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### March 7, 1996

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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# ARKANSAS BAPTIST



Volume 95, Number 5

March 7, 1996



## A WORLD OF MINISTRY: body & SOUL

Southern Baptists, who recorded 287,806 overseas baptisms during the past year, also are responding to physical needs in such areas as famine-stricken North Korea



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## TRUE LOVE WAITS

# True Love Waits 'hits roof,' launches effort for schools

ATLANTA (BP)—Minutes after 18,000 teenagers and youth ministers watched 350,000 True Love Waits cards reach the roof of the Georgia Dome in Atlanta, Southern Baptists announced a new campaign to send the abstinence movement to schools.

To the beat of the Christian rock group Newsboys, the commitment cards were hoisted to the roof of the 27-story Georgia Dome. Later, a spokesman for the Southern Baptist-sponsored abstinence campaign announced a new goal and theme: "True Love Waits Goes Campus."

"On Valentine's Day 1997, our goal is to display True Love Waits cards on every school campus in America — all 56,000 schools in the U.S.," Richard Ross, youth ministry consultant at the Baptist Sunday School Board, told those attending the "True Love Waits — Thru the Roof" celebration at the Georgia Dome in Atlanta.

The 350,000 cards pulled to the roof of the Georgia Dome were gathered from all 50 states and from 76 countries — with the international cards accounting for about half the commitments by young people.

True Love Waits, an international campaign to challenge teens and college students to remain sexually abstinent until marriage, was launched by the BSSB in April 1993. The first national True Love Waits rally was held in Washington, D.C. in July 1994.

For more than a year, organizers have been planning a second national celebration to honor young people who have made commitments to remain sexually abstinent until marriage. The Thru the Roof rally coincided with Atlanta '96, a contingent of youth leaders representing

125 denominations and Christian youth organizations gathered in Atlanta for leadership training conferences. Other contemporary Christian artists who performed at the hour-long rally included DC Talk and Michael W. Smith.

With the new campaign, True Love Waits Goes Campus, young people are being asked to take the abstinence message to high school and college campuses, explained Paul Turner, international spokesman for the abstinence campaign.

"I believe with True Love Waits Goes Campus, we are embarking on the most exciting phase of our abstinence campaign," Turner said. "It will empower students to take the message of Christ and abstinence to their peers at school."

This summer, organizers of True Love Waits Goes Campus plan to train high school and college students in using Christian clubs at school to coordinate abstinence campaigns on their campuses, Turner said. On Valentine's Day 1997, True Love Waits Goes Campus is expected to culminate with a visible demonstration of commitment cards at the schools.

"True Love Waits Goes Campus will allow students to take Christ to their campuses with the channels already in place," Turner said. "Campus clubs provide a natural vehicle for that, and campus club organizations and True Love Waits can partner to strengthen and support each other."

More information about True Love Waits, which is supported by 42 other denominations and student organizations, is available by calling 1-800-LUV-WAIT. To order a True Love Waits Goes Campus kit, call 1-800-458-2772.

## Cover Story

(BP) photo / Warren Johnson



## Body & soul 3 & 11

Southern Baptists, who recorded 287,806 overseas baptisms last year, are also responding to physical needs in such areas as famine-stricken North Korea.

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# ARKANSAS BAPTIST

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## Brotherhood, WMU join in Korean famine relief

Leaders of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Brotherhood and Woman's Missionary Union have issued an emergency call for food to help relief efforts in famine-stricken North Korea.

Brotherhood and WMU have joined with the Southern Baptist aid agency Cooperative Services International for the effort. The two organizations will coordinate collection of food provided by Southern Baptist churches.

CSI already has pledged \$500,000 for the immediate purchase of food and has offered to arrange for overseas shipping to North Korea from the U.S. west coast.

State Brotherhood department director Harry Black said that he and Arkansas WMU executive director Julia Ketter are asking Arkansas Baptists to prepare 500 boxes of food to fill one 20- by 20-foot shipping container. Southern Baptists have a goal of filling 100 shipping containers.

Each box will contain dried beans, powdered milk, corn meal, flour, spaghetti and rice. In addition, donors will be asked to contribute \$20 per box to help defray the cost of shipping.

Black said the need is at emergency status. "We understand that people are starving to death waiting for food to arrive."

Although government officials in North Korea reportedly have declined to acknowledge the famine's impact, Ketter pointed out, "Our CSI personnel have gained permission for us to do humanitarian aid. This is a great opportunity for us to demonstrate Christian love and concern. This may be the open door for other efforts."

Black agreed. "Here is an opportunity for Southern Baptists to do something in a country that is closed to us. If we go in with finesse and compassion, maybe we'll be allowed back when the spiritual opportunity is greater."

Black and Ketter already have sent letters to Brotherhood and WMU leaders in the state asking for food. Their pleas have been joined by letters from ABCS executive director Emil Turner to pastors and ABCS student ministry department director David James to Baptist Student Union directors.

In late January CSI announced it would spend \$500,000 in Southern Baptist hunger relief funds to send food aid into the isolated communist country. The funds include support for two projects: one to feed up to

10,000 North Korean schoolchildren for six months in one hard-hit area and another to purchase low-cost rice for immediate shipment to North Korea.

Disastrous flooding in North Korea last summer destroyed thousands of homes and buildings and devastated the grain harvest — already meager in recent years. The flooding and resulting food shortages have directly affected up to 5 million North Koreans, relief groups report. The Red Cross has warned that without immediate intervention, up to 120,000 North Koreans may die before the next harvest.

six months, the doctor said, 1,420 people had died — mostly children and elderly patients weakened by malnutrition. That afternoon, the visitor saw one more malnourished child die.

Later, he saw only six students in a schoolroom that normally would hold 40 or more. "The other boys and girls could not come to school," he said. "They have no energy" because of hunger.

Conditions are better on the seacoast where people can eat fish and seaweed, he said. And the capital city, Pyongyang, "is a different world. Pyongyang people have two meals a day. Two meals a day is a luxury in North Korea."

But in the mountain villages and rural areas of the north, starvation looms as the winter grows bitter.

"I stayed with these people, with ordinary people in their homes," the Korean-American noted. "Forty-five years ago, you American brothers and sisters helped save our lives (when the Korean War caused enormous human suffering among civilians). I urge you to help us once more."

"We have worked, prayed and probed for the last several years for access to North Korea, but we have seen little progress," an anonymous CSI worker explained. "This is a great change in the attitude of North Korea, one that we should pursue aggressively to build relationships in the name of Christ and help alleviate suffering."

Those wishing to prepare a box should first call 1-800-838-2272 in state or 376-4791 locally by March 14 to register their participation with either the WMU department (ext. 5137) or the Brotherhood department (ext. 5158). Emphasizing the importance of coordinating the effort for maximum efficiency, Black urged interested individuals to "not pack a box until you register your participation."

"We will respond back with a diagram, instructions, labels and stickers," explained Ketter, adding that participants need to have the food delivered to the Baptist Building, along with a \$20 check or cash, by April 1.

In addition to churches and individuals which choose to pack a box, others may send \$60 directly to the Brotherhood or WMU offices at P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203. The gift will be used to fund a box of food. Checks should be made payable to ABCS.



ABCS Woman's Missionary Union executive director Julia Ketter (left) and Brotherhood director Harry Black pack a box of food to be sent from Little Rock to North Korea to aid victims of a flood-caused famine there. The box is one of 500 food boxes slated to be sent by Arkansas Baptists.

International political disputes have swirled around the famine. Some nations have questioned the severity of the crisis and refused to supply food. North Korean officials reportedly told a number of foreign relief organizations Feb. 9 that aid not already "in the pipeline" should be dropped. But CSI officials say they have reconfirmed Southern Baptist aid will be accepted.

While some have disputed the famine's severity, a Korean-American who has traveled to North Korea five times since November has seen the suffering.

"I saw people eating soil," reported the individual, who spoke to Baptist Press on condition of anonymity.

When he visited one small North Korean hospital in December, a doctor told him that 100 people die at the facility during a typical six-month period. In the previous

## A PASTOR'S HEART



By EMIL TURNER  
ABCS Executive Director

"Are there any prayer requests today?" The professor in seminary began every class this way. "Yes, sir - I'm beginning my first pastorate this weekend and I'd like the class to pray for me." We rejoiced with the young preacher. Some of us felt envious. But we asked about what messages he'd preach, the size of the church and how far the drive from seminary would be. The next week we were anxious to hear his report of his first Sunday. We were shocked when he emotionally explained, "They voted me out Sunday night!" My friend had violated some unwritten rules on Sunday morning and he was the "ex-pastor" Sunday night.

What a bad start to a new work! Beginning my ministry as your new executive director has made me think of my friend. I wish he had made a better start...perhaps if he had more help...if we had only prayed for him more diligently....

I am confident that God has allowed me to get a good start. Dr. Don Moore is a man of God with a reputation for both integrity and compassion - he has helped me start. Few men have the advantage of following a man so loved and respected.

The Executive Board has been tremendous in its affirmation of me and my family. They have helped me get a good start.

Jimmie Sheffield, Dan Jordan, Audrey Parker and Joy Faucett here in our Baptist Building have been invaluable. They have worked overtime, double-time and all the time helping me get a good start.

Baptists all over Arkansas and, indeed, America have prayed for me that I'd have wisdom and grace to do a good job. You have helped me get a good start.

Mary, Joel and Jonathan have been excited and tremendously supportive in helping me get a good start.

But ultimately, God's grace and goodness have supported me. My friend in his first pastorate had a very brief tenure (probably a blessing in disguise). But I, because of God's providence, look forward to many years of helping Arkansas Baptists reach lost people. I thank God and you for helping me make a good start.

LUCIE HAGINS

## Woman's Viewpoint

### Words work wonders!



The right word at the right time can work wonders. Have you a good word for others, words like "well done," "good job," "forgive me," "I love you," "I care about you" or a "thank you"?

Are we too quick to criticize and condemn and perhaps too slow to praise, compliment or forgive? Praise is a wonderful instrument for building self-esteem and well-being. We should practice the art of praise, always looking for the good in others. Sincere praise enhances relationships. Ill feelings, misunderstandings, holding on to grudges and grievances can destroy friendships while an "I'm sorry" or "please forgive me" can heal hurt feelings.

A word of good cheer or a bright smile can bring warmth to a friend. Earnest prayer in one's behalf can help that one endure. Enthusiastic words of encouragement and hope to one confined due to illness can have a therapeutic effect and improve the body.

My son recently gave me this motivational rhyme: "I'm alive! I'm awake! And I feel great! I feel good! I feel fine! I feel this way all the time!" What a great picker-upper! Keeping a positive attitude can effect a decided change when feeling grumpy or down.

Do we apply a positive approach in our churches and praise our leaders, or do we too often criticize? A critical

word repeated over and over can grow until disunity abounds and church harmony is undermined. Do we express thanks to our pastor for a message of hope or spiritual blessings received, for his numerous visits, prayers and encouraging words? Do we voice appreciation to other church leaders, the music minister, organist, pianist and choirs who help set the mood for our worship experiences? When did you last thank your church secretaries, deacons, committee members, teachers, nursery workers and custodian for time spent fulfilling their duties? They deal with various personalities and would like to know that their service to their church family pleases.

In businesses, smart bosses express thanks for jobs well done. Why? They know everyone benefits. The same principle will work in the church, too! Try it and see! Words work wonders when sincerely expressed. Lives will be lifted and love will abound!

Lucie Hagins is a member of Fortyfive First Church, having retired as church secretary there after 21 years. She serves as WMU director and is active in adult choir and Keenagers. She also serves on the board of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*. She has a son, Ben, and a grandson, Trey, who is a student at Baylor University.

## Personal perspectives

"True Love Waits Goes Campus...will empower students to take the message of Christ and abstinence to their peers at school."

—Paul Turner, *True Love Waits international spokesman*

"The contention between denominations has gone on long enough. If the church ever stood together, almighty God would have His way."

—Bill McCartney, *Promise Keepers founder*

"This is not a politically correct mandate. It's a biblical mandate. Racism is biblically wrong."

—Richard Land, *SBC race task force chairman*

# How much will restructuring cost?

How much will denominational restructuring cost Southern Baptists? That is a question that has been posed repeatedly since the "Covenant for a New Century" was unveiled just over a year ago.

Rather than conducting feasibility studies or a cost analysis, the seven-member structure study committee opted to focus on a broad vision of convention ministry needs and goals. That plan includes reducing the number of Southern Baptist Convention national entities from 19 to 12. Committee members determined that the most appropriate time to address financial concerns would be during the implementation process.

Study committee chairman Mark Brister assured fellow Baptists that restructuring would provide "less funding of bureaucracy and more fueling of ministry."

Committee member Ronnie Floyd, who now serves as chairman of the SBC Executive Committee, emphasized that the proposed changes would "eliminate unnecessary bureaucracy, avoid duplication and get more money to the mission fields of the world." Amid such confident words of assurance, 64 percent of SBC messengers voted last year to adopt the restructuring proposal without any specific indication of how much money would be spent — or saved — during the process.

Following several months of behind-the-scenes analysis, a 10-member implementation task force recently brought its first report to the SBC Executive Committee. Included among four task force recommendations approved by Executive Committee members was the first public glimpse of a cost-based item directly tied to restructuring.

How much will denominational restructuring cost Southern Baptists? Based on Executive Committee action, the first restructuring cost involves spending up to \$495,000 to employ the services of a management consulting company. The

## STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR

By TRENNIS HENDERSON



consulting firm will assist the implementation task force in determining the most effective way to merge the Home Mission Board, Brotherhood Commission and Radio & Television Commission into the new North American Mission Board.

In their commitment to "get more money to the mission fields of the world," Southern Baptist leaders will begin by spending almost half a million dollars in Cooperative Program funds to gain outside input about how to transform the "Covenant for a New Century" into reality.

How much does \$495,000 represent in Southern Baptist life? By comparison, it is more than the annual CP allocation for either the Education Commission or the Stewardship Commission, both of which are being eliminated by the restructuring.

Is that level of expense for consulting services the best use of Cooperative Program gifts? Executive Committee members apparently believe so. The financial outlay was unanimously approved by committee members moments after receiving the proposal, with virtually no discussion on the issue.

Task force member Ted Warren, chief operating officer of the Baptist Sunday School Board, explained that "no commercial enterprise would undertake such a large and meaningful reorganization without the assistance of a professional

management consulting firm." Suggesting that "the need for objective assistance is even greater" for a religious organization, Warren added, "An investment of less than \$500,000 can be recovered in less than one year from the savings we anticipate."

If Warren's projection is accurate, the initial cost may prove to be a shrewd investment. Yet grassroots Southern Baptists tend to be very protective of their Cooperative Program gifts. In addition to a bill for \$495,000, local Baptists deserve assurance that they will receive a full accounting of the overall costs and savings related to restructuring.

It is essential to realize that \$495,000 is merely a first step. Overall restructuring costs also will include the expense of physically relocating the Brotherhood Commission and Radio & TV Commission from their current sites in Memphis and Fort Worth, respectively, to their future home in Atlanta. There also will be legal fees, staff training, new program and curriculum development, severance and retirement costs for displaced staff members and numerous other expenses in the months ahead.

In addition to the initial implementation costs, there obviously will be long-term financial savings from reducing the number of SBC entities and streamlining current ministry efforts. Yet implementation remains a challenging task. Too much bureaucratic cost on the front end can significantly impact the number of years before true financial savings are produced. Too little money — and time — spent in implementation may jeopardize the quality of the finished product.

How much will denominational restructuring cost Southern Baptists? No one knows at this point. It remains imperative that convention leaders carefully analyze each decision and each expense in light of eternal impact. A lost and dying world can't afford for them to do otherwise.

## Stay with King James

In the Jan. - March 1996 Bible Book Study of our Sunday School material, the New American Standard translation has been used in Colossians and Titus. If this series continues, as did the Life and Work Series, then those who prefer the King James Version will have no choice of Sunday School material to use.

I am asking all pastors, Sunday School teachers and all other church members to write to Jimmy Draper, Eugene Mims, Bill Taylor, Louis Hanks and Gene Henderson at the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville, Tenn., to please leave the Bible



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Book Study material as it is with the King James. This way we do have a choice of material.

Jim Oliver  
Cove, AR

## Don't affirm politicians

I have always avoided either commending or criticizing political figures in

the pulpit, for in any contest between individuals there will generally be honest differences between equally sincere Christian people. This principle ought to apply to the Newsmagazine, which is supposed to be for all the Baptist people of Arkansas.

It especially applies to editorial commendation of the president, whose dedication to Christian standards is doubtful at best. The people are well able to draw their own conclusions from his words and actions. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

Clay Hale  
El Dorado, AR

## Foundation alters investment fund, adds disclosure statement

The trustees of the Arkansas Baptist Foundation have voted to enact changes in the Foundation's disclosure practices and changed the agency's Demand Fund to a moving-value "Limited Maturity Income Fund."

Foundation president David Moore said that beginning this month, the agency will "provide a disclosure statement to new participants in any collective investment fund" because of two new federal laws designed to protect all charitable agencies from a Texas class action lawsuit.

The laws are "a blessing to legitimate charities like the Foundation," Moore emphasized, because the measures "allow us the freedom to carry on our ministries with less regulatory requirements" and "protect us from baseless lawsuits which could be devastating to Baptist causes."

Detailing the passage of the new laws, Moore added, "On Dec. 8, 1995, President Clinton signed two laws which had been unanimously passed by both houses of Congress." The Charitable Gift Annuity Relief Act and the Philanthropy Protection Act of 1995, he noted, "were intended to give legal affect to the assumptions under which charities have operated for generations, as well as to counteract the devastating effect of a class action lawsuit in Texas against all charities which had issued gift annuities."

"A grand-niece of a donor to the Lutheran Foundation of Texas filed the lawsuit against the Lutheran Foundation and all charities that issue gift annuities to attempt to recover the money that her wealthy aunt had donated to Lutheran causes through a gift annuity," Moore recounted. "In the lawsuit, accusations against the way charities operate were filed and some protection was needed officially in the laws of our land."

He said the two new laws "exempt charities...from antitrust laws. Additionally, the laws exempt charities from state and federal registration as an investment advisor and from the requirement that collective investment funds be registered as securities."

Moore reported that it was "refreshing to see charities across the country pull together in this effort to seek protection for charitable giving by congressional action. Congress's swift and unanimous

response to the situation validates the time and effort invested in charitable giving each year."

One requirement of the new laws, however, "is that charities must provide a 'disclosure statement' to new participants in any collective investment fund," he said. Disclosure statements will begin to go from the Foundation to new participants in March.

"Basically, a collective investment fund is where funds from several accounts are commingled by the charity in order to provide for better investment vehicles and more simplified accounting," Moore explained. "Each account receives a share of the earnings of the collective investment fund."

He said that the Foundation "operates several collective investment funds, including stock funds, bond funds and balanced funds" and that one of those, the Demand Fund, "is in the midst of another change."

"The Demand Fund is being changed to the 'Limited Maturity Income Fund' (LMIF) in order to more accurately describe the fund," he said. "The LMIF will continue to be invested in limited maturity treasuries, government bonds, government bond funds, certificates of deposit and money market funds."

"The change," he explained, "is that the churches, associations and other participants in the LMIF will experience a change in their principal value as the market prices of the underlying assets in the LMIF change. Basically, this will occur when interest rates change."

"If interest rates go down, then the value of existing bonds and CDs will increase," he said. "If interest rates go up, then the value of those same bonds and CDs will decrease. The risk to principal is limited somewhat by the shorter duration of the fund itself."

He said the Foundation "has asked each church, association, and other participants in the Demand Fund if they would like to be invested in the LMIF. If not, then they can request a withdrawal of all their money or they can instruct the Foundation to place their funds into a money market account, which should pay less interest income but provide no real risk to the principal."

## Harmony, Pollard, loses facilities in Jan. 31 fire

A recent fire destroyed the facilities of Harmony Church in Pollard, sending members to a neighboring church facility for services and sparking fundraising efforts to rebuild.

According to pastor Shelby Elkins, the damage to the 36-year-old structure was "complete." He said the physical plant, which included a sanctuary, kitchen, fellowship area and classrooms "burned to the ground."

The fire occurred Jan. 31. Elkins, a bivocational minister who has served the church for two years, said investigators believe the fire started at a wall plug for a heat lamp.

Although the church had only \$28,000 in insurance on the building, "We want to rebuild," he said. "We're looking at estimates and we're trying to build as economically as possible. About \$60,000-65,000 is what we're shooting for, but we have gotten a lot of free labor (including an electrician and plumber) already."

Elkins acknowledged that the cost estimates are "scary for a country church. I've let them understand that they will have to step out on faith."

"We have been getting donations," he added, through fundraising efforts such as "singings" and an already-existing building fund. "If we can raise another \$20,000-25,000 we won't have to borrow."

Arkansas Baptists have sent a \$1,000 "disaster recovery" check to help with the rebuilding, said Jimmy Barrentine, Arkansas Baptist State Convention missions department director. The money, from a combination of Dixie Jackson State Missions Offering and Cooperative Program funds, provides seed money for smaller churches rebuilding after a disaster.

The congregation is meeting at New Hope, a sister church in Pollard. "I hope this is a short-term thing," Elkins said. "We've been there four weeks. We're welcome, but we always feel like we're intruding."

Elkins said the fire has "kind of slowed us a bit. The church was growing so fast (Elkins baptized 54 people last year) and we have a church full of young Christians. It's finally settling in on them how hard it is. But the Lord will supply us the tap root. This will make us stronger and we are going to grow from this."



# Dickerson gives 25 years of student leadership

By Russell N. Dillard

Associate Editor, Arkansas Baptist

Arlliss Dickerson has a simple, straightforward philosophy for conducting student ministries: "Let's do it the very best way we can do it." And that reflects his commitment to student work now for a quarter century as a Baptist Student Union director for two Arkansas universities.

Dickerson, director of the BSU at Arkansas State University in Jonesboro, said his philosophy of "do the best" came from his high school coach. "I was not a very good athlete, but I loved it and my coach had us always doing our best: That old get out there and do it."

Dickerson started his ministry to students in 1970 following a call from Tom Logue, then director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention student ministry department. "I had been drafted in 1968 and was sent to Vietnam (as a chaplain's assistant for an engineering brigade) in 1969.

"Tom Logue offered me the job of BSU director at Henderson while I was in Vietnam. I had never seen Henderson, but I thought I'd like it better than Vietnam."

The call from Logue confirmed a call to the ministry that Dickerson said began as a youth in his home church of First Church, Piggott. He said that sense of call grew while he was involved in BSU at Southern Baptist College (now Williams Baptist College) and at ASU.

He served at the Henderson BSU from 1970 until 1979, when he accepted a call to serve as director on the ASU campus. Since coming to ASU, Dickerson has seen the BSU program there grow to include 400 to 500 students each school year, with about 250 students active in Bible study and other programs.

He noted that during his 25 years as a BSU director, he has seen "little change" in college students. "I hear people talk about how much they've changed and they have changed, but I haven't seen as much change as people talk about."

One difference in today's students he has noticed is that in promoting BSU programs and leadership positions, "you have to show them how it's to their benefit now."

"One of the things I tell them is, 'if you do this, you're going to learn how to be a better leader, you're going to learn how to be a better business person and you're going to be more organized.'"

Dickerson said the biggest change he has seen is "family issues with students. So

many of them are carrying divorces or different problems they have come out of. It used to be you were just dealing with, 'What am I going to be when I grow up?' and 'Who am I going to marry?' Now they've got so much more baggage that they're bringing with them."

One thing that hasn't changed, though, is that Dickerson asks students for commitment. He said that his philosophy of "doing the best" means that "I'm hard on students. I ask a whole lot of them.



Arlliss Dickerson, director of the Arkansas State University Baptist Student Union, recently observed his 25th year of ministry as a BSU director. He said his ministry goals include training student leaders and "exposing students to a wider world."

"I heard a story from years ago when I was at Henderson," he recalled. "One of our students was working on something she was going to hand out and she started across the street from the dorm to show it to me. She ran into another student who said, 'No, he'll tell you to redo it. Go on back to the dorm.' She did it better and brought it back."

David James, director of the ABSC student ministry department, noted that Dickerson sets a mark of stability and creativity for other campus ministers, as well.

"Nationwide, there is not a director who's respected more than Arlliss," he remarked. "His work is very consistent and stable. He has a stable ministry that has an area of creativity every year, where he experiments and does things that no one else has done before."

Although Dickerson hasn't seen big changes in his students, he has noticed changes in himself. "I really think different points in your ministry you have to emphasize different strengths. I don't do it the way I did it 25 years ago.

"They want to talk to me about gigantic

issues and it's scary sometimes how much they're going to put into what I say," he reflected. "It's a little tough because I see them going in and talk with my associates about their date last night, but then they come across the hall and talk to me about deciding what they want to do with their lives, or about their parents."

He said a priority in his ministry has been "to expose students to a wider world. We've taken a (mission) team to Jamaica a couple of times and they come back and get off the plane and say, 'My life will never be the same.' They can come back and think, 'I can do that or this with my life' because their world is so much bigger."

Another of Dickerson's priorities has been "training leaders and challenging leaders. I decided a few years ago to impact student work nationally. Southern Baptists are doing it better than anybody else is doing it."

"Across the nation associates who have worked for Arlliss are now in key programs," James pointed out. "He is very much producing quality BSU directors who are successful in other state programs and doing very much the same kind of emphases he has."

Also integral to Dickerson's ministry is his wife, Sue, who works part-time as BSU administrative coordinator. "She has had a major part of our ministry — that has been a plus in our being together," Dickerson affirmed.

"Sue is a key element," agreed James. "Their team together for students in a day where students have no family models is a magnificent thing."

Dickerson's ministry "is a ministry that is very much foundational in his love for the Lord Jesus," James added. "There are very few directors as committed to their church or his love for the Word — he has taught Sunday School for years. There is no student who has not said to me clearly that Arlliss has impacted their lives."

"I see other BSU directors in places where they're not appreciated," Dickerson noted. "But I have been appreciated and loved and supported and encouraged everywhere I've been. I've been in churches that have loved BSU and have given us real places and in universities that have honored (BSU) work."

Reflecting on his 25 years in student ministry, he said he continues to see it as "the high calling. God calls a bunch of pastors and missionaries, and a few BSU ministers. It wasn't something I was trying to do to go to something else."



## Acteens Encounter to feature missions, hands-on ministries

Arkansas Baptist Acteens will be urged to "Change Your World" during Acteens Encounter '96 at Immanuel Church in Little Rock. It will feature a "Missions Extravaganza," Activator commissioning, "Sixth Grade Slam" and missions projects for junior and senior high-age girls.

Angela Lowe, an associate in the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Woman's Missionary Union department, said that the theme, "Change Your World," will emphasize "the idea that the world is not just across the ocean, but across your own backyard..."

The program will feature Dorcas Byrd, a missionary from Houston, Texas; Foreign Mission Board employee Trish Landers; and The Company drama team from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

New program features include the "Sixth Grade Slam," an introductory event for sixth grade girls, and a "Missions Extravaganza" featuring missions activities, missionaries, Student Activities and games.

Lowe said an offering will be taken to support the Arkansas Activator team at the '96 Olympics in Atlanta. The offering will

be used to purchase evangelistic resources such as tracts and New Testaments.

Encounter also will offer several ministry options for participants. High school juniors will participate in the "Just for Juniors" missions project at a local retirement center while seniors will work with children at the Dorcas House ministry center during the "For Seniors Only" project.

All participants are urged to bring new or used T-shirts to be used in clothing ministry efforts; a can of Ensure for Project Help; AIDS; a fingernail file, plastic comb, handkerchief and a package of gum for the Just for Juniors project; and loose change.

Encounter will begin at 6:30 p.m. Friday and conclude at 3 p.m. Saturday.

The cost for the event is \$13 per person and includes Friday supper, Saturday lunch and snacks. Lowe reminded leaders that Acteens participating in the Student Activities recognition service must wear a dress or skirt on Saturday afternoon.

For additional information, contact Lowe at the state WMU office toll-free in state at 1-800-838-ABSC, or locally at 376-4791, ext. 5137.

## '96 Youth Convention set for April 5

The 1996 State Youth Convention will challenge participants to "Seize the Day" during a day of worship, messages and Christian music April 5 at the Statehouse Convention Center in Little Rock. Bob Holley, director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention discipleship and family ministry department, said the convention emphasizes the importance of "today."

The program will feature speaker Chuck Register, a national evangelism leader from New Orleans; worship leader Michael John Clement of Birmingham, Ala.; and a testimony and challenge from Christina Kartsonakis, a freshman at Ouachita Baptist University and daughter of popular Christian musician Dino.

## 'Nehemiah Project' to help ABCHFM ministries

Men's Ministries groups will gather at three Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries locations to "paint up, patch up and fix up" during the Nehemiah Project in March and April.

Men will gather March 23 for repair, refinishing and lawn care projects at the Arkansas Baptist Boys' Ranch in Harrison and April 20 at the Arkansas Baptist Home for Children in Monticello and Promise House in El Dorado.

Volunteer coordinator Warren Burleson said that work crews "only scratched the surface" during the first project, held last

Participants also will hear music from Called 2B from Williams Baptist College, and The Praise Singers of OBU.

During the evening session, Holley said participants will hear "a challenge to thousands of youth to follow through" on the True Love Waits campaign for sexual abstinence before marriage. The session will feature "True Love Waits - What Now?"

The program will begin at 9:50 a.m. and conclude at 7:45 p.m. There is no cost for the event and participants are responsible for their own meals and lodging.

For more information, contact Holley at the ABSC discipleship and family ministry office toll-free in state at 1-800-838-ABSC or locally at 376-4791, ext. 5160.

year at the Children's Home. "There is a lot of work to be done."

He called for volunteers to bring tools for plumbing, construction, painting and lawn work and urged mechanics to bring tools to work on small engines, automobiles and lawn mowers.

Meals will be provided for participants and those working at the Children's Home may spend the night.

For more information or to volunteer, contact the Children's Home at 501-367-5358, the Promise House at 501-862-0199 or the Boys' Ranch at 501-741-4362.

## Siloam leaders stress evangelism, expand schedule

Pat Batchelor has made a slight change in his goals for camps held at Arkansas Baptist Assembly in Siloam Springs. Last year's goal was to make the encampment "an easy place to be saved." This year, he wants to make it a place where it is "hard for lost kids to stay lost."

Batchelor, an associate in the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Sunday School department and director of the ABSC encampment in northwest Arkansas, said the 1996 program and curriculum will focus on evangelism.

"We will be using 'The Road to Hope: The Roman Road Witness Training' as our curriculum for the youth and adults," he said, adding that adults also will be trained in holding evangelistic rallies at their churches following camp.

In keeping with the evangelistic theme, all participating youth will be given a copy of the short feature film, "The Appointment," to pass on to friends. The film is produced by Rich Christiano Films, an Arkansas-based Christian production company.

Batchelor also noted the expansion of the encampment's book store, "which will be seven to eight times larger than in the past" and offer an expanded line of products.

Also expanded for 1996 is the schedule, which features an added eighth week of camp for children only. The camp schedule, for both youth and children, is: Week 1, June 17-21; Week 2, June 24-28; Week 3, July 1-5; Week 4, July 8-12; Week 5, July 15-19; and Week 6, July 22-26.

Week 7 will be "Power Week" for youth only and will feature Southern Baptist Home Mission Board youth communicator Jerry Pipes. Week 8 will be "Children's Week" for children only and will feature Mike Seabough, pastor of Crosspoint Church in North Little Rock.

Reservations for the camps may be made by mail only. For a complete information packet with prices and details, contact the Assembly office locally in Little Rock at 376-4791 or in state at 1-800-838-ABSC, ext. 5129.

Batchelor encouraged Baptists to "send lost kids to camp this year. As long as we make that a priority, everything else will fall into place."

# SBC leaders approve restructuring steps

NASHVILLE, TN (BP/ABP)—Four initial recommendations for implementing a sweeping restructuring of the Southern Baptist Convention were approved Feb. 19 by the SBC Executive Committee.

The actions include spending up to \$495,000 to hire a management consulting company to assist in creating a new North American Mission Board (NAMB).

The new mission board, which would replace the SBC's current Home Mission Board, Brotherhood Commission and Radio and Television Commission, is a key component of the "Covenant for a New Century" restructuring approved by messengers to the convention's 1995 annual meeting in Atlanta.

The other three recommendations presented by the Executive Committee's 10-member Implementation Task Force (ITF) involved a proposed charter for the NAMB and proposed legal documents relating to several SBC agencies slated for dissolution or merger.

The proposals will be forwarded to the 1996 SBC annual meeting in New Orleans, where a required second vote is slated on an amendment to SBC bylaw 15, which lists the names of SBC entities.

ITF member Ted Warren, chief operating officer of the Baptist Sunday School Board, told Executive Committee members that "no commercial enterprise would undertake such a large and meaningful

reorganization without the assistance of a professional management consulting firm. The need for objective assistance is even greater, I believe, in a religious, not-for-profit organization.

"An investment of less than \$500,000 can be recovered in less than one year from the savings we anticipate," Warren said. "The cost in efficiency and effectiveness of a restructuring poorly done can be millions of dollars that we have to live with year after year for many years."

Executive Committee members saw the four recommendations from the task force only minutes before voting their approval. Blaine Barber of Potosky, Mich., made a motion to delay the vote overnight on the Articles of Incorporation for the North American Mission Board. "I would like to have time to read these articles of incorporation," he said. However, Michael Trammell of Mt. Airy, Md., said little would be gained by reading the complicated legal material.

The committee voted overwhelmingly to reject Barber's motion to delay. Instead, Executive Committee chairman Ronnie Floyd gave members three minutes to skim over the eight-page document, after which members unanimously approved it.

Among other specifications, Executive Committee members approved a proposed charter to enable the Southern Baptist Foundation's ongoing operation as a

separate corporation with the Executive Committee selecting the foundation's trustees. Executive Committee president Morris Chapman explained that the Executive Committee would not be managing donor funds.

In other business:

■ After meeting several hours behind closed doors in executive sessions during both committee and plenary sessions, the Executive Committee approved a request by the Southern Baptist Annuity Board to restructure its investment program into registered mutual funds.

■ The committee voted to recommend a \$145 million allocation budget for the SBC's Cooperative Program in 1996-97 and a capital-needs budget totaling \$17.1 million. The budget includes \$700,000 for implementation of the restructuring. Should this year's annual convention reject a second balloting on whether to change a bylaw to dissolve several agencies, an alternate budget without restructuring expenses will be presented.

■ Bill Merrell, 52, was elected vice president for convention relations. Merrell has been on the job since January, pending approval by the full Executive Committee. A former pastor and director of missions in Texas and Oklahoma, Merrell comes to the job after serving briefly as director of communications for the SBC Christian Life Commission.

## Record shares overview of SBC implementation effort

NASHVILLE, TN (BP/ABP)—Southern Baptists, in the middle of a massive denominational restructuring, are "at a crossroad, a divine moment" that few religious bodies face, said Bob Record, chairman of the task force implementing the new structure.

"This is one of the most significant transformations that a religious body has undertaken," Record, pastor of First Baptist Church of Norfolk, Va., told members of the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee Feb. 19. The new structure will reduce the number of SBC agencies from 19 to 12 and save costs, although no dollar amount has been determined.

The undertaking is not easy, Record said. Change produces ambiguity and frustration, he noted. There is no "roadmap" to guide the kind of overhaul Southern Baptists are attempting, he said, but only "a compass and a dream." Consequently, "spiritual issues," not organizational ones, have been the first priority for Record's 10-member task force, he said.

Much of the task force's time has been spent in prayer, he said. Later the task force and the Executive Committee joined in a day-long prayer session Feb. 21.

Record said task force members have met with the head of each agency affected by the reorganization. A survey of the personnel of those agencies also has been conducted.

Record said the spiritual needs that called each of the SBC's agencies into existence have not changed, but the world in which the agencies operate has changed dramatically.

The task force chairman reported Feb. 23 that William Pinson will chair a committee of three or four state Baptist convention executive directors "to be an information resource" for the task

force's work as it relates to state Baptist conventions.

Record said he asked Pinson, executive director-treasurer of the Baptist General Convention of Texas and president of the state executives' group, to chair and name the committee.

Likening the SBC restructuring to a family moving across country, Record said it is only natural for people to fear change. "The part of change that is so uncomfortable for many of us is ambiguity; we tend to want all the 'i's' dotted and all the 't's' crossed," he said. "This ambiguity requires leaders to exercise clear vision and wisdom in planning."

The Southern Baptist Press Association, the organization of state Baptist newspapers, has passed a resolution asking for media access to the meetings of the task force.

Protesting a task force decision to conduct all its meetings behind closed doors, the resolution "strongly encourages" the task force to allow media coverage of its sessions.

The resolution notes that "massive changes" are anticipated through the restructuring plan, which was approved "on promise of detailed specifics to be forthcoming before the 1996 convention." The resolution calls on the SBC Executive Committee, which supervises the task force, to enforce its own policies, which permit media access to all its subcommittees unless sensitive personal or legal matters are involved.

Record rejected an earlier request from the editors to cover the meetings, citing "legal and personnel issues." The editors responded that only sensitive portions of the meetings should be closed to reporters. Record said he would take the editors' latest request "under advisement."

## Missionary killed in Peru plane crash

AREQUIPA, PERU (BP)—A Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board missionary was among those killed after a Peruvian jet apparently caught fire in the air and crashed five miles from its planned landing Feb. 29.

The missionary, Lynn Davidson, 42, was last identified in Lima, Peru, boarding a Faucett Airlines flight home from a church growth strategy meeting there. Several hours after the crash, a newscast listed her as a passenger. All 117 passengers and six crew were killed.

Davidson and her husband, Dennis, were appointed as SBC missionaries to Peru in 1987. They have three children, Charis, 11, Cassia, 8, and Rannon, 4. They have lived in Arequipa since 1992, where he has been assigned as a church starter.

Davidson's husband was able to see the crash site in the early hours of March 1. He reported seeing little left of the plane except ashes, Foreign Mission Board officials said.

Davidson, the former Lynn Vanderford, grew up in Santa Fe, N.M. She was a graduate of the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley and the University of Colorado at Denver.

Besides her husband and children, she is survived by her parents, Max and Marie Vanderford of Brighton, Colo.; a sister, Cathy Gilpin of Alamosa, Colo.; and two brothers, Gerry Vanderford and Keith Vanderford, both of San Jose, Calif.

## Missionary, son show slight improvement

MEMPHIS, TN (BP)—Southern Baptist foreign missionary Wade Watts, who sustained brain injuries in an automobile accident in Peru Feb. 1, is showing some slight improvement at Baptist Memorial Hospital-Central in Memphis, Tenn.

Watts, who remains in a coma and in critical but stable condition, opened his eyes Feb. 22, said Marvin Fitts of Memphis, a former Southern Baptist missionary to Peru. Physicians said some fluid in Watts' lungs had cleared, and he may be able to breathe without the aid of a respirator in a few days, Fitts said.

Watts' 9-year-old son, Marcus, who also sustained brain injuries in the wreck, remains in a coma at LeBonheur Children's Medical Center in Memphis. He also is showing some slight signs of improvement, Fitts said. On Feb. 22 he was able to eat some pudding and indicated he understood what his nurse said to him, Fitts said.

Watts' wife, Nancy, 35, and their other son, Joshua, 7, are recovering at the Memphis home of her mother. They sustained less serious injuries in the Feb. 1 wreck on a mountain road near Huancayo, Peru.

Bill Goff, associate director for work in Spanish South America, has asked Southern Baptists to continue praying for the Watts family.

## Zambia promises permits for missionaries

LUSAKA, ZAMBIA (BP)—Zambia has promised to provide long-sought work permits for Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board missionaries who have decided to help a new breakaway group of Baptists there.

Immigration workers for the southern African nation had withheld permits at the direction of the Baptist Convention of Zambia since 1993. Since then some missionaries have transferred to other countries or resigned, while others are reapplying every 30 days to stay in the country.

But during a recent meeting in Lusaka, Zambia, the country's chief immigration officer promised to renew permits that were to expire in February for two missionaries. The meeting included the executive secretary of the newly formed Baptist Fellowship of Zambia, which registered with the government in December and in January asked missionaries to help its member churches spread the gospel.

Also at the meeting were convention representatives and missionary Dan Sowell, the Foreign Mission Board's mission administrator for Zambia. This time the immigration officer gave Sowell the green light for FMB missionaries to keep working in Zambia.

Sowell told the immigration officer that the 21 missionaries left could no longer work with the Zambian convention because of theological differences. The convention has seen itself as a hierarchy with the power to discipline churches and dismiss pastors — a departure from Southern Baptists' view upholding the right of churches to govern themselves.

## Church growth expands in Eastern Europe

WIESBADEN, GERMANY (BP)—Church growth rivaling the first century's? It could be around the corner in Eastern Europe — if Southern Baptists can meet pressing personnel needs.

One of the most dramatic church growth spurts in modern times is developing across Russia's eight time zones, yet 29 requests for Foreign Mission Board missionaries — especially church planters and seminary extension teachers — have proven surprisingly hard to fill.

The Foreign Mission Board has 28 foreign missionaries assigned to the Commonwealth of Independent States, the loose alliance among Russia and other autonomous nations that were once Soviet republics. John Floyd, the board's area director for Europe, would like to see more than 100 workers there within the next two years.

Southern Baptist missionaries are sprinkled across the CIS from Kiev — adjacent to Poland — to Khabarovsk — a city just across the water from Japan. Since communism fell, FMB officials have been pushing to get personnel into Eastern Europe. In former Yugoslavia, new requests include a general evangelist and a church planter in Serbia and a church planter and church developer for Bosnia.

## Bulgarians protest 'unfavorable' treatment

SOFIA, BULGARIA (ABP) — Several Protestant churches in Bulgaria have complained of "unfavorable" treatment from government officials and the media.

The Bulgarian Evangelical Alliance issued a "cry for help" in the form of an official declaration to Bulgaria's president and to the World Council of Churches, according to Ecumenical News International.

Among concerns noted by the group is a claim that the Bulgarian Orthodox Church has asked the government to ban all Protestant churches. About 87 percent of Bulgarians are members of the Orthodox Church.

The statement claims that some legitimate churches "which have been in Bulgaria for more than 100 years" have been labeled as sects.

The members of the evangelical alliance are the Baptist Union of Bulgaria, the Pentecostal Union, the Congregational Church, the Church of God and the Methodist Church.

## '48 Hours' set aside for students to witness

ALPHARETTA, GA (BP)—Forty-eight hours in April have been set aside for a nationwide simultaneous effort for students to share the gospel. From noon Friday, April 12, to noon Sunday, April 14, youth and college students are challenged to find their lost friends, share the gospel with them and give them an opportunity to respond, said Dean Finley, Home Mission Board youth evangelism specialist.

Known simply as "48 Hours," the effort is multidimensional, with supporters including Campus Crusade, the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and various Southern Baptist groups. For more information about 48 Hours, call Finley at 417-862-1111.

# Missionaries report record gains in 1995

By Marty Croll

SBC Foreign Mission Board

RICHMOND, VA (BP)—Proclaiming the gospel and ministering in the name of Christ, Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board missionaries and their partners overseas experienced record gains in 1995.

A record 2,612 newly constituted churches represented a 21 percent jump from 1994 and contributed to a record 39,073 partner churches. A significant number of new churches (367) and baptisms (6,548) were reported among people groups considered inaccessible to traditional mission work.

For the first time in history, total membership among affiliates overseas topped the 4 million mark, reaching 4.11 million. The year's 287,806 baptisms was the second-highest number in history behind last year's 302,132.

The most telling story about baptisms, however, was the 14-to-1 member-to-baptism ratio among overseas partners, contrasting sharply with the 40-to-1 ratio among Southern Baptists in the United States.

The increase in the number of new churches in 1995, from 2,162 in 1994, and the continuing high number of baptisms "reflect the work of the Holy Spirit through the witness of missionaries, volunteers and national co-workers," affirmed FMB president Jerry Rankin.

"We are filled with praise that God has allowed us to participate in what He is doing around the world in such an amazing way," Rankin said. "It's especially thrilling to see the level of response among previously unreached people groups who never before had access to the gospel."

Missionaries and their partners started working among 41 new people groups in 1995, many of them in "The Last Frontier," or "World A." Mission strategists define World A as the 2,466 cultures that have never been exposed to the name of Jesus Christ or seen the Bible translated into their languages. They have been locked behind political, religious and cultural boundaries.

## 'People are responding'

"It's amazing," said Avery Willis, the board's senior vice president for overseas operations. "We're seeing that once we take the gospel into these darkened places where it's never gone, people are responding. We never expected it to happen this quickly."

One country, with only 65 known believers a few years ago, now has an estimated 200,000 Christians.

Church growth surveys in recent years have helped missionaries zero in on lost people in all parts of the world. The clearer focus played a role in increasing the number of new churches, said evangelism and church growth analyst Jim Slack, who

compiled the annual report. Another contributing factor was the FMB's dual focus on the Last Frontier and traditional harvest fields.

The total number of churches on the field increased by 6.65 percent in 1995, from 36,638 in 1994. Growth was strong in Eastern Europe, which has benefited in recent years from the fall of communism.

In church starting, Romania led Southern Baptists' overseas affiliates with 313 new churches. Since the fall of the Iron Curtain, the Baptist union there has started at least one church every week. In Russia, 130 new churches and 6,693 baptisms were reported. Ukraine, formerly a Soviet republic, reported 9,119 baptisms in 1995.

Brazil, a populous, mature mission field, led other countries in the total number of baptisms, with 71,993. Kenya reported 23,078, Nigeria 20,000, South Korea 16,050.

The tiny southeastern African nation of Malawi produced 15,857 baptisms, or one for every seven members, about twice as many per member as the worldwide average in 1995.

Bible teaching ministries increased by more than 11 percent during the year. Record growth also occurred in Vacation Bible School enrollment, Woman's Missionary Union and Brotherhood enrollment, literacy training and youth ministries.

## FMB leaders highlight priority requests for '96

RICHMOND, VA (BP)—The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board has targeted 645 new career missionary jobs to fill in 1996, 50 of which have been designated strategic priority requests.

The 50 priorities reflect a global emphasis by FMB area directors. Half of these are for missionaries to work in virtually unevangelized parts of the world. The rest are to further evangelize areas already highly responsive to the gospel or to accomplish other strategic goals.

Last year Southern Baptist foreign missionaries began work with 41 new people groups, many of them virtually untouched with the gospel. In 10 years, the FMB has increased its total resources committed to unreached people groups from 1 percent to 13.5 percent, said Avery Willis, senior vice president for overseas operation.

But this is just a beginning. "It will take a mission force equal to our present number of missionaries (4,100-plus) just to have one missionary unit (single or married couple) assigned to each unreached people group," Willis said. This year's requests address this goal.

The priority list gives FMB officials the opportunity to "encourage applicants to look at top (priorities) within a certain skill," said Jim Riddell, associate director of the board's missionary personnel department.

While sharing the gospel is part of every missionary's portfolio, the majority of personnel requests specify evangelism and church planting as specific assignments. A sampling of those priority requests include:

- Church starter in the historic area of Novgorod, Russia, or the Andean town of Cajamarca, Peru, and other locations.
- Evangelist/health worker in Kanuri, Nigeria.
- Student worker in South Korea.

Other assignments focus on specialized needs such as:

- Teaching hearing-impaired students at a school in Gaza.
- Teaching soil conservation and crop management among the Afar people in Ethiopia, or in Madagascar, helping local farmers in animal husbandry.

Some priority requests call for dual roles, such as one for a church developer/pilot for a remote area of Equatorial Brazil.

The board's priority focus has worked well matching applicants and their gifts to critical needs. Last year, of 129 priority requests, 60 were filled, said Lloyd Atkinson, director of the board's personnel selection department.

Anyone interested in learning more about career missionary service through priority requests or other needs may call 1-800-999-3113 or write to the FMB at P.O. Box 6767, Richmond, VA 23230.

## People

**James and Betty Wilson** are in Celle, Germany, where he will serve for 11 months as pastor of Celle Church. He recently retired as pastor of Parkway Place Church in Little Rock, following 24 years of ministry. The couple previously served for six years as Southern Baptist missionaries to Brazil. They are parents of two daughters, Debbie Johnson of Benton and Vicki Wagner of Rogers, and one son, John Wilson of Austin, Texas. They have six grandchildren.

**Norma Ellison** was recognized Feb. 25 by Oak Cliff Church in Fort Smith for 10 years of service as church secretary and pastor's secretary. She was honored with an evening fellowship and given an additional week of vacation.

**R. Wilbur and Mary Elizabeth Herring** of Jonesboro observed their 60th wedding anniversary Feb. 27. Herring is pastor emeritus of Central Church in Jonesboro.



**Leona A. Troxwell**, a longtime member and financial supporter of First Church of Rose Bud, was honored Jan. 28 when the church dedicated a new educational facility in her honor. The new building, the last of a three-phase improvement program totaling approximately \$80,000, provides space for seven classrooms, two restrooms and storage space. Speakers for the occasion were former pastor Harrel Cato, interim pastor Jim Hill and Calvary Association director of missions Ledell Batley.



## ARKANSAS ALL OVER

The couple has two children, William Taul Herring of Germantown, Tenn., and Mrs. Bob W. Harrison of Jonesboro. They have three grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

## Church news

**Central Church of Pine Bluff** will dedicate a \$400,000 education and activities building debt-free March 24 to culminate a four-year program of fund raising and construction. Arkansas Baptist State Convention president Rex Horne, pastor of Immanuel Church of Little Rock, will be the guest speaker. Gary Akers is pastor.

**Cabot First Church** experienced "Miracle Sunday" when the congregation came together in one service in their new 1,500-seat sanctuary. The new facility also includes a preschool addition. Due to the congregation's growth, the church has held two to three worship services on Sunday mornings since 1985. The final worship service in the old sanctuary was held Feb. 25 and included reflections of the past and a challenge for the future. Del Medlin is pastor.

**Blytheville First Church**, climaxing two years of planning, recently voted to construct a chapel/office complex and family life center at an estimated cost of \$3.5 million. Construction, beginning this month, should be completed in just over one year.

**Almyra First Church** will observe its 100th anniversary March 9-10. Saturday activities will include a 4 p.m. worship service, a 5:30 rib dinner and a 7 o'clock concert by gospel singer Squire Parsons. The Sunday celebration begins with 10:55 worship, followed by a noon potluck meal and a 1:30 p.m. worship service. Former pastors participating will include Coy Sample, Graham Fowler, Ray Huddleston, H.E. Williams, Tom Logue, Delton Cooper, Dean Newberry, Walter Hill and Don Hubbard. Other program personalities will include Harrison Johns, director of missions for Centennial Association, and pastor Gregg Greenway.

**Helena First Church** deacons are ministering two Sunday afternoons each month to patients in the rehabilitation department of the Helena Regional Medical Center.

**Bill McElduff** and **Fred Waites** are coordinating the programs which include music and devotionals.

**Rogers First Church** hosted the **Zambian Accappella Choir**, a singing group of 10 young men from Zambia, Africa, in concert Feb. 25. The group, which had its beginnings in one of the poorest sections of the Zambian capital city of Lusaka and has a repertoire of over 500 songs in five different native languages and in English, is scheduled to sing at the Southern Baptist Convention in June.

**Little Rock First Church** will host a 6 p.m. concert March 10 which will feature solo handbell artist **Christine Anderson**. Anderson, who has appeared on many national television broadcasts and performed both in the United States and foreign countries, directs a five-octave handbell choir and a four-in-hand quartet at First Church, Houston, Texas.

**Rogers Immanuel Church** music ministry will present "He's Alive" as the church's 13th annual resurrection musical drama April 3-6 at 7 p.m. each evening and also at a 4 p.m. Saturday matinee. The production, focusing primarily on the book of Matthew, will portray the life, death, resurrection, ascension and heavenly reign of Jesus Christ.

**Henry Lester Burton** of Tupelo died Jan. 30 at age 74. He was a member of First Church of Tupelo where he served as a deacon and director of discipleship training. Survivors are his wife, Betty Lou Burton; a son, Paul W. Burton of Norman, Okla.; a daughter, Diann Martin of Ottawa, Ill.; two brothers; two sisters; and three grandchildren.

## State changes

**Billy Ed Morris** has accepted the call to serve as pastor of Immanuel Church of Newport. He previously served 20 years as pastor and 11 years as a staff member of Jacksonport Church. Morris and his wife, Jo Ann, have three adult children, Delana Epperson and Anita Shannon, both of Jacksonport, and Cindy McCloud of Fort Smith.

**David Birdsong** began serving Feb. 11 as pastor of First Church of Pencil, moving there from Fort Worth, Texas. He is a graduate of Baylor University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Birdsong and his wife, Rene, have three children, Rachel, Josh and Carissa.

## ARKANSAS BAPTISTS

**Ray Edmonson** began his ministry as pastor of East Side Church of Pine Bluff Feb. 25. He and his wife, Brenda, moved there from Altheimer where he was pastor of First Church. He also has served Nall's Memorial Church (now West Rock Church) and Immanuel Church of Newport.

**Jimmy Albrecht** began his ministry March 1 as pastor of Cornerstone Church in Texarkana. He previously served several Texas churches and has been a summer missionary in California and Florida. Albrecht is a graduate of Stephen F. Austin State University, Nacogdoches, Texas, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. His wife, Tammy, also is a graduate of Stephen F. Austin State University. They have two children, Anna Christina and Jimmy Dean.

**R.V. Haygood** is pastor of First Church of Huntsville where he had been interim pastor for 10 months. He and his wife, Gwen, moved on the field March 1. Haygood is the former executive director of the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana. He previously was pastor of First Church of Garfield.

**James Burleson** joined the staff of Central Church in Pine Bluff Feb. 4 as minister of music and activities. He previously has served other Arkansas churches. Burleson is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and has attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, as well as the University of Missouri. He and his wife, Shirley, have three adult children.

**Paul Lancaster** recently joined the staff of East Side Church of Mountain Home as associate pastor where he also had served as part-time minister of education and outreach. A 22-year Navy veteran and native of Mountain View, he previously had served as minister of music for Foothills Church in Mountain View.

**Richard Wentz** has joined the staff of Rock Creek Church in Little Rock as associate pastor/minister of worship. He previously was minister of music and to senior adults for First Church of White Hall. Wentz also has served on the staff of Wynne Church. He is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University. He and his wife, Janet, have a daughter, Taylor.

**Raymond Johnson** joined the staff of Natural Steps Church of Roland March 3 as minister of music and education. He previously was a member of Central Church of Jonesboro. He and his wife, Myra, have four sons, Thomas, Benjamin, Seth and Joseph.

**Chris Stem**, a student at Westark Community College, has joined the staff of

Immanuel Church in Fort Smith as minister of youth. He previously served First Church of Lavaca as minister to students/intern.

**Irby Spharler** has joined the staff of Matthews Memorial Church in Pine Bluff as part-time minister of music. He also has served Sulphur Springs Church in Pine Bluff. Spharler and his wife, Margie, reside in Pine Bluff.

**Al Sparkman** began serving Feb. 11 as interim pastor of First Church in Atkins. He is the retired pastor of Crow Mountain Church of Russellville. Sparkman and his wife, Bobbie, will leave April 1 for Baumholder, Germany, where he will serve two months as interim pastor of Trinity Church in the absence of furloughing missionaries Dan and Glenda Sims as part of the Arkansas-European Baptist Partnership.

**Johnny Jackson** of Little Rock is serving as interim pastor of Wynne Church. He previously was pastor of Highlands Church of Little Rock. Jackson is president of Arkansas Vocational Evangelists.

**Rex Pilcher** recently resigned as associate pastor of Parkway Church in Little Rock to become pastor of First Church in Cami, Ill. He is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Pilcher and his wife, Mary, have two daughters, Hannah and Marissa.

**Bob Parker** recently resigned as pastor of Mount Vernon Church in Benton. He is

available for supply preaching, to serve as an interim pastor or to lead revivals. Parker may be contacted at 4801 North Hills Blvd., #807, North Little Rock, AR 72116; phone 501-791-3533.

**Mike Hooks** recently resigned as minister of music and youth at First Church of Prescott. He and his wife, Sandy, and their daughter, Haley, have moved to Richmond, Mo., where he has joined the staff of First Church as minister of music and youth. Hooks is a graduate of Henderson State University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

### Ordinations

**Central Church** of Jonesboro ordained Raymond Johnson to the gospel ministry Feb. 18. Johnson is serving as minister of education and music at Natural Steps Church in Roland.

**Benton First Church** ordained John Crews, David Dawson, Thurman Jones, Charles Kennedy, Roy Lamm, Gary Newcomb, Tom Peters, Terry Robertson and Mike Rosinbaum to the deacon ministry Feb. 18.

**Sedgwick Church** ordained pastor Thomy Green to the gospel ministry Feb. 25. Green, a student at Arkansas State University, had been serving the church as interim pastor.



*Old Union Church of Benton broke ground Feb. 4 for a 42-foot by 92-foot facility that will include a sanctuary, three classrooms and a multi-purpose room. The church, organized in 1830, currently meets in a sanctuary erected in 1912. Building committee members participating in the ground-breaking service included (left to right) Matt Rickford, Nancy Welborn, Alex Hinson, May Wyllia, James Hinkson, Tex Keim and pastor Roy McLeod.*

## Southern Seminary receives 'notation,' avoids probation

LOUISVILLE, KY (BP/ABP)—Southern Baptist Theological Seminary will not be placed on probation by its primary accrediting agency, according to information received by the school Feb. 26.

However, the Association of Theological Schools did issue a formal notation against the seminary, citing a "general tone" that "impairs the capacity to provide significant theological education and ministerial training."

The ATS Commission on Accrediting placed the notation after a visit to the campus last November by representatives of ATS and two other accrediting agencies. The ATS action came in response to a complaint filed against the seminary administration in April 1995 by the seminary's faculty committee, including concern that the president's firing of the dean of the Carver School of Church Social Work created a negative environment for education.

The ATS visiting committee cited four areas of concern based on their observations and interviews:

- Lack of consultation by the trustees and administration with the faculty, specifically in developing policy changes regarding the qualifications of faculty, the procedure for disciplinary action and the future of the Carver School of Church Social Work.
- Questions about adherence to ATS standards for contract and tenure-track faculty appointed under a set of criteria that now has been changed.
- Low morale of faculty and students.
- The need for stronger networks of communication throughout the campus.

The ATS team said the trustee board's statement on qualifications for new faculty, adopted in April 1995 at the president's request, displayed "haste and lack of clarity," despite the long-term consequences of such an action.

The team also said the faculty was wrongly excluded from the process of adopting changes to the hiring process, from creating a procedure for disciplinary action short of dismissal and from the decision to disband the Carver School.

The visiting team also noted four strengths of the seminary that were determined by interviews with faculty and administration. The strengths were "an unusual degree of unanimity and support" for the seminary's mission, a commitment to the seminary's work and place in the Southern Baptist Convention, a desire for the institution to prosper and a "constructive

spirit among the faculty interviewed as well as strong and appreciative collegiality across the ranks."

The commission also authorized a campus visit in the spring of 1997 to monitor progress the institution has achieved in addressing concerns about "academic freedom," faculty status, faculty governance and communication.

"I am very pleased to receive the accreditation report from the Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools," seminary president Al Mohler said. "From the onset, we have indicated our commitment to work with all appropriate accrediting agencies through this period of institutional transition.

"We will continue to cooperate with the ATS Commission on Accrediting and other appropriate agencies," Mohler said. "We will also stand proudly before the Southern Baptist Convention and its churches. Southern Baptists should know that Southern Seminary is moving forward with confidence, faithfulness and eagerness."

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# Kelley unanimously elected New Orleans president

By Debbie Moore

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

NEW ORLEANS (BP)—Charles S. "Chuck" Kelley Jr. was elected unanimously Feb. 23 as the eighth president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Kelley, professor of evangelism at New Orleans Seminary since August 1983, assumed the office of president March 1. He succeeds Landrum P. Leavell II, president from 1975-95.

Following Kelley's election, he and trustees proceeded to the seminary chapel, where faculty, staff and students waited to hear the official announcement. Trustee chairman Ed Johnson, pastor of First Baptist Church, Ocala, Fla., praised Kelley for his

servant's heart, then held a presidential commissioning service, with the Kelleys kneeling at the front of the podium area.

Kelley told trustees, professors and staff members that he believes the purpose of the seminary is "to equip leaders to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries." He said five core values of the seminary are doctrinal integrity, spiritual vitality, mission focus,

excellence and servant leadership.

"Serving is my leadership style," he emphasized. "I see my role as a chief servant rather than as a chief executive officer."

Seeking to emphasize "what historically has been the strength of the school — involvement in ministry," Kelley said he wants to do "all we can to focus on academic excellence. I want us to challenge people to develop to the height of their ability."

Kelley, 43, has been the Roland Q. Leavell professor of evangelism at New Orleans Seminary since August 1983. In March 1993 he was named chairman of the seminary's largest division, pastoral ministries. In June 1993 he was named director of Southern Baptists' first Center for Evangelism and Church Growth, located on the NOBTS campus. He also served from 1983-93 as the seminary's director of field education.

Kelley is widely recognized among Southern Baptists for his evangelistic preaching and for his research in the area of "baby boomers" and "baby busters" generational groups.

A native of Texas, Kelley is a graduate of Baylor University and New Orleans Seminary.



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*Don Moore*

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Pastors, church staff and their spouses who are new to Arkansas Baptist churches are invited to attend Partners in Ministry—Welcoming New Pastors and Staff April 15-16 at the Baptist Building in Little Rock. The event is open to pastors and staff members new to Arkansas or to the ministry.

Rob Hewell, director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention church music ministries department, is chairman for the welcoming event. He said the committee planned the program "to build relationships" between Executive Board staff and church staff.

"The emphasis is to build relationships with people who are new to church staff positions in Arkansas," he noted. "We are inviting new pastors, staff members and their spouses to Little Rock to come get acquainted with the Executive Board staff and the staffs of the Arkansas Baptist Foundation, *Arkansas Baptist News-magazine* and the Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries." Also included are orientation sessions with the Christian Civic Foundation of Arkansas and Baptist Health.

"They will have the opportunity to tour the buildings, to meet (new ABSC executive director) Dr. Emil Turner, to get acquainted and find out something about the work of each of the departments and each of the agencies," he added, "and to get acquainted with the people on each of those staffs and find out about the work and the ministries, support, services and events that we do."

"We certainly want them to catch a glimpse, a vision, of what we do as a staff, but the real emphasis is on building relationships and developing friendships," Hewell emphasized.

The program, which begins at 1 p.m. Monday and concludes at 11:30 a.m. Tuesday, will feature building tours, program orientation sessions and a Monday evening banquet with Executive Board staff.

A program for spouses also will be provided, which will include building

tours, meals, a reception at the home of Peggy Sutton, discussion and a group session with J.D. Stake, director of the ABCS crisis support ministry.

There is no cost for the orientation. Hewell said participants will be reimbursed for mileage, and room and all meals will be provided.

For more information, contact Hewell at the church music ministries department toll-free in state at 1-800-838-ABSC or locally at 376-4791, ext. 5121.

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## NATION

### Promise Keepers' ministers rally rebukes barriers

By David Winfrey  
SBC Home Mission Board

ATLANTA (BP)—More than 39,000 Christian ministers seeking revival prayed, praised, wept and worshiped throughout the first Promise Keepers clergy conference, Feb. 13-15.

Under the theme "Fan into Flame," church and para-church leaders addressed topics of revival and racial and denominational unity. Promise Keepers' vice president Dale Schläfer billed it as "the largest and most diverse meeting of God's shepherds in the world."

Speakers urged ministers from every state and a dozen countries to trust God, model reconciliation and lead their congregations to spiritual revival.

Promise Keepers founder Bill McCarny started the meeting by pleading for an end to racism and denominational strife. "The contention between denominations has gone on long enough," he declared. "If the church ever stood together, almighty God would have his way."

In a scene reminiscent of Southern Baptists' 1995 passage of a resolution on racial reconciliation, representatives of Anglos, African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans and Asians prayed for forgiveness for racism, hatred and unforgiveness.

Conference speaker Henry Blackaby described the event as another expression of what he's seen God doing to bring revival to America.

"I've really sensed that there is almost an irresistible movement of God on the hearts of the leadership to move their thinking toward revival," he said.

The meeting was significant, Blackaby said, because it focused on leadership of churches, agencies and para-church organizations. "Biblical and historical revival has come when the leaders got right with God," he said. "I would say we would be a lot farther away from revival if we were not seeing a meeting of leaders."

Blackaby spoke to the pastors about the importance of being led by the Spirit of God and doing the will of God. "As goes the leaders, so goes the church," he said. Speakers also touted the meeting as a refreshment for pastors feeling alone and discouraged.

"We have many who have taken the field who are beaten and bruised and broken," said Tony Evans, pastor of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship in Dallas. "Many of you have resigned from the clergy long ago, you just haven't informed the board yet."

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## Annuity Board assets top \$5 billion; benefit payments near \$200 million

DALLAS (BP)—The Southern Baptist Annuity Board closed its 78th year of operations with assets of \$5.173 billion after paying a record \$192.56 million in retirement and relief benefits.

Trustees, who met in Dallas Feb. 26-27, were told total earnings in 1995 were almost \$794 million, which made possible a permanent 5 percent increase in benefits on Jan. 1, 1996, for all annuitants with benefits established for five years or longer.

Trustees also heard a report from president Paul W. Powell that the SBC Executive Committee had responded with positive action on the request by Annuity Board trustees to approve creation of two new business trusts. The trusts could be used to implement a mechanism for using registered mutual funds for the investment activities of the Annuity Board. Trustees are not expected to take final action before the first quarter in 1997.

At the initiation of Powell and Gordon Hobgood, chief operating officer, trustees began discussion of a succession plan for the two top officers of the Annuity Board. Hobgood plans retirement in 1998 and Powell in 1999. The executives told

trustees the size and complexity of Annuity Board operations invites a study of the organizational structure and a review of the responsibilities of the two positions. Trustees will discuss the subject in their next meeting.

Treasurer Harold Richardson reported contributions to participant accounts continued to rise, with \$254 million representing a 6.5 percent increase over 1994. There were 11,097 new retirement plan enrollments in 1995, and 4,413 new benefits were established.

Richardson said increases in Cooperative Program receipts and increases in available funds from the board's endowment funds made it possible to make relief payments of \$1.29 million in 1995. The board received \$1.1 million from CP funds, all of which was used in the relief program.

In addition to the relief program, the Annuity Board paid \$962,250 during 1995 in \$50-a-month supplements to annuitants with very low monthly benefits. At year end, there were 1,711 people receiving the special gifts from the board's Adopt An Annuitant Program that is funded by designated gifts.

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**Needed** — Part-time youth minister. Send resumes to: Tommy Freeman, First Baptist Church, PO Box 368, Star City, AR 71667.

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**Seeking resumes** — Monte Ne Baptist Church is seeking a part-time youth minister. Send resume to: 1610 Monte Ne Road, Rogers, AR 72756.

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**NATION**

**Baptist leaders  
form task force  
to combat racism**

NASHVILLE, TN (ABP) — Southern Baptist Convention leaders have created a task force to put teeth into the convention's historic statement of repentance for racism.

The SBC task force on racial reconciliation will be comprised of representatives of all the convention's agencies and institutions, SBC president Jim Henry announced Feb. 19.

The race task force — created by the council of SBC agency heads at Henry's request — was unveiled during the recent meeting of the SBC Executive Committee in Nashville, Tenn.

Last year, after the race resolution was approved by the SBC, Henry approached the SBC Inter-Agency Council about finding a way "to move forward" on race, he said.

The council's response notes that the race resolution calls for Southern Baptists to "commit ourselves to eradicate racism in all its forms from Southern Baptist life and ministry."

It affirms the council's agreement with the race resolution, commits itself "to work as an agent for racial reconciliation" in the SBC, pledges to make racial reconciliation a priority for the agencies and to "strive for representation...based on biblical qualifications and embracing the ethnic diversity of the Southern Baptist Convention and its churches."

The race task force will be comprised of a representative from each SBC agency and will work through the year 2001. It is charged "to work toward strategy and implementation of full racial and ethnic reconciliation."

The council's statement asks the SBC nominating committee to "set a priority to nominate persons representative of all ethnic groups to our boards of trustees."

The agency heads also directed the race task force to identify and involve SBC ethnic leaders in its work. They named Richard Land, president of the SBC Christian Life Commission, as the task force chairman.

"Our goals are first to represent the ethnic diversity of the SBC, and ultimately to represent the ethnic diversity of the country," Land said.

"This is not a politically correct mandate," Land said. "It's a biblical mandate. Racism is biblically wrong."

The task force will work to expand its focus beyond the relationship between Caucasians and African-Americans, he added. "We will be focused on all racial and ethnic groups in America."

## Clinton, abortion foes differ over proposed D and X ban

WASHINGTON (BP)—President Bill Clinton has made it clear the only way he will sign a bill outlawing a gruesome, late-term abortion procedure is if the legislation is amended to include an exception which the measure's supporters say would make it meaningless.

In a Feb. 28 letter to Senate Judiciary Committee chairman Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, the president said he would sign the Partial-birth Abortion Ban Act, H.R. 1833, if it is amended to allow the procedure when it is "necessary to preserve the life of the woman or avert serious adverse health consequences to the woman." Otherwise,

he would veto it because he does not believe the bill meets the "constitutional requirements" set forth by the Supreme Court in the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* opinion and other decisions, Clinton said.

An exception for health reasons would have the effect of allowing abortions for a wide range of reasons, thereby gutting the bill, said supporters of the legislation.

The measure already includes an exception for a "mother whose life is endangered by a physical disorder, illness or injury," Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole, R-Kan., said in a letter to Clinton the same day. "A broader exception would simply defeat the purpose of the bill, which is to stop this grisly procedure."

The Senate passed H.R. 1833 in early December in a 54-44 vote. The House of Representatives had approved it by a 288-139 margin in early November. The bill awaits House approval again before going to the president because the Senate amended H.R. 1833 to provide an explicit exception when the mother's life is threatened.

### MK prayer calendar

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■ March 7: Lantz Smith, OBU Box 4040; sophomore from Guatemala.

■ March 8: Ann Browning, OBU Box 3070; sophomore from Colombia.

■ March 18: Andrea Leagans, OBU Box 4215; senior from Colombia.

■ March 27: Jason Greenwich, OBU Box 3817; junior from south Brazil.

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## COLLEGE DIGEST

### Williams Baptist College

Scholarship established — The Riley-Frazier Scholarship has been established at Williams Baptist College to benefit students preparing for foreign missions work. The scholarship was begun in memory of Lois Riley, who was the wife of W.C. Riley and mother of Quanita Frazier, both of Paragould.

Mrs. Riley, who died last March at the age of 79, was a lifelong resident of Greene County. She had been married to Riley for over 62 years.

W.C. Riley funded the scholarship with an initial donation of \$15,000. Students interested in information about the scholarship may contact WBC's office of financial aid at 501-886-6741, ext. 121.

Acappella coming to WBC — Acappella, a contemporary Christian recording group, is scheduled to perform April 15 at Williams Baptist College. The four-man group, which has sold over 2 million albums, will perform at 7:30 p.m. in the Southerland-Mabee Center.

Acappella, which performs without musical accompaniment, has performed in the U.S., Canada, Brazil, Europe and South

Africa. Ticket information is available by contacting the office of student affairs at Williams at 1-800-722-4434, ext. 115.

### Ouachita Baptist University

Faculty members gain new titles — Two music faculty members recently were appointed to new posts by the school's board of trustees.

Charles Wright has been named as the dean of the Bernice Young Jones School of Fine Arts, chair of the Division of Music and professor of music. Craig Hamilton was named as chair of the Music Education Department of the Division of Music.

Wright, a graduate of OBU and North Texas State University, joined the Ouachita faculty in 1964. Hamilton, who holds degrees from the University of Southern Mississippi, Arkansas State University and the University of North Texas, has served on the OBU faculty since 1983.

Christian Focus Week — "Treasures in Jars of Clay" was the theme of the recent Christian Focus Week at Ouachita. The annual emphasis, sponsored by OBU's Baptist Student Union, featured Greg Kirksey, a 1976 OBU graduate. Kirksey, pastor of First Church, Benton, is a former Arkansas Baptist Executive Board president.

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## Convention Uniform

### *The first will be last*

By William H. Sutton, attorney,  
member, Immanuel Church,  
Little Rock

Basic passage: Matthew 19:27-20:16

Focal passage: Matthew 19:30

Central truth: Ranking in the kingdom of God is not our business.

At another time and place in history, lawyers did not discuss their fees with clients. They humbly turned their backs while the client dropped the fee in the lawyer's cloak.

Human nature compelled Peter to ask Jesus, "What's in it for those of us who have left everything and followed you?" Jesus did not rebuke the question. He addressed it with patience, saying you shall sit upon 12 thrones, judging the tribes of Israel. Jesus added that everyone who has left all to follow Him would receive many times as much and shall inherit eternal life.

This response should have elated the disciples. It didn't because they were tasting the poison of jealousy. Jesus knew it and moved to quench their thirst for it.

The story of the workers in the vineyard is a profound exposé of human nature. Some were hired early and worked all day. Others were hired late and worked a short day. All were paid the same. Those who were perfectly happy with their original deal were suddenly miserable by the owner's generosity to others.

Jesus meant to strike hard and clear with the message that God's justice is perfect and grace is His to give as it pleases Him. To emphasize the point, He reminded the listener that many who have been first shall be last (Matt. 19:30). Since God's judgment is perfect and man's is not, ranking in heaven will be different from man's expectations. The stock of the humble, the meek, the poor and the peacemakers shall rise as that of the haughty, conceited, prideful and rich self-promoters falls.

Immediately after hearing Jesus' clear message, the disciples were in an argument as to who among them would be greatest (Matt. 20:24). Only after the crucifixion did they learn the rich joy of humbly suffering "shame for His name" (Acts 5:40) and truly loving one another. Arguments about who should be first passed from their concern. It should pass from ours as we trust God for "many times as much and eternal life" (Matt. 19:29).

## Life and Work

### *Message to the children*

By Ben J. Rowell, pastor,  
First Church, Rogers

Basic passage: Matthew 7:7-12

Focal passage: Matthew 7:9-12

Central truth: Ask of God because you are His child.

"Ask and it shall be given to you" (Matt. 7:7). To pray is to ask of God. The more humble and childlike the asking, the better. "Knock and it shall be opened to you" (Matt. 7:7). We need to be persistent in our asking. The seeking is continual and earnest, until God opens it. Now, I want to remind you that we are not told that no matter what petitions men offer, they will be granted. Matthew's entire discourse applies only to the children of the Kingdom, to those who hunger and thirst after righteousness and the mercy of God, to those whose hope is in Him. We may with assurance ask the Father who is in heaven for every need of our lives. If we will knock on His door, He will respond. This presumes on the part of those who ask, seek and knock a serious desire. He that seeketh, findeth. It won't take a person long to find the Lord, when he makes up his mind to do so.

Life is a research. I can remember the first time in college that I had to do a research paper. The paper was on John D. Rockefeller. It took me weeks to complete this paper. No one else could do it for me. The same is true as we seek the things of the Lord. No one else can seek for you.

In this matter of seeking, we are not powerless. Prayer is left to us. When we come to His door, let us not knock like some church visitors who knock and pray that no one is at home. But knock loudly and boldly, not as a beggar knocks at the door, but as one who belongs to the house. You are not a stranger at His door. You are one of His children.

Matthew 7:9-11 compares the parental love of men to that of God and emphasizes how much greater the love of God is, for we are evil while He is good. We are not told that God will necessarily give what we ask, but He always responds. Everything that He does in us and for us is good.

Matthew 7:12 returns to the subject of neighborly love which is the theme of the whole discourse and formulates what has been called "The Golden Rule." Jesus here sets a high goal for all of us.

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## Bible Book

### *Servant's solemn charge*

By Don Moseley, pastor, Sylvan Hills  
First Church, Sherwood

Basic passage: II Timothy 3:1-4:22

Focal passage: II Timothy 4:1-5

Central truth: The solemnity of the charge given by Paul is realized in the light of the fact that we shall all, the living and the dead, be judged at the second coming of our Lord.

Paul knew death was fast approaching and in the urgency of the moment he passes the mantle of responsibility down to young Timothy. Paul admits that the seriousness of this charge hangs on the fact of judgment of both the living and the dead at the return of Jesus (John 5:28-29). It is in light of this truth that Paul says, "I give you this charge" (v. 1).

The charge given by Paul involves nine admonitions. Timothy is first called upon to "preach the Word" (v. 2). Paul specifies preaching "the Word" because preaching would be to no avail unless the content was the life-giving Word of God, the good news of the gospel. It is the foundation on which Timothy would be able to succeed in the following eight admonitions.

Paul calls upon Timothy to "be prepared in season and out of season" (v. 2). The word translated prepared also has the connotation of readiness. He needed to be alert. "In season and out of season" speaks of preaching the Word both when it is convenient and when it is not. Be ready to share the truth of God's Word. Do not let wrong attitudes of hearers dictate when the gospel is preached (vv. 3-4).

Two of the next three admonitions are negative and one is positive: "correct, rebuke and encourage" (v. 2). "Correct" or "reprove" has to do with challenging wrong actions, whereas, "rebuke" has to do with a challenge of wrong attitudes. "Encourage" or "exhort" is the positive effort needed to help believers grow in Christ. This is done with "great patience and careful instruction."

In verse 5, Paul continues with "keep your head in all situations," the idea of being level-headed or well-balanced. "Endure hardship" is a call to be willing to literally suffer evil. A call to confront the lost with the gospel was still a need even though much of Timothy's job was pastoring believers, so Paul exhorts him to "do the work of an evangelist" (Eph. 4:11). And lastly, he is to "discharge all the duties of your ministry." Here is the idea of fulfilling his call.

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## Convention Uniform

### *Achieving your potential*

By William H. Sutton, attorney,  
member, Immanuel Church,  
Little Rock

Basic passage: Matthew 25:14-30

Focal passage: Matthew 25:29

Central truth: Each of us is accountable to God for our talents.

Union General George B. McClellan was a gifted man. Young, handsome, idolized by his men, he was given a great army to crush the small and ill-equipped army of Northern Virginia. But he had a problem. His fear of losing his magnificent army was so great that he could not bring himself to risk it, even for the purpose for which it was created. He was eventually removed from command.

Jesus' story of the talents is told to illustrate the nature of accountability to God. When the master distributed the talents to his servants, there was no misunderstanding that increase was expected (v. 26).

Realizing the precious nature of time, the faithful servants moved at once to employ their talents. To the lazy servant, time was merely an unwelcome addition to his unwanted responsibility. He buried his talent in the ground for safe keeping where it would be worth the same whether it was given 10 years or 10 minutes.

The day of the Master's return was joyful for the faithful servants. With great pleasure, they delivered the product of their devoted service.

Not so with the unproductive servant. Instead of presenting the fruit of diligence, enterprise and devotion, he offered fear as an excuse (v. 25).

Describing his servant as "wicked and slothful" in verse 27, the Master's reprimand for his actions was extremely severe (vv. 28-30).

Fear of failure is not an acceptable excuse to God. As Paul reminded Timothy, "For God did not give us a spirit of fear, but a spirit of power, of love and self-discipline" (1 Tim. 1:7).

Along with the talents and time that each of us is given, we are accountable for that spirit of power, love and self-discipline that God gave us for certain success.

## Life and Work

### *The gate, the way is Jesus*

By Ben J. Rowell, pastor,  
First Church, Rogers

Basic passage: Matthew 7:13-23

Focal passage: Matthew 7:15-20

Central truth: More people go the wrong way than go the right way.

These verses show that we have to make a choice and the fact that there are few who find the gate and the way which leads to life. These words are to be read as a warning. The way that leads to destruction is broad and easy. People follow it almost without thinking. The way to life is difficult both to find and follow. It demands vigilance at every moment. There is no other way to be saved outside of a personal faith in Jesus Christ. There is the unsafe way, and then there is the safe way. The choice is ours.

Matthew 7:15-20 shows us that every Christian should know enough Bible doctrine that we can use it against false prophets and false teachers. They come to you in "sheep's clothing" and they move into your life, thus into the life of the church, with smooth talk and quoting scriptures. Satan and his angels come as angels of light. The cults are grabbing our members by the thousands because we do not know what the scriptures say.

Who are these false prophets? Without doubt, all those who falsify the Word of God and proclaim only visions of their own minds. Jeremiah 23:16 says, "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, 'hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you. They make you vain, they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord.'" These false prophets and teachers represent themselves as belonging to the flock, although their only thought is to devour and destroy.

In our day, things like the New Age have moved in and are taking control of the minds and hearts of our people. We know a tree by its fruit and a disciple by his work. If we have been born again, the new heart will reveal itself in words and deeds.

Do you realize that some people who think they are going to heaven will not be going there? How sad this is. Some think by good works, by baptism, by partaking of the Lord's Supper, by being a good neighbor, this will reserve a place for them in heaven. Sad to say, that just is not so. Jesus will say to those people, "I never knew you." Being born again is the only way into His presence.

## Bible Book

### *Qualified church leaders*

By Don Moseley, pastor, Sylvan Hills  
First Church, Sherwood

Basic passage: Titus 1:1-16

Focal passage: Titus 1:5-16

Central truth: God has not left us without clear guidelines or qualifications for leadership in His Church.

Titus was a Greek who had assisted the apostle Paul. In verse 5, Paul points out that Titus had been left in Crete for two primary reasons, one of which was to "straighten out" or "set in order" destructive situations and the other reason was to "ordain elders."

The term "elders" or "presbyters" is synonymous with "bishops" or "overseers" and "pastors" or "shepherds." Titus was to be careful that these men met certain qualifications. The listing is very similar to the instructions given to Timothy by Paul (1 Tim. 3:1-7).

The first qualification is that an elder be "blameless" (v. 6). He should be above reproach and have a good reputation.

To be qualified the elder must also be "the husband of but one wife." Polygamy was commonly practiced in the pagan culture of Paul's day, therefore, Paul wants to make it clear that the man of God must be married to one woman and be loyal to her and her alone. He must be, literally, a one-woman man. With the rate of divorce so high in our culture and in the church, we see the need is just as great today for godly men to remain faithful to one woman.

The elder must also manage his own household well, being "a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient" (v. 6b). His family should not be out of control. He further should not be "overbearing," that is, not open to the thoughts of those he leads. He is not to be "quick-tempered" for patience is a necessity in the role of leadership. He must not be given to "drunkenness." He is not to be "violent." He is not to "pursue dishonest gain." Money was the motivation of the false teachers. He is to be "hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined" (v. 8). He is also to hold to "sound doctrine" (v. 9).

Paul also instructed Titus to silence and rebuke those who were causing dissension and confusion (vv. 11, 13). The purpose of correction was that they might return to sound doctrine and faith (v. 13), although Paul saw that as a slim possibility (v. 16).



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### High court rejects challenge to commandment display

WASHINGTON (ABP) — The U.S. Supreme Court has refused to hear a challenge to a Ten Commandments display on the Colorado Capitol grounds in Denver. The Feb. 20 ruling left standing a Colorado Supreme Court ruling that the engraved monument in a park near the capitol did not violate either the federal or state constitutions.

The Freedom from Religion Foundation had argued that the monument's religious message violated the U.S. Constitution's requirement of church-state separation, as well as the Colorado Constitution's ban against preferential treatment of religion.

The 3-by-4-foot monument was donated by the Fraternal Order of Eagles of Colorado in the mid-1950s as part of a nationwide program to expose young people to historic codes of conduct. In addition to the Ten Commandments, the monument depicts an American flag, the American eagle and Jewish and Christian symbols.

The Colorado Supreme Court said the monument was not erected to endorse religion, but rather to serve the secular purpose of recognizing a "historical, jurisprudential cornerstone of American legal significance."

### Children, families focus of national WMU conference

BIRMINGHAM, AL (WMU) — Meeting the needs of children through ministries sponsored by the church will be the focal point of Children and the Church II, set for April 24-26 in Birmingham, Ala.

The conference, sponsored by national Woman's Missionary Union is designed as a forum for individuals who minister with children and their families in the name of the church, whether in local congregations or in agencies supported by churches.

Among the conference's keynote speakers are Marian Wright Edelman, president of the Children's Defense Fund; Diana Garland, Greens professor of Christian family ministry at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; and Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

Individuals registering by March 15 will pay the reduced fee of \$90. The fee increases to \$100 after that date. All reservations must be made by April 1.

To register, call 1-800-968-7301 or send registration fee, along with name, address, telephone number, agency/church name and title/occupation, to Woman's Missionary Union, P.O. Box 830711, Birmingham, AL 35283-0711. Make checks payable to Woman's Missionary Union.

### Mark Short sets retirement as Louisiana executive director

ALEXANDRIA, LA (BP)—Mark Short, executive director of the Louisiana Baptist Convention since 1987, has announced his retirement, effective Dec. 31, 1996.

Bobby Swanner, president of the Louisiana Baptist Convention executive board, has announced the 15-person administrative subcommittee will form the search committee to seek Short's successor.

Short, 67, previously was a professor of church administration at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. His future plans include the continuation of his church growth and church administration consulting as well as his speaking and writing ministries.

### Coppenger inauguration slates Rogers, Carl F.H. Henry

KANSAS CITY, MO (BP)—Adrian Rogers and Carl F. Henry will be the featured speakers at the April 20-22 inauguration of Mark T. Coppenger as president of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in suburban Memphis, Tenn., will preach at a community-wide rally to be held on the seminary campus April 21. Henry will bring the inaugural address on April 22.

Inaugural activities, including a 24-hour prayer and fasting vigil, will be held in a 1,200-seat tent pitched on the front lawn of the seminary campus.

Coppenger, who became Midwestern's third president Aug. 1, has pledged to emphasize academic excellence, conservative theology and missions and evangelism.

### Southeastern professor Max Rogers dies at age 63

WAKE FOREST, NC (BP)—Max Rogers, professor of Old Testament at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary since 1961, died Feb. 12 following an extended illness. He was 63.

A native of Richmond, Va., Rogers came to the seminary after serving on the faculty at Columbia University, New York City, and Brooklyn Friends School, Brooklyn, N.Y. He held degrees from Duke University in Durham, N.C., and Union Theological Seminary and did postdoctoral work at the University of Munster in West Germany.