceable at all," Floyd added. "It's clear the rules that govern the SBC were voluntarily adopted; what we will find out is if the rules mean anything. A rule that is not enforceable is not much of a rule.

"If you think about it, it is a little worrisome for an institution as large as the Southern Baptist Convention that rules cannot be enforced. It is disturbing when you think of the money, assets and number of people involved."

Of the arguments to be presented before the appeals court, Guenther said: "All these arguments are a rehash of what has been said in the lower court. Nothing is new. We're still saying the same thing we've always said, and they're saying the same thing they have said."

Marv Knox is Baptist Press feature editor.

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## Eight recommendations OK'd by peace group

ATLANTA (BP)—Two "foundational" statements, a transitional statement and eight recommendations have been adopted by the SBC Peace Committee.

The foundational statements are:

"It is the unanimous conclusion of the Peace Committee that the cause of peace within the Southern Baptist Convention will be greatly enhanced by the affirmation of the whole Bible as being 'not errant in any area of reality.'

"Therefore, we exhort the trustees and administrators of our seminaries and other agencies affiliated with or supported by the Southern Baptist Convention to faithfully discharge their responsibility to carefully preserve the doctrinal integrity of our institutions receiving our support, and only employ professional staff who believe in the divine inspiration of the whole Bible and that the Bible is 'truth without any mixture of error.'

"It is the unanimous conclusion of the Peace Committee that fairness in the appointing process will contribute to peace.

"Therefore, we exhort the present and future presidents of the Southern Baptist Convention, the Committee on Committees and the Committee on Boards to select nominees who endorse the Baptist Faith and Message statement and are drawn in balanced fashion from the broad spectrum of loyal, cooperative Southern Baptists, representative of the diversity of our denomination."

The transitional statement says:

"We believe the beginning and continuation of a process which hopefully will resolve theological issues will diminish undesirable political activity.

"In order to minimize as much undesirable political activity as possible during this process, we recommend the following: . . ."

The group, by common consent, agreed to include in the final report, a comment to "let the Bible speak for itself" on its nature, and cited the words of Moses (Dt. 4:2), David (Ps. 119:160), Jesus (Mt. 5:18), Paul (I Ti. 3:16) and John (Rev. 22:19).

Nine recommendations were presented for discussion by the Peace Committee's political activities subcommittee. Eight were adopted and one was referred back to the subcommittee "for further work." One other recommendation, which arose from the floor, was referred to the subcommittee.

The adopted recommendations are:

— Recommendation One: "That the

members of the Peace Committee commit themselves to abstain from all overt political activities. We further request that all political constituencies cease sending emissaries to instigate overt political activities in the Southern Baptist Convention.

"That we further request the leadership of all political constituencies to respond in writing to this recommendation of the SBC Peace Committee and that they abide by the report adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in Atlanta, Ga., 1986, as follows:

"That the convention respectfully request there be a one-year moratorium on theological/political position meetings and a deceleration, if not a dismantling, of the political power structures, allowing the Peace Committee and SBC agency leadership to work without distraction on the theological and political problems before us during the year 1986-87.

"That the convention deplore the use of the type of temperate, inflammatory and unguarded language used by some spokesmen on both sides of the political spectrum."

— Recommendation Two: "We believe Baptist Press has sought to abide by the report of the SBC Peace Committee, adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in Atlanta, 1986, and should be commended.

"We encourage the autonomous independent journals to abide by the report of the SBC Peace Committee. . . as follows:

"That the convention urge Baptist Press, the state Baptist papers and the independent journals to be especially careful to be fair and accurate in reporting events in the convention and refrain from labeling and attributing improper motives."

"We further encourage them to aid the Peace Committee in the peace process by positive and accurate reporting to their constituencies."

— Recommendation Three: "That the Peace Committee invite the editors of the state Baptist papers and Baptist Press to meet with the Peace Committee Wednesday afternoon, Feb. 18, 1987."

Fuller told Baptist Press the meeting will give the editors of the 37 state Baptist newspapers an opportunity for a "question and answer session. We will be looking for re-

action to the preliminary report, inquiry. At that point, their input could be very helpful to us in working through our report, drafting and finalizing it."

— Recommendation Four: "That the Peace Committee request the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention to set a time in their agenda on Wednesday morning, Feb. 18, 1987, for the preliminary report of the Peace Committee and response by Executive Committee members."

— Recommendation Five: "In view of the fact that the Cooperative Program is the lifeline of all that we are doing as Southern Baptists, we commend our churches and state conventions for their increased giving to the Cooperative Program, and we encourage our people to continue their strong support of the Cooperative Program and urge that this trend continue."

— Recommendation Six: "That the SBC Peace Committee request the SBC Resolutions Committee to continue its policy of not presenting resolutions that are divisive in Southern Baptist life."

— Recommendation Seven: "We recommend that the president of the Pastor's Conference and the chairman of The Forum enter into a discussion concerning getting back together."

— Recommendation Eight: "That the Peace Committee commend the SBC president as he continues to seek input from all constituencies in the . . . Convention and exercises fairness in naming members of the SBC Committee on Committees."

The recommendations which were referred back to the political activities subcommittee dealt with the nomination and election of the SBC president. Chairman Fuller said the committee is not though dealing with politics, which he said "is now the area where we feel we need to concentrate most in preparing our recommendation."

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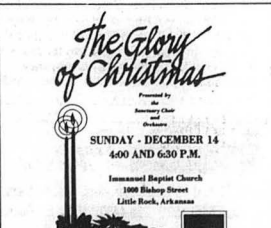
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# Based on love: Sellers Baptist Home and Adoption Center

NEW ORLEANS (BP)—The first time 14-year-old Paula saw her father cry was when he was told she was pregnant.

"It was 1:30 a.m. and Mom had just awakened him from a sound sleep with the news," she remembers. With tears streaming down his face, he looked into her eyes and said, "Paula, I love you more right now than I have ever loved you in my entire life."

It was assurance that Paula needed, calming fears of rejection that had kept her in constant panic for five months.

It was her doctor who recommended Sellers Baptist Home and Adoption Center in New Orleans, the only Southern Baptist maternity home that serves the entire convention.

Cheerleader, varsity swimmer, student council member, Paula suddenly found herself "outcast," staring out of a bedroom window of a strange building, side-tracked by an unwanted pregnancy, and a series of question marks for a future. Paula's days grew brighter, however, as Sellers gave her the anonymity and emotional breathing space she needed.

Founded in the 1920s as the Baptist Woman's Emergency Home, for half a century Sellers has ministered to the spiritual, physical, mental, and emotional needs of its clients and, often, of their families as well.

"I've thanked God over and over that there was a place like Sellers for us to turn to," says Paula's mother.

In 1961 the name was changed to honor Thomas Sellers, an obstetrician who donated his medical services for 33 years.

Although the facility was founded as a ministry to destitute women, many clients today are middle-class. No one is denied admission because of inability to pay, however. Since its affiliation with the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board in 1933, Sellers has been supported primarily through Southern

## by Joe Westbury and Everett Hullum

Baptist Cooperative Program budget receipts and gifts to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions.

All of Sellers' services—maternity home, life skills classes, foster care, day care—are offered in a two-story red brick building on a quiet, tree-lined residential street.

"We do not accept anyone against her will," says Mary Dan Kuhnle, Sellers director for the past 11 years. "Sellers does not operate as a reform school. Clients are free to come and go during the day as long as they are here for regular appointments and work assignments."

Dorothy Witt and Debra Reames, both resident managers at Sellers, hold non-mandatory Bible studies that frequently deal with love and forgiveness. "Sometimes I'm saddened by the unkind remarks tossed in our direction when we're out at a mall or restaurant," says Reames. "I tell residents to ignore them, but I understand why they are sometimes reluctant to leave the building."

Unfortunately, the judgmental remarks and condemning looks are not restricted to the outside world. "You'd be surprised at some of the reactions to our young women," Kuhnle says. "Many adults seem to have the attitude, 'That could never happen to my daughter.' We have to remind them that our clients come from all walks of life, including church families."

The subject of adoption is approached from an objective viewpoint. Through counseling sessions, each expectant mother comes to understand adoption is not child abandonment.

"Many times it takes greater maturity and love for a woman to place a child for adoption than to decide to keep it," says one counselor. "She has realized she cannot provide what the child needs most, a stable family environment."

Such is the case with Paula. "I had to ad-

mit that I couldn't be a decent mother at 14, regardless of how much I tried," she remembers.

Paula's mother agreed but remembers the most difficult moment of the experience was returning with Paula and the baby to Sellers, knowing after the adoption she would never see the child again.

With tears in her eyes, she turned to her daughter and first grandson and said, "Paula, you gave that baby the greatest gift, the gift of life. Now give it the second-greatest gift, the chance of a normal family life."

Counselors stress the decision must be made by the mother, and she must be able to live with the decision.

If a client decides for adoption, Kuhnle makes it "very clear that this decision is irrevocable. If anyone talks you into a decision you're not comfortable with, you'll forever blame that person and never accept that decision as your own. That violates a basic precept of mental health, taking responsibility for your own decisions."

For adoptive parents, this process provides an awareness that the child is a gift of love, not rejection.

One adoptive father summed up the experience in a Christmas card he wrote to Sellers' expectant mothers: "Believe me, not being able to have a child when you desperately want one is a terrible experience. You may look fine on the outside, but you are hurting on the inside."

"My wife and I could not possibly love a biological child more than we love our adopted child. The sun rises and sets on this active package of joy. We continue to give thanks to God . . . We also thank God for a place like Sellers and the wonderful people who work there."

Condensed from the November-December 1986 issue of MissionsUSA. Names of Sellers Home clients have been changed. Joe Westbury and Everett Hullum write for the SBC Home Mission Board.

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## Convention Uniform

### From preaching to writing

by Kenneth W. Overton, Arkansas City Church

**Basic passage:** 1 Corinthians 15:1-8; Luke 1:1-4; John 20:30-31; 1 John 1:1-4

**Focal passage:** 1 Corinthians 15:3-8; Luke 1:1-4; John 20:30-31; 1 John 1:1-4

**Central truth:** The New Testament was written to preserve the account of Christ and draw people to his saving power.

The disciples had the greatest message for the world to hear; Christ died and rose from the grave. They were the eyewitnesses of Christ's life. The disciples knew that real Christianity is never second-hand. It is knowing personally who Christ is and what he can do.

The men and women of Jerusalem and in other places shared the message. Christ's death and resurrection was the core of the early church's message.

Luke expressed clearly that there needed to be an orderly account of Christ's life. This message needed to be preserved. But Luke also expressed that this orderly account ought to be faith-inspiring.

The Gospels never claim to give a full account of Christ's life. John states that they were to appeal to the readers to take Jesus as Savior. His method was selective so that the reader would see the signs and make a confession of faith. Faith by the reader was John's intention for writing his gospel.

John, in his first letter, tells us why he can write his account. John had a personal experience with Christ. He heard with his own ears. He saw with his own eyes. He gazed that it is he came to understand Christ. And he touched Christ.

John lists give ideas central to the written account of Christ. First, Christ has always existed. Next, Christ actually lived as a man in history. Then, the eyewitnesses were spiritually encouraged to proclaim Christ. Also, the fellowship of Christians is essential. Last of all, that people would experience the joy found only in Christ.

There is something appealing to us when we meet people of real and exciting experiences. The real and exciting experiences of the writers draw us to the same belief that they wrote about and knew. Then we tell others so they may believe. The result, fellowship is established because we both know Christ.

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## Life and Work

### God's blessing for mission

by Bradley A. Rogge, Brookwood First Church, Little Rock

**Basic passage:** Genesis 11:24 to 12:9

**Focal passage:** Genesis 12:1-9

**Central truth:** God blesses his people and calls them to follow him in mission.

When most of us think of missions, we think of sending missionaries paid by funds from the Cooperative Program to the heathen people of the world.

Support of the mission work of our Southern Baptist Convention is very important and that cannot be denied; but Scripture teaches us that this is the beginning and not a stopping place of involvement.

God calls upon each of us to be personally involved in missions. That involvement must go beyond our title envelope. God does not call everyone to serve overseas, but he calls all of us to serve where we are.

Recently I read a book by C. Peter Wagner called *On The Crest of The Wave*. Instead of the term *heathen*, Wagner uses the term "fourth world" to describe the direction of our mission effort. There are 850 million residents in the "fourth world." They live in South America, Europe, Asia, and in Arkansas. We need to be missionaries to the "fourth world." Maybe a Sunday School class could find a mission project to reach a member of the "fourth world" who lives in the community.

God calls people to mission to bless others. God called Abram to leave his homeland and travel to a place unknown to him. God made him two promises. First, that Abram would bless others because of his faithfulness.

Secondly, God would bring Abram personal blessing. Personal involvement in missions does bring us personal blessings. To this I can personally attest.

Recently my church allowed me to go to Brazil as a part of the AMAR Program. I worked with a Brazilian pastor as we shared the message of Christ from house to house. We held services in the streets as well as in the churches. We pray, each in his own language, for the work.

One day as we walked, this pastor looked at the poverty and decay about him and looked at me with tears in his eyes; and said in broken English, "Oh how I love my people." I learned much about mission in that moment and was blessed because of personal involvement. You will be too.

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## Bible Book

### Miraculous healing

by Robert A. Parker, director of ABSC Christian Life Council

**Basic passage:** John 9:1-41

**Focal passage:** John 9:4-7, 18-25, 35-38

**Central truth:** The miraculous power of God in Christ is nearly always challenged by Satan, resulting in controversy.

Men, under the influence of Satan continue to disbelieve in a miracle working God in Christ. The miracles, such as the one described in today's lesson, are still disputed by some who call themselves Christians. The greatest of all miracles, a spiritually reborn, transformed individual, is still faced by some with unbelief. These, also, do not believe in the virgin birth of Jesus, his resurrection and ascension. These are the true liberals of our day and need our sincere concern and prayers. God is able to save them even as he once changed an unbeliever and disputer by the name of Saul of Tarsus.

The blind man in this account was the recipient of two types of vision. He received physical sight. He received spiritual sight. He did not understand all the "mechanics" of his healing, but in child like faith, he accepted what happened. We don't witness much, if any, argument on his part. Neither did his parents have much to say. They all just knew something wonderful had occurred because of God's power and that satisfied. Satan's children, however, were quite upset. They produced and carried on the controversy. They had physical sight but spiritually were more blind than "bats."

The argument goes on in our world. Many still do not accept, in others, what God in Christ accomplishes. They won't even accept the miraculous fruit of the spirit which is manifested in the lives of true believers.

While considering such passages of scripture as today's lesson, one should, also, review other miracles performed by our Lord during his earthly ministry. As much as we are amazed by his physical miracles, we are more amazed by the miracle of the new birth in a person the tax collector, Matthew, or the woman at Jacob's well. Amazing grace is best demonstrated through those spiritual, life changing, miracles!

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## Church youth ministry is the brightest spot in town

by Bill Bangham

BLOCKTON, Iowa (BP)—In Blockton, Iowa, Friday nights on Main Street are quiet. They're as quiet as the placid Platte River that snakes along the edge of town.

The movie theater is gone. So is the drug store, the bank, the Laundromat, two restaurants and three garages. Where there were two gas stations, now there is one.

The grade school too is quiet. The last classes were held here in the early '70s. Children now ride one and a half hours each way to another community for class.

Two thousand people once lived here. Now there are 275.

"If you've got to be parked in the middle of nowhere, this is a good place to be," says Richard Melvin. He should know. He's lived all of his 30-odd years here.

"I hate to see it, but Blockton is dying," says Melvin. "Too many people think it's dying. It would be different if people believed in it."

Melvin is one of those who believes.

Every Friday night, and many Saturdays, finds him in the brightest spot in town. It's also the noisiest.

Climb the rickety, wooden stairs to a room above Melvin's father's hardware store and ears are assailed with the clatter of foosball games, the sharp crack of a cue and billiards skittering across green felt, the electronic dithering of an Atari, and the tinny hum of a record player.

There's always a round-robin elimination ping-pong game with six or eight players rotating rapidly around the table, each wildly swatting in turn at the careening ball.

If you're there on the right night, a rented movie flickers on the video player at one end of the room.

But the noise only serves to punctuate the happy chatter of 15 to 20 young people.

It's not just the brightest spot in Blockton, these nights it's the only light on Main Street. This is the Upper Room, a youth ministry of Blockton Church, where Melvin is a member.

"The kids just need something to do," says Melvin. It's as simple as that.

The Upper Room started three and a half years ago with Melvin and Carol Elg, wife of the former pastor, Mike Elg. Carol Elg was determined to have a ministry to the young people of Blockton. And so was Dode Lawrence, a former church member.

"Carol and I did the talking," recalls Melvin, "but Dode did the actual work."

The church didn't have much money to put into it at the time. Lawrence went around town asking for donations. Somehow he raised between \$400 and \$500. He listened every morning to radio swap shows and eventually bought a pool table and a used television set.

Melvin's father, Orville, donated the room above his store.

When Lawrence died several months after the Upper Room opened, the young people dedicated it to his memory. The sign above the door on the street leading to the stairs attests to that.

"They knew who got the money to get it started," says Melvin. "He was quite a guy. He spent a lot of time with them."

The Upper Room is open to everyone, not just members of the Blockton Church. Some of the young people who attend are members of other churches. Others don't attend any church at all.

"You don't have to go to any church to come up here," says church member Charles King. "But after so long, we hope they will see the need for it."

A few families have joined the Blockton church through their children attending.

"Everyone in Blockton has been witnessed to through the Upper Room," says Melvin. "It's helped dispel the idea that you can't be a Christian and have fun."

"Down the road is where we'll see the results from this."

**Bill Bangham writes for the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission.**

## Foy Valentine receives Clarence Jordan Award

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)—Foy Valentine, executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, has been honored by the Clarence Jordan Center of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary for "outstanding contributions" in Christian ethics.

Valentine, the second recipient of the honor, was recognized for his "sacrificial service, prophetic witness, exemplary life and outstanding leadership" in directing the work of the Christian Life Commission since 1960.

The special recognition is awarded in honor of Clarence Jordan, a Southern Baptist Greek and New Testament scholar who was a pioneer in racial reconciliation during the turbulent 1950s and 1960s. Jordan,

a graduate of Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky., founded Koinonia Farm outside Americus, Ga., a Christian community where Valentine worked for a summer after graduating from Baylor University.

Jordan, known throughout the world for his "Cotton Patch" translations of New Testament writings, died in 1969.

Southern Seminary ethics professor Paul Simmons, who made the presentation, praised Valentine for his "prophetic stands" on issues such as racial justice, economic opportunity and political responsibility.

Valentine, he said, has been "committed to a vision of God's kingdom beyond all earthly prizes and beyond all denominational politics and institutions."

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