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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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ARKANSAS BAPTIST



Volume 95, Number 7

April 4, 1996

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RISK THE JOURNEY

More than 700 participants attended the 1996 Woman's Missionary Union annual meeting, held at East Side Church in Fort Smith. Missionaries, missions leaders and others helped interpret the meeting's theme, "Risk the Journey."

Retired ABSC missions department director R.H. Dorris dies at age 80

Rivos H. Dorris, former director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention missions department, died March 19 at age 80. Dorris, who retired in 1979, served eight years as missions department director. He previously served Arkansas Baptists for three years as director of chaplaincy and following retirement returned in 1980 to serve as interim executive secretary prior to the election of Huber Drumwright.

An ordained Southern Baptist minister for 63 years, he served as pastor of Pike Avenue Church (now Crosspoint Church) in North Little Rock for 17 years. He also served churches in Boydell, Junction City and Urbana as well as Ida Baptist Church in Ida, La.

Dorris had served as a chaplain in World War II and the Korean conflict. A lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve, he served there as a chaplain and as a Veterans Administration part-time chaplain. He also had served as chairman of the North Little Rock Municipal Hospital Commission, vice president of the Baptist Medical Center board of trustees and vice chairman of the Governor's Advisory Committee on Chaplains.

"We at Baptist Health are deeply saddened by the death of Dr. R.H. Dorris," noted Russell D. Harrington Jr., president of Baptist Health Corporation. "He had faithfully served our organization since 1964 as a corporation member and during that time span served three separate terms as a member of the board of trustees."

Harrington said Dorris had been a trusted adviser and strong supporter of the organization during the development

of Baptist Memorial Medical Center in the late 1950s and early 1960s. "It was his leadership as chairman of the North Little Rock Municipal Hospital Commission that helped pave the way for Baptist Health and the City of North Little Rock to work as partners," he said. "He was truly a giant among men. We will miss him."

Bob Holley, director of the state convention's Discipleship Training department, remembered Dorris as an encourager with a gentle spirit who was deeply committed to the Lord and to ministry. "He had a ready smile and a quick sense of humor," Holley said. "He was always a gentleman and was highly respected by those who worked with him at the Arkansas Baptist State Convention."

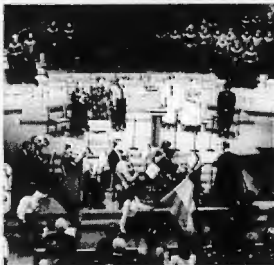
Funeral services for Dorris were held March 22 at Baring Cross Church in North Little Rock where he was a member. He had served the church as interim pastor and was honored in 1993 when the church named one of its buildings in his honor.

Dorris, who was born in Kentucky and reared in Dermott, was a graduate of Ouachita Baptist College (now Ouachita Baptist University) and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He received an honorary doctor of divinity degree from OBU in 1977.

Survivors include his wife, the former Jimyc Steuart of Dermott; a daughter, Julia Queen of New York; two granddaughters, Tannya Evans Gast of Dallas, Texas, and Alicia Evans Tugwell of Little Rock; one grand-son, Taylor Todd Tugwell of Little Rock; and one brother, Royce H. Dorris of Florence, Ala.

Cover Story

ABN photo / Millie Gil



'Risk the Journey' 6-9

Arkansas Baptist Woman's Missionary Union members were challenged to "Risk the Journey" during their 1996 annual meeting held March 15-16 in Fort Smith.

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ARKANSAS BAPTIST



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Partnership update

Fund-raising efforts, new EBC coordinator top partnership developments

By Russell N. Dilday

Associate Editor, Arkansas Baptist

The beginning of a fund-raising effort in the United States and the naming of a new overseas partnership coordinator top the news of the missions partnership between Arkansas Baptists and the European Baptist Convention.

The EBC has announced the beginning of fund-raising efforts for the Million Dollar Vision Missions Endowment Fund in honor of John and Elizabeth Merritt. John Merritt retires as general secretary of the EBC this fall following 26 years of service. The endowment fund seeks to raise \$1 million for use in buying land and building churches in Europe.

According to C.W. Bess, pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church in Wiesbaden, Germany, only 10 percent of EBC churches "own their own facilities. The other 90 percent face constant rent increases. Often they are forced to vacate in favor of more desirable tenants."

"God gave the Merritts a burden and a solution for churches caught in the 'rent trap,'" Bess explained. That solution was "a million dollar vision" for a missions endowment fund to supply EBC churches with the financial base for purchasing property and constructing facilities.

"The fund would use an investment of \$1 million to provide an annual return of \$100,000 to provide grants to EBC churches," Bess said. "The current balance for the fund is \$500,000. No grants can be made, though, until the fund achieves its primary goal of \$1 million."

Bess said the goal of EBC leaders "is for the Merritts to see the fund value reach \$1 million and the first grant made to a church before they leave Europe."

Part of the campaign in the U.S. will include contacting former members of EBC churches now living in the States. Bess said that approximately 30,000 former EBC church members, primarily former military personnel and business people, now reside in the U.S.

Former EBC church members are encouraged to contact the Arkansas Baptist State Convention with their names and addresses by calling the ABSO toll-free in state at 1-800-838-ABC or locally in Little Rock at 376-4791, ext. 5103.

In other partnership developments, James Duke, pastor of International Baptist Church in Sofia, Bulgaria, has been named EBC partnership missions committee chairman. He will be responsible for gathering information from EBC churches



Former Arkansas pastor James Duke (center), pastor of International Baptist Church in Sofia, Bulgaria, is the new partnership missions committee chairman for the European Baptist Convention. He and one of his church members visit in Bulgaria with Doyme Plummer (right), the partnership's stateside coordinator.

and requesting projects from the ABSO.

Speaking to Baptist Building staff during chapel services March 20, Duke said it was "quite a challenge just living" in Bulgaria.

"In October, we finally received a one-year visa" to live in Bulgaria, he noted. "The first 28 months we were leaving the country each month to renew our visas."

Duke also rejoiced in International Church's five baptisms in the past six months, "the first fruit," he said, of the four-year-old work which "is the only English-speaking church in Bulgaria...in an area the size of Texas."

He related ministry problems he faced in Bulgaria, including ministry both to refugees and native Bulgarians. One new Bulgarian convert "told her friends of finding Christ...and they left her," he said.

Despite the problems of ministering in the former Communist-bloc country, Duke said he maintains a good attitude. "You can dwell on your problems or you can see your opportunities. Pray that we will be objective and effective. The decision has already been made in Heaven."

Arkansas Baptists have many ways to respond to partnership needs, said ABSO Brotherhood department director Harry Black, adding that European and Arkansas churches "have reached 48 partnerships, with four in negotiation."

Black noted that several requests from the EBC administration and churches remain unfilled, including:

- A request for volunteers for an Experiencing God weekend June 14-16 at

Faith Baptist Church in Kaiserslautern. Lance Hudnell, a member of Lakeside Church in Hot Springs, is team leader.

- A request for construction team members for separate projects in Bulgaria and Germany.

- An urgent need for a two-year office manager/assistant to the EBC general secretary. "They are asking for a Christian woman with a good knowledge of Baptist life who has office management and secretarial skills including computer knowledge," Black said. "The EBC is able to provide an apartment to be shared with another female EBC staff member. She is asked to provide all of her own support."

- A need for interim and supply pastors "and those who would go and stay," Black said. He noted that churches in Geissen, Frankfurt, Bamberg and Schweinfurt, Germany, as well as Naples, Italy; Waterloo, Belgium; and Bratislava, Slovakia, all need pastors.

Jimmy Martin, chairman of the EBC prayer and vision committee, has also requested ongoing prayer. "We are asking you to join us in prayer that Almighty God will guide and empower His people to experience revival and spiritual awakening," he said.

Martin highlighted "some very practical, down-to-earth things" needed in prayer, including an EBC-owned office facility, staff housing and staff support. "These things will free us to spend badly-needed funds for starting and developing new churches," he added.

A PASTOR'S HEART



By EMIL TURNER
ABS Executive Director

Marie didn't understand that her daddy was drunk. She just knew that something was terribly wrong. Her mom was crying and her dad was acting really mean. Only a fourth grader, Marie had never seen anything like this. Her dad had a gun and was threatening to shoot himself. Soon he forced Sue and little Marie out of the house and locked the door. Sue had picked up the cellular telephone without Larry seeing her. She called 911 and sheriff's deputies arrived in moments. They forced their way into the house and disarmed Larry. Within the hour, he was in a psychiatric unit in a local hospital. When the deputy called me, it was 4 a.m.

Larry, Sue, and little Marie (not their real names) were church members, my friends. But they were also victims of legalized gambling. Larry had been secretly going to the casinos and playing video poker for months. But that night he lost thousands of dollars. In despair, he decided to end his life. Sue and Marie were as much the victim as Larry. What is tragic is that some "lucky" person won part of what Larry lost. That gambler bragged the next day about "getting lucky" at the riverboat. What he or she won almost cost a little girl her daddy. Gambling is evil. Give, work and vote to defeat it.

■ Have you read *Intimate Allies* by Dan Allender and Tremper Longman III? Published by Tyndale, this is one of the best books I've read in the past year on Christian marriage. It is balanced and goes beyond the obvious to the struggles of sustaining a marriage. It's interesting, too.

LUCIE HAGINS

Woman's Viewpoint

Renewal on the porch



'Tis spring! I can again enjoy my porch! It's here I have my quiet time early in the morning. No one is stirring to mar the quietness. Everyone needs a special time and place to draw nearer to the Lord for refueling — an infilling of His spiritual power.

Before I tell Him my problems or ask for forgiveness, I praise the Lord for His greatness and goodness, thanking Him for His saving grace, watch-care and love that casts out fear. I live alone but am not lonely, for His presence is with me. He has abundantly blessed me with a sweet family, dear friends, a good church, healthy body and mind, a positive nature and a love of life.

I recall the statement: "Happiness does not come from possessing rich blessings, but from the way we handle the things we are given to bear." I'm grateful that my Lord is all-powerful. Whenever I call on Him, He gives me the courage, strength and encouragement I need. I wonder — am I showing my love for Him, doing all He'd have me do?

Wait! I heard someone call. No one's here, but I heard my name! I'll be quiet and listen. There it is again!

"So, it's spring and freshness is all about: But what about you? Are you budding out anew, growing in your faith and obedience to My teachings? What about your commitments of time and talents, your prayer life and study of My word? Do these claim a propor-

tionate amount of your time?" My conscious now pricked, I listen.

"I know you enjoy your porch and had made plans for today, but My work is vast and needs are great. Like you, many out there are in the senior years. Unlike you, they're physically and spiritually low, crying for help. Go lend a listening ear. Share your time, love, cheer and comfort. You can make a real contribution. Your experience and wisdom enables you to tell others of My saving power. Get up now and get going!" A sense of missions flooded my being, but I am questioning as I hear the voice answering.

"You ask, 'Where to go?' I'll direct you. Whom to see? I'll tell you. What to say? I'll give you the words. What are you to do? Be trusting and tranquil, not anxious. Just listen; then follow and obey and leave the rest to Me. The greatest witness to My power is a growing Christian who is alert and listening, so spring into action! You'll find this day will go quite well, for service you do in My name will bring joy and real delight to your life."

Lucie Hagins is a member of Fordyce 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; a daughter-in-law, Kathy; and a grandson, Trey, who is a student at Baylor University.

Personal perspectives

"Reconciliation means giving up the power games and being vulnerable."

—Milton Ferguson, *president emeritus, Midwestern Seminary*

"Being a missionary is not the greatest calling. Being in the will of God is the greatest calling."

—Jimmy Draper, *president, Baptist Sunday School Board*

'Be imitators of God'

Are you ready for Easter? Please don't misunderstand. I'm not asking if you've bought cute little baskets with fake plastic grass and colorful toy eggs for your children or grandchildren. I'm not even talking about buying a new outfit to wear to church on Easter Sunday morning. My question is: Are you *truly* ready for Easter — spiritually ready?

Ephesians 5:1-2 challenges followers of Christ to "be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma."

What does it mean in your life to be an "imitator of God?" Roy Lamm, a member of my Sunday School class at First Church, Benton, had a memorable opportunity to be an imitator of God last December during the church's annual Christmas pageant. Like many other congregations throughout the state and nation, Benton's Christmas production included a dramatic depiction of Christ's death, burial and resurrection.

As the actor chosen to portray Jesus, Roy interpreted and imitated what the Son of God experienced from His trauma on the cross to His triumph over the grave. Roy's scenes depicted Christ dragging the cross toward Golgotha, being nailed to the cross and being buried in a borrowed tomb. The pageant also featured Christ's death-defying resurrection as well as an inspirational ascension scene where Roy "ascended" the steps of the choir loft

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR

By TRENNIS HENDERSON



which had been transformed into a heavenly setting complete with white-robed "angels" singing praises to God. It was an unforgettable, awe-inspiring performance.

But the nightly performances before a packed sanctuary of attentive observers weren't the ultimate highlight for Roy. A few days after the pageant concluded, Roy was relaxing in his living room, watching TV, when his 4-year-old son Ryne entered the room.

Ryne had watched numerous practices and performances in which his dad portrayed Jesus. Now it was Ryne's turn.

Slowly staggering across the room, Ryne had a toy gun slung over his shoulder, representing the cross. A "crown of thorns" ingeniously fashioned from a collapsible ball was perched on his head. As he neared the couch, Ryne "fell" beneath the weight of the cross. After a moment, he stood and

stretched out his arms as he was silently "nailed" to the cross. In his next scene, Ryne solemnly lay down on the floor/tomb with his hands across his chest until time for his "resurrection." Following that dramatic moment, he "ascended" the ladder of his Little Tikes slide and triumphantly stood atop the slide, welcoming future followers of Christ into "heaven."

What quietly transpired that evening in the Lamms' living room is symbolic of what Jesus Christ desires to occur in the life of every believer. Roy imitated Jesus Christ. Ryne, in turn, saw Christ in his father's life and joyfully chose to imitate his dad.

Are you ready for Easter? Can your family members, friends, co-workers and even casual acquaintances observe your daily life and clearly see a reflection of Christ in your attitudes and actions? "Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ," the apostle Paul urged in 1 Corinthians 11:1. It worked for Paul, it worked for Roy and it will work for you...if you are willing to be a faithful imitator of God

Jesus declared in John 12:32, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." Jesus was not only lifted up on the cross of Calvary to die for our sins; He also is lifted up through the lives of His followers as we seek to imitate His unconditional love and compassion.

"Be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love..." Is there any better way to prepare for Easter?

Holly lived life as a celebration

By Bobby Rankin

SBC Foreign Mission Board

RICHMOND, VA (BP)—Each time I visit a new country, one of my prayers is that the Lord will not allow me to exit as I entered but will change me in a significant way. I desire to know our missionaries and the peoples with whom they work and to understand more specifically how to intercede for them.

After spending three wonderful weeks in Togo, West Africa, in September, I came home with a mild case of malaria. This malady is common among our missionaries in many mosquito-infested areas. The Lord answered my prayer in helping me to understand how to pray for them, and I certainly returned in a condition different than when I arrived!

I was totally unprepared for the phone call on Oct. 14 from Betty Kay Yamaoka, associate area director for west Africa, telling us about the death of Holly Lamm. A missionary to the Ivory Coast, Holly, age 32, wife of Allen and mother of Amber, 9, and Luke, 7, had attended the last women's conference in Togo. I remember her not only as a beautiful and vivacious young missionary, but as a woman whose heart was sensitive and responsive to the Lord.

Holly contracted malaria and began to experience heart palpitations after her first dosage of medication. Whether from the malaria or some other complications, the palpitations became more severe, and she experienced cardiac arrest during the night.

Holly's testimony prior to their appointment to the Ivory Coast reflects her personal commitment to an unequivocal call to foreign missions. "The idea of missions excites me more than scares me," she said. "I believe my children will enjoy the mission field as well. We are a close family and love our prayer time together. They will see what God is doing firsthand and see people come to know the Lord as their Savior. They will also see how God can and will use them for the furtherance of His kingdom. The sacrifice is small compared to all that."

As I pause to remember Holly's death and to celebrate her life, I will ever be grateful that her life touched mine. Many unanswered questions remain, and the parallels of our lives evoke deep reflection on my part. Holly and I met in west Africa and both had our first brush with malaria. Mine was mild case with controllable palpitations; her case was more severe and life-threatening. At 32 years of age I, like Holly, was a missionary with two children — a daughter, age 9, and a son, age 7. I came home to America, but Holly went to sleep and woke up in her heavenly home on my birthday.

May we always be aware of the precious gift of life given to each of us and to our families and friends. May Holly's testimony encourage us to share the life of Christ and His love in the world in which we live. Let us celebrate life where God has placed each of us, recognizing, "In him was life; and the life was the light of men" (John 1:4).

'Risking the journey'

WMU annual meeting participants examine risks, rewards of missions service



Author and speaker Barbara Joiner (above) of Columbiana, Ala., led "Risk the Journey" theme interpretations during the Arkansas WMU annual meeting March 15-16. Mary Helen Dixon (right), national WMU foundation development specialist, told participants that "as you continue to go for Jesus, He will give you the needed power."

Risk the Journey was the theme for the 107th annual meeting of Arkansas Woman's Missionary Union held March 15-16 at East Side Church in Fort Smith.

State WMU president Barbara Wikman was re-elected to office for another year, as were vice president Nadean Bell of Bella Vista and recording secretary Donna Fine of Fort Smith.

"I'll Risk the Journey," written by Camille Simmons, was used in worship and praise sessions to emphasize session themes of risking the journey ...to love ...to serve ...to tell and ...to go. Simmons, a Southern Baptist home missionary, was director of the musical sessions which included special music by Kerry Lorey, Phyllis Portmann and Teri Morfe, a ladies trio, and the adult choir of the host church.

"Jesus commanded us to love as He loved - unconditionally," declared Bible study leader Bruce Tippitt, pastor of Fianna Hills Church in Fort Smith. "How did He learn such love? He learned from His heavenly Father who so loved that He gave His only begotten Son."

God's Word says individuals are loved unconditionally, allowing His creative power to be released through them, Tippitt pointed out.

"The Word says to love. What is my response?" he asked. "He would not tell me to love if He had not equipped, enabled and prepared me to apply it. If the Word says to love, be assured of His ability to supply you what you need to do what He says."

"Jesus commanded us to love as He loved - unconditionally,"

- Bruce Tippitt
Pastor, Fianna Hills Church
Fort Smith



"What good will it do for you to love?" he continued. "By this all people will know you are God's disciples. Yes, you may even appear foolish to some but you will still be

known as His disciple if you continuously do what the Word says - love them."

The risk to love was further emphasized by national Woman's Missionary Union Foundation development specialist Mary Helen Dixon.

"In the year since SBC WMU took the risk and established a foundation, we have tried to assist states like your partnership state, Iowa, with funding for such events as Acteens Encounters and Girls in Action camps, giving them the opportunity to see a 'real live missionary,'" she explained. "The gospel not only has been shared in the United States but in other countries since the WMU Foundation was established and as monies become available we plan to broaden our language mission work."

Calling attention to a dime in her hand, she urged participants to let the "In God We Trust" be their guide, trusting Him to provide the means for them to place WMU in their wills, providing the opportunity for others to hear the gospel.

Dixon commended WMU members for their ministry to missionary kids, for their upcoming participation in the Atlanta Olympics and for involvement in short-term volunteer mission projects. "As you continue to go for Jesus, He will give you the needed power to continue even if you are weary," she said.

Risking Something New...Christian Women's Job Corps was highlighted by Simmons, a missionary in San Antonio, Texas, a pilot area for the new ministry.

Simmons said that the new ministry effort is designed to help impoverished women overcome their financial problems. "We are planning to work with these individuals to train them to work and change that cycle of poverty," she explained.

"Each woman who receives help will have a spiritual mentor...who will walk by her side through thick and thin," Simmons noted. "This is the difference in what we can do and what the government or others cannot do."

The Riverside Church in San Antonio began its pilot ministry in January with six women. As they receive work training, they also attend meetings which include Bible study and support group classes, as well as sessions with their mentors. Similar pilot projects are being conducted in five other states.

"The Christian Women's Job Corps will be successful because Women on Mission care and are willing to assist in equipping individuals," Simmons concluded. "They



know each person is a special one that God has created."

Participants also heard testimonies from the four 1995-96 Acteens panelists about how Acteens has affected their lives.

Jennifer Croft, a member of Calvary Church in Little Rock, noted, "Whenever I think of Acteens, I think of missions. I've done a lot of missions projects during the time I've been in Acteens."

One of her favorite ministries is visiting residents in a senior adult center. She said the "goody bags" she delivers "help them know God loves them and so do I."

Croft emphasized that "Acteens is a great way for girls to get involved in our communities and our churches...because you really learn how to serve God and learn about missionaries and the way they serve."

Allison Kemmer, a member of First Church in Brinkley, said Acteens "is a time to fellowship with my Christian friends and learn how to support missionaries.

"Missionaries are the light to the world and so am I through Acteens," Kemmer added. "I know that Acteens can change the lives of people and youth throughout our world. I am with a group of girls who believe that God is important and real. I want others to know that the awesome God I serve can change their lives, too."

Misty Rosinbaum, a member of First Church in Benton, said that through her involvement in Acteens, "I've grown closer to Christ through Bible study, mission action and missions studies."

Because of her experience on Activator trips to Iowa and Germany, she said, "I've seen how much we as Acteens can change the world."

Sarah Walker, a member of Glendale Church in Boonville, said she has learned through Acteens that "missions is a part of my daily life and not just something that happens in a far-off country." Urging WMU members to support Acteens, she said, "It takes teamwork and that's what we are — a team serving Christ."

Kaye Miller, a member of Immanuel Church in Little Rock, encouraged WMU members to support "missionary kids," children of foreign missionaries, when they return to the United States.

Miller, whose parents were Southern Baptist medical missionaries, noted that "being a missionary kid is a mixed bag: you get to learn several languages...you get to see the world, but ending up with a feeling of rootlessness affects most MKs — I'm from here, I'm from there."

As slides of MKs flashed across twin screens behind her, Miller urged members to be like a woman from WMU who came to visit her on Parent's Day while she was a student at college. "I didn't know her, but she showed me love."

Ketner praises members, urges fight against gambling proposals

"You have made a world of difference as you participated in missions through the work of Woman's Missionary Union," Julia Ketner told Arkansas WMU members during her annual executive board report. Ketner, executive director of Arkansas WMU, cited national ministry projects, missions offerings and personal ministries as examples of the impact being made through WMU.

She began her report by recommending that members approve a \$750,000 goal for the 1996 Dixie Jackson State Missions Offering. The goal, which was approved by a show of hands from participants, is a \$25,000 increase over last year's goal.

"In 1995, you made a difference in meeting hunger needs...through WMU's first national ministry project, Project HELP: Hunger," Ketner pointed out. She said Arkansas Baptists gave 46,899 cans of food and \$12,146 toward a national effort which totaled more than 1.24 million cans of food and \$378,673.

Emphasizing WMU's 1996 national project, Project HELP: AIDS, she noted, "You have risked the journey in the area of AIDS education and ministry and have been willing to follow Christ's model of ministry, even in the midst of opposition. I commend you for the step of faith...you took to become involved."

Ketner also told members that they "helped make a world of difference through the special mission offerings as you led Arkansas Baptists to give a record amount to the Dixie Jackson, Annie Armstrong and Lottie Moon offerings," for a state total of \$4,777,968.

"To each of the three offerings, Arkansas Baptists gave more in '95 than in '94," she noted. "Thank you for the important role you played in leading your churches to grow in their missions giving to these three special mission offerings."

Highlighting the state missions offering, she said that although "we just voted \$750,000 to be this year's Dixie Jackson Offering goal...we need to give \$800,000 to this year's state missions offering."

"An additional \$50,000 is needed to help relocate the Migrant Mission Center in Hope. The government is in the process of moving the Rest Center and Educational Center from its present location to a site

on I-30 in Hope," she explained.

Praising partnership missions efforts of WMU members, she said, "You helped make a difference in partnership missions with Iowa WMU and the European Baptist Convention in '95." She noted that WMU members sent a camp team for an Iowa Girls in Action camp, sent volunteers for a women's retreat in Europe and a team of Activators and sponsors to participate in witnessing ministries in Germany.

Ketner recognized the work of a group who participated in a Mississippi River Ministry project and members of the state Baptist Nursing Fellowship chapter.

She also thanked participants who work in missions education groups.

"You have made a world of difference... but there is still much work to be done."

— Julia Ketner
Arkansas WMU
Executive Director

"Without a strong commitment to growth in new members and organizations," she said, "Southern Baptists could soon be without a missions force or a missions conscience in the local church — a role that has been Woman's Missionary Union's for nearly 108 years.

"But there is still much work to be done," she added. "A serious issue faces Arkansas this year — legalized gambling.

"Gambling proponents have offered six proposals for the expansion of legalized gambling in our state," she warned. "Proposals that will establish a statewide lottery, approve as many as 20 casinos in our state, allow slot machines and electronic games of chance at hotels and malls statewide and legalize charitable bingo and raffles."

She urged members to support the work of the Christian Civic Foundation of Arkansas and Christian Civic Action Committee, which oppose the gambling proposals. Ways to combat gambling, she said, include financial help of anti-gambling efforts, educating others and "getting our church members out to vote 'no' to all proposals.

"This is another opportunity for us to do missions, to truly be women on mission making a difference in our state," she said. "If we gamble with the future of our children and our state, we will lose."

Ketner concluded her report by asking members to participate in sending food to drought-stricken North Korea. The feeding effort, a joint project with Arkansas Brotherhood members, seeks to send 500 boxes of food to North Korea in April.



Arkansans recount personal volunteer efforts

Participants at the Woman's Missionary Union annual meeting heard several testimonies from fellow Arkansans who have participated in recent volunteer missions projects.

Donna Fine, state WMU recording secretary and member of Immanuel Church in Fort Smith, told of her church's foot care ministry to senior adults launched in 1983 with five people. The ministry now has about 35 participants.

Noting that feet are the first thing to hit the floor each morning and carry an individual down the aisle to make a profession of faith, Fine said feet are mentioned many times in the Bible, including the ministry of Jesus to His disciples.

"These people to whom we have ministered have become our friends and part of our extended family," she said. "We invite them to our church but our goal is to listen to them." She said the ministry volunteers "are rewarded each time they say, 'I can't believe you will do this for me.'"

Acknowledging that "we are taking a risk to serve," Fine added, "It would certainly be a risk if we didn't."

John and Barbara Wikman, members of Fianna Hills Church in Fort Smith, shared their 1995 volunteer experiences to India. They previously had served for seven years as Southern Baptist foreign missionaries, laying the groundwork for a hospital.

The Wikmans, who relieved furloughing missionary Rebecca Naylor, said upon their return to India they experienced a roller coaster of emotions ranging from sadness because of the masses of people



Dorothy Humphrey, a Little Rock beautician, shared about her volunteer mission trip to Africa, noting that "God had a place for me."

living in poverty to the joy of seeing the children to whom they had ministered now actively involved as adults in sharing the gospel of Christ.

Mrs. Wikman, state WMU president, said the cries of a newborn baby in the hospital reminded her of her purpose of service, recalling Christ's words, "I came that you might have life."

Dr. Wikman said that his greatest joy came as he found that their prior ministry efforts had been accepted and many churches had been established.

"In these 25 years this work has been used by the Lord for compassionate ministry and service," Mrs. Wikman noted. "The Bible talks about reaching, preaching and healing. Jesus is still doing that through our work in India."

Volunteer efforts through the European-

Arkansas missions partnership were highlighted by Carolyn Shell of Clinton.

Shell, who traveled to Germany as a Bible study leader, recalled, "I had decided, after much praying, that the book of Ruth was what I needed to teach from because as a widow in a foreign country, she and her mother-in-law, Naomi, had risked a journey, returning to their native land.

"I later realized, after learning of the tragedies of a German girl, that it wasn't wisdom, intellectual knowledge or talent these people needed," Shell continued. "God had sent me there to let someone know I was available to...be a friend."

Beautician Dorothy Humphrey, a member of Greater Grace Church in Little Rock, said she "risked the journey to go to Africa."

When presented with an opportunity to travel to Africa with a mission team, she said that despite a lack of funds, "I knew that God had a place for me and I asked that if it was His will, I'd go. I didn't have no money, but I believed that everything I asked for in prayer, He would give it to me. I believed that."

When she arrived in Africa, she found that most of the Africans responded well to her color. She noted that one man remarked, "You are like us' because my face is black."

Sensing God's leadership to witness in the streets, she found Africans who could speak English and helped her witness. Noting that "everybody was running" to hear her testimony, she added, "I had

Missionaries, Iowa WMU leader share 'field reports' during

The 1996 Woman's Missionary Union annual meeting was punctuated by testimonies of home and foreign missionaries and the president of Iowa WMU recounting how they "risked the journey" for missions.

Describing her call to foreign missions, Pattye Box shared how she and her husband "risked the journey" to serve as missionaries in Germany. "I didn't know what God had in store for me," she recalled. "I didn't know He would permit me to be a missionary to the entire world."

Box, a former missionary to Malaysia, said she found an "extreme contrast" between the Malaysian and German cultures. "The greatest adjustment of my life was to try to adjust to Germany," she acknowledged.

"Definitely we felt like we were among the wolves because of the sophisticated and intellectual society," Box noted.

"These are a people that are so hardened and wrapped up in intellectualism in a battle with God."

She reported successful witnessing efforts among refugees in Germany. "Not only is God working among the Germans, but God is using all the years of disaster and war in Africa to bring Africa to Germany. There is no place on earth better than being a missionary in Germany in these days because that is where the world is coming."

Many conference participants were visibly moved by the testimony of Phyllis Poe, a chaplain with the Oklahoma City Police Department, who comforted and counseled rescue workers, victims and families following last year's bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma City.

Describing the aftermath of the April 19 bombing as "the worst thing I had ever

seen in my life," Poe added, "I want you to know and be proud of Southern Baptists because within 45 minutes, there were eight trained fire and police Southern Baptist chaplains doing ministry in front of the worst terrorist act in our nation's history. That's something we need to be proud of and praise God for that."

Poe, who ministers as a chaplain along with her husband, Jack, said they could not have accomplished what they did without the faithful prayers of fellow Christians. "I am here to thank you for those prayers and ask you to not stop," she said. "We desperately need your prayers in Oklahoma City as we try to heal."

Emphasizing that "all around you are those who are hurting and need you to touch them," she added, "I want to challenge you tonight to reach out and touch others."



Personal testimonies highlight impact of AIDS ministry project

Highlighting Project HELP: AIDS, a national Woman's Missionary Union ministry project, Trudy Smith shared challenges she has faced as volunteer state coordinator for the effort. The project is designed to share the gospel with AIDS patients while ministering to both physical and spiritual needs.

Noting that she first remained aloof toward HIV/AIDS patients while working with an internist in Little Rock, Smith said the prompting of the "still small voice of God" to care as Jesus would do eventually led her to begin attending AIDS support meetings.

"I felt compelled to view this disease and its effects as a Christian," she said. "Over the next several years I volunteered with AIDS agencies." When she learned that the national WMU ministry project for 1995-96 would focus on AIDS ministry, Smith told state WMU executive director Julia Ketter of her desire to be involved in the project. Since that time, she has visited churches throughout Arkansas, speaking about the disease and encouraging individuals to participate in the ministry project.

Describing the risk one takes in ministering to AIDS patients, Smith said the risk is not in being exposed to the virus but being involved with people who have different values and beliefs. "The risk is to my heart, not my health...to see people as Jesus sees them and hurt with Him as people He loves and values are ridiculed, despise and rejected while they are sick, afraid and dying...people who need His touch, His love and His hope in the face of death."

As a result of her personal involvement, Smith said she has not only seen the physical pain of an AIDS patient, but has helped reconcile the patient with family members. "It is a sobering thought to know I am spiritually responsible for this person I have come to love. It is a risk that hurts as he makes the final preparation to die."

"So, why take the risk?" Smith asked. "Because I know it is an area where the Lord is moving. I have been given much and my heart is full from taking the risk to love."

Smith received a plaque of appreciation from Arkansas WMU for her leadership in the Project Help: AIDS effort in which she has shared information with 3,000 individuals.

Willis Bell, an AIDS patient, risked the journey "to Tell" during a Friday

evening interview conducted by Russell Dilday, associate editor of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*.

Bell noted that he had been raised in a Christian home in Des Arc and became a Christian at age 15. "In college I was involved in the work of Baptist Student Union, serving as a student missionary to Germany in 1983, 1985 and 1986."

Other interview questions and responses included:

■ When did you learn of your illness? "Seven years ago, first thinking I had leukemia, but later finding out it was AIDS."

■ What were your thoughts when you found you had the virus? "There was first fear, then how to tell my family and then thoughts of what the future would be like, knowing there would be suffering and death."

■ How did your family respond? "They were scared and feared how people would treat me, but came to the hospital to assure me of their love."

■ How have Baptist friends responded? "Some nurses at the hospital hugged me and let people know there was no danger. I have had some who refused to let their youth go on trips with me and even close friends who have not come by."

■ How has the disease affected you? "It has changed my life and life perspectives. It has taught me that now is the time to live. I have found that we as Americans are fortunate to have what we have and have discovered what is important to me."

■ And that is? "That medically, the doctors can't tell my future. Mathematically, I should have died in December 1994. However, I know God is the one who is going to take care of me and that is something that I am looking forward to - meeting Him and knowing He will understand."

■ What would you like our prayers for you to be? "Pray that every day I will understand God's love, that I will feel His warmth and most of all pray for my family that has been burdened because of what I did."

Barbara Joiner, who led session theme interpretations, commended Willis for his willingness to share with Arkansas WMU. "I salute you Willis and thank you for sharing with us," she said. "I am going to remember and I know those here in attendance will remember to pray daily for you and your family."

never seen anything like it my life. They wanted to hear about Jesus.

"I went on faith and He took care of me," she said. "Keep on praying for me 'cause I plan on going again."

John Bell, a member of Bella Vista Church, recalled how he and his wife, Arkansas WMU vice president Nadean Bell, traveled to Germany to lead conferences for the European Baptist Convention.

"When his wife told him she had been invited to lead the session, 'I said, 'I think that's great.' She said, 'You don't understand. I want you to go, too.'"

"I had some real concerns about that," he recalled, citing concerns about "taking off two weeks," preparation time and language differences.

When he arrived in Interlaken, Switzerland, to teach a conference on Total Quality Management, the conference material he had sent ahead "wasn't there and nobody was really sure where it was." Prayer was the answer, he said, and the materials were located.

Bell said the teaching trip reminded him of Philippians 4:19 - "And it is He who supplies all your needs according to His glorious riches, because of Christ Jesus."

Other volunteer efforts highlighted through skits included the Arkansas Acteens Activators team who worked in Germany and the ministry of the Arkansas Baptist Nursing Fellowship. Sandra and Allison Kemmer of Brinkley highlighted the Acteens ministry, noting the excited response of the German children to their teaching efforts. Donna Cheatham of Russellville was the spokesman for the Baptist Nursing Fellowship, which was involved in ministry projects in Romania, Honduras, Georgia, Louisiana and Arkansas.

annual meeting

Sarah Keyes, the president of Iowa WMU, shared a report about Southern Baptist ministry efforts in her state. She told Arkansas WMU members, "You have been such a part of what is happening in our state" through the Arkansas-Iowa missions partnership.

"This partnership has meant so much and you have been so committed," she said. "So many of the ministries, missions and church starts that we have had in the past year are because of your support. Thank you on behalf of Iowa Baptists for your commitment and support, both spiritually and financially."

Keyes said that although more than 30 new churches and missions have been started in Iowa, Baptist work still needs help. "We have 99 counties in the state of Iowa. Forty-six of those counties are still without Southern Baptist works."

During Jerry Cound's brief life, he received two heart transplants, completed a college education and competed all over the globe in the World Transplant Olympics. He was only 25 when heart failure claimed his life March 15 while playing basketball on vacation in Valencia, Spain.

In addition to hurdling huge medical obstacles and establishing a world-class athletic record, Jerry also is remembered by friends, fellow church members and family for his dynamic testimony of faith.

"He had a heart for people and he had a heart for God and His righteousness," commented Adam Jordan, who attended junior high school, Sunday School and Ouachita Baptist University with Jerry. "In everything he did, that seemed like what he was after."

Sharing his testimony during the 1995 Arkansas State Youth Convention in Little Rock, Jerry noted that "sports and church" were his two passions growing up. A member of Park Hill Church in North Little Rock, he said that "I was always involved with my church with mission projects and Bible studies. I went to Canada and Guatemala with different missions trips. Growing up those were the two main influences on my life."

"I come from a very athletic family," Jerry told the statewide gathering of Baptist young people. "My father was a tremendous athlete....set some state records in track and field and played basketball and baseball." Jerry's older brother, Mike, and sister, Chela, also played college sports.

'A great attitude'

Jerry's faith was often evident while playing sports, especially basketball, Jordan recalled. "On the court, he had a great attitude. I never saw him get mad."

Jordan described Jerry's playing style as "aggressive. He was real quick and a real team player."

One of Jerry's deepest wishes was to excel in sports like his father and siblings, but a heart disease contracted as a child damaged his heart muscles, excluding him from school sports.

"At two weeks old, I had a virus...that went to my heart and almost killed me," he noted last year. "But I survived and it left some scar tissue on the heart in a condition...basically a weakened heart muscle. So growing up I had this heart condition but I never would admit it to anybody. I never admitted it even to myself."

"He didn't want other people talking to



Transplant athlete's life is testimony to his faith

By Russell N. Dilday, Associate Editor

him about his problems," said his father, Gerald Cound. "He didn't want them to consider him any different than anybody else. Jerry's heart was tough. I think he knew tough love."

"To be honest, that's the script we wrote as a family," said the elder Cound. "We emphasized early on we weren't going to treat Jerry differently than we treated our other children. There was no reason to complain about things."

"So I never heard Jerry complain about anything," his dad continued. "Even in the depths of his toughest times, he never once...complained."

A physical examination prior to junior high school showed that his heart "was working on about 25 percent of what it should be working on," said Jerry. "It was just compensating and...working harder than it should." The tests showed "that I didn't need to compete in junior high athletics. I was very upset and very disappointed. I wanted to follow in my brother's and sister's footsteps and even set some of my own records like my father had."

Despite being unable to compete in school athletics, "I was still playing church basketball and YMCA basketball," he said.

Luke Flesher, minister of pastoral care

for Park Hill and Jerry's former youth minister at Park Hill, observed Jerry's dedication while playing church basketball. "Whatever he did, it was never 100 percent. It was always 120 percent. He always dove into the bleachers" going after a basketball.

Jerry's life was interrupted again when, at age 15, "I got sick and went into the hospital with pneumonia" and other complications, he shared during his testimony. "I was basically on my death-bed and getting worse. Then they diagnosed heart failure."

Jerry was taken to Houston, where doctors decided to transplant a new heart. Describing that experience as "tough," Jerry said, "The month before, I had been playing basketball. I had my own little lawn mowing service. And all of a sudden I was down and out."

He received his new heart June 1, 1986. In Jerry's words, "everything went well for five years." He continued to be active and participated in the World Transplant Olympics in Singapore in 1989, the same year he enrolled at Ouachita Baptist University. His primary events at the Olympic competitions, said his father, were running as well as competing in volleyball.

Jerry again participated in the World Transplant Olympics in 1991 in Budapest, Hungary. Following the games, he recalled, "I got sick. We thought I just had a little bug. But I passed out in my apartment. My roommate said I quit breathing for about 30 seconds."

The next morning he was back in Houston. "They told me I might have another transplant. They said the only reason they would give me one is if they found the perfect heart."

On Sept. 23, 1991, doctors told Jerry they had found that heart. "I came through and got a stronger, healthier heart."

During a bout with rejection the next month, he experienced a low point in his recovery. "I was laying there in bed one day and was just feeling terrible and was crying in my bed."

"He almost gave up. There came a time when I got very angry and threatened to throw him out of bed," Gerald Cound laughed. "We both cried. After a day or two, things straightened out. He had gotten to a point where he wasn't sure he wanted to continue everything, but I needed his fighting spirit to make things go."

"I said, 'God, just let me die,'" Jerry recalled. "Why do you keep putting me through this? Let me go. I'm ready. The

next thing I knew I was waking up and was feeling fine and from that point on I got better and better."

He returned to OBU the next semester. Ouachita classmate Wade Tomlinson met Jerry when Tomlinson and one of Jerry's close friends, Brian McKinney, took Jerry home following his second operation. Tomlinson said he noticed then that Jerry's "heart's desire was to live life to its fullest."

"That meant taking risks, being open to friends and to people regardless of who they were," he said. "I remember coming home from Houston, Jerry said, 'This heart might last five years.' Even though he didn't talk about it a lot, he knew he wasn't going to live forever."

Jerry's recovery was hampered when personal tragedy struck his family in February 1991. "I got a call from my father. My mother had passed away. My mother was the angel in my life. Losing my mother was a tough thing. It was a lot tougher than any transplant or surgery."

Jerry went on to participate in more U.S. and World Transplant Games. He also was chosen by Gov. Jim Guy Tucker to represent the state at the National Victory Celebration in Washington, D.C., in 1993.

'Life is good'

Jerry graduated from Ouachita in 1994 and began work as the fitness director for the Downtown Little Rock YMCA. He also used his testimony to speak to church and civic groups.

"Life is good," he told an estimated 3,000 youth at last year's State Youth Convention. "Life is very good for me. I'm very blessed. Each year I've traveled to the World Transplant Olympics. I've been to Singapore, Budapest, Vancouver and England and all over the U.S."

"Just like my father, although I wasn't able to set records in college, I was able to set my own records in both world and national Transplant Olympics."

"Every day I have to deal with different trials," he explained to the youth. "I don't know why God has allowed me to live this long. But I try to live life to the fullest and try to give God my all and I hope I do."

"He sensed every moment was valuable, and he was ready," said Fleisher. "I think as time went along, he matured and came to an awareness that his life was fragile, but he never focused on that."

"His spirit testified to who he was," commented Jordan. "There was so much evidence in his life of the Lord and His purpose."

Confidently sharing that perspective, Jerry quoted Psalm 73:26 to participants at the State Youth Convention. "My heart and my flesh may fail," he acknowledged, "but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever."

Super Summer to offer separate sessions for junior, senior high

Students in sixth through 12th grades will learn how to "Shine" at Super Summer evangelism schools during two sessions at Ouachita Baptist University in June. Students in ninth through 12th grades will attend Super Summer Arkansas June 16-20 and students who have completed sixth through eighth grades will attend Super Summer JV June 20-22.

Randy Brantley, Super Summer executive director, said that offering the separate schools is a "change in format" from single sessions held since 1985.

By offering two sessions, "students will no longer be turned away," he explained. "Everyone applying to Super Summer Arkansas will be housed two per room on the OBU campus."

He said that holding two sessions will give students and leaders "more specialized training, youth leaders will be able to take students to two camps and be away only one week" and that involvement will be "more economical," noting that "a family with a junior high and senior high student can send both to Super Summer for \$145, not \$190."

Brantley said that the program for the older students will resemble those of previous years and include "in-depth training in personal holiness, campus evangelism, development of positive relationships with

parents, peers and siblings and leadership development training."

The younger students, he said, "will learn the basics of salvation, quiet time Bible study, prayer and personal soul winning...through fun and action-packed teaching that will guide each student to a richer level of Christian maturity."

The program also will feature a Youth Ministry School for youth workers and also will feature separate curricula for workers with older and younger students.

The cost for Super Summer Arkansas is \$95 per person for those registering from churches in Arkansas and \$115 per person for those registering from out-of-state churches by May 24. After May 24, a \$15 late registration fee will be added. The cost includes all meals, lodging, materials and recreation fees.

The cost for Super Summer JV is \$50 per person for in-state churches and \$60 per person for out-of-state churches. After May 24, a \$15 late registration fee also will be added. The cost includes all meals, lodging, materials and recreation fees.

For more information or to request a registration packet, contact Brantley at the Arkansas Baptist State Convention evangelism department toll-free in state at 1-800-838-ABSC or locally at 376-4791, ext. 5222.

RA Congress to focus on fun, missions in new co-ed format

Boys and girls in grades one through six will participate in missions and track events, camping and race cars events as well as hear from the national power lifting champion at the 43rd Royal Ambassador Congress April 26-27 at Ouachita Baptist University.

Harry Black, director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Brotherhood department, noted that RA Congress is open "to all Lads, Crusaders, workers, friends and fans" of participants. Following "new trends in RAs," he added, "Congress is now co-ed. Male and female RAs and counselors are welcome and will be eligible to participate in all events."

Black added that he is "excited" about the Friday evening program which features national power lifting champion Paul Wrenn of Clarksville, Tenn. "His weight lifting demonstration and personal testimony will be high points of this year's program," said Black.

Other Friday events will include Lad and Crusader car racers, Speak Outs, Lad

tug-of-war, Crusader basketball and open gym and free swim time.

Saturday's program will include a missions emphasis, track and field events at OBU's Williams field and an awards ceremony at 2 p.m.

Black asked RA leaders to pre-register and added that pre-registering churches will receive 100 bonus points toward their competition total.

Participants must bring their own bedding and personal items. Separate lodging for boys and girls is available in campus facilities, but Black said that many participating churches choose to camp in the Congress "Tent City."

The cost for the Congress is \$13 per person and includes a chevron patch, dinner Friday and breakfast and lunch on Saturday.

For more information or to register, contact Black at the ABSC Brotherhood department toll-free in state at 1-800-838-ABSC or locally in Little Rock at 376-4791, ext. 5158.

Staff changes

Jeffery Scott Junyor began his ministry March 24 as pastor of First Church of Fisher, coming there from Walnut Ridge where he has been a residence hall director and sound coordinator for Williams Baptist College. He previously served as pastor of Ravenden Church which ordained him to the gospel ministry. A native of Lepanto, Junyor is a graduate of Williams Baptist College. He is married to the former Cynthia Marie Phillips of Ash Flat. They have two children, Joshua Andrew and Katelyn Nicole.

Paul Parker retired April 1 as pastor of Scotland Church. He previously was pastor of Victory Church in Conway and First Baptist Church of Seminole, N.M. He also served for 21 years as a minister of music and education. He is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University. He and his wife, Betty, have two children, Denise and Steven. Parker will be available to serve as a pulpit supply, interim pastor or in special volunteer missions projects. He may be contacted at 132 Canterbury Road, Fairfield Bay, AR 72088; phone 501-884-3805.

Thomas Daniel Baxter joined the staff of Geyer Springs First Church in Little Rock April 1 as minister of music, coming there from Sherwood Church in Albany, Ga., where he has served as associate pastor/minister of music since March 1990. He also has been a staff member of churches in Texas and Alabama. Baxter is a graduate of Samford University in Birmingham, Ala., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Cindy, have two children, Brittney and Bracey.

Bob Barnes is pastor of Gulon Church in Rocky Bayou Association. He was recently licensed to the ministry by Franklin Church where he was a member.

Joe Acuff is serving as interim pastor of Walnut Valley Church of Hot Springs. He is a member of Barcelona Road Church, Hot Springs Village.

Steve Mullen is serving as interim pastor of First Church in Piggott. He is an assistant professor at Williams Baptist College.

Paul Root of Arkadelphia is serving as interim music director of Beech Street Church in Gurdon. Root is a professor at Ouachita Baptist University.

David William Burgess of Malvern has accepted the call to serve as minister of education/music and staff evangelist at Lake Hamilton Church in Hot Springs. He previously has served other Arkansas churches. Burgess attended the University of Arkansas. His wife, Shirley, is serving



ARKANSAS ALL OVER

By MILLIE GIU

the Lake Hamilton Church as secretary. They are parents of four adult children.

Mark Keyes will join the staff of First Church in Fordyce April 7 as minister of youth, coming there from Crestmont Church in Burleson, Texas. Keyes, who also has served as a youth camp director, is a former youth and recreation intern for First Church of Ruston, La. Keyes is a graduate of Louisiana Tech University in Ruston and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is married to the former Tiffani Barber. They have a son, Britton.

David Burris will join the staff of Grace Church in Camden April 7 as youth director. A native of Flippin, he is a student at Ouachita Baptist University, majoring in religious education.

Tim Blann will join the staff of Second Church in Little Rock April 21 as minister of worship and music, coming there from Taylor Memorial Church in Hobbs, N.M. He previously served on the staff of Eudora Church, Geyer Springs First Church in Little Rock and Park Place Church in Hot

Spings. In addition, he has been a high school choral director in Greenville, Miss., and Hot Springs, and the choral director and music instructor at Garland County Community College. Blann, a native of Dermott, is a graduate of Mississippi State University, Starkville, Miss., Ouachita Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Joan, have two daughters, Beverly and Barbara.

Wesley Freeman of Houston, Mo., has accepted the call to serve as associate pastor of First Church in Corning. A senior at Williams Baptist College, he will serve the Corning church in a part-time position until his graduate in May. Freeman and his wife, Codi, have a son, Andrew.

Damon Martin has joined the staff of Claud Road Church in Pine Bluff as minister to youth. He is a freshman at Ouachita Baptist University, majoring in biblical studies.

Tim Carpenter resigned March 17 as pastor of Nimrod Church in Conway-Perry Association. A graduate of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, he will be available to serve as a supply preacher or as an interim pastor. Carpenter and his wife, Dianna, reside at 614 McClendon, Hot Springs, AR 71901; phone 501-624-7550.

Dennis Bell resigned March 24 as minister of education and outreach at Second



First Church of Almyra recently celebrated its 100th anniversary with a weekend of activities that included preaching, fellowship meals and musical sessions featuring gospel singer Squire Parsons. The Almyra church, which began in 1896, currently meets in debt-free facilities that include a worship center with a seating capacity of 275, a fellowship area and educational space. Special guests and speakers included (back row, left to right) former pastors Delton Cooper, Don Hubbard and Ray Huddleston, former interim pastor Tom Logue and pastor Gregg Greenway; and (front row, left to right) former pastors Walter Hill, Dean Newberry, Graham Fowler and Coy Sample.

ARKANSAS BAPTISTS

Church of El Dorado to serve as minister of education and administration at First Baptist Church of Yukon, Okla. He previously has served on the staff of churches in Texas. A native of Hot Springs, he is a graduate of Henderson State University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Bell and his wife, Julie, are parents of two children, Steven and Marissa.

Gary Hawkins recently resigned as pastor of Thornburg Church and the Mission Service Corps of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board to become pastor of First Church of Dover, Okla.

Church news

Gosnell Church held a revival March 3-8 that resulted in 18 professions of faith and four additions by letter. Ben Rogers was evangelist and Dwayne Boudier directed music. Eddie Clemons is pastor.

Central Church in North Little Rock held a recent one-day revival that resulted in 29 professions of faith, 20 baptisms, one commitment to special service and 30 rededications. William Blackburn of Fort Smith was evangelist. Music was directed by minister of music Bruce Rodnick. Bryan Webb is pastor.

Siloam Springs First Church broke ground March 31 for a 34,000-square-foot facility that is estimated to cost more than \$2 million. The service took place at the corner of Dawn Hill Road and Highway 43 North where the church has purchased 20 acres of land to relocate from downtown Siloam Springs. The new facility will include a temporary worship center, an education/preschool wing, a family life center and church offices. Steve Abbott is pastor.

Victory Church of Jacksonville will have volunteers from the Church in a Day organization at the church April 12-13 to construct a 6,000-square-foot building which will house a new worship center and educational space. The church will host a potluck dinner April 12 at 6:30 p.m. that will be followed by a special service at which details of the construction will be explained and testimonies will be shared. Actual construction of the new building will begin at sunrise Saturday morning with construction expected to be completed by sunset. Other volunteer craftsmen are invited to participate and may receive additional information by contacting pastor Elton Baillentine at 501-945-9496 or Danny Coen at 501-982-1421.

Stephens First Church recently honored Ethel Sheldon Davis, a member since 1926, on her 91st birthday with a surprise potluck

luncheon. In a brief program, Grace Hall recognized Davis for her years of service to the church which included singing in the choir for 70 years. John Blase is pastor.

Charleston First Church will observe 150 years of ministry with an anniversary celebration and Bible conference May 31-June 2. Speakers for the observance will include former pastors Gene Ryan, C.E. Hansford and Larry Home, Concord Association director of missions Nelson Wilhelm and Arkansas Baptist State Convention executive director Emil Turner. Mike Love is pastor.

Beech Street First Church of Texarkana will hold an "Experiencing God" lay renewal weekend April 25-28 with Don Gibson of the Baptist General Convention of Texas as coordinator, assisted by Randy Whitley. Wayne Williams will be general chairman. Roy Parker is pastor.

Pine Bluff First Church, in a recent called business meeting, voted to relocate to its south Hazel Street property and authorized the relocation committee to offer its current Cherry Street property for sale. The committee also was authorized to select and hire an architect, establish a building fund and to select an appropriate method of fund raising. Ken Buckner is relocation committee chairman.

South Side Church in Pine Bluff's 38-member youth and adult ministry team recently ministered at the Joy Fellowship Mission, an inner-city mission located in a Hispanic community in Houston, Texas. The group did some painting and repairing of the building, worked in the mission's clothes closet and did automotive repair, as well as worked with preschoolers and infants during worship services and helped in the mission's feeding program. Kasper Hines, minister of education and youth, organized the trip. J.R. DeBusk is pastor.

Siloam Springs First Church recently launched a G.R.A.C.E. (Giving Respect and Care Effectively) ministry. Participants will seek to meet the needs of those who do not have a spouse by providing more personal care and communicating special needs to the church's pastor and staff. The program also will involve the deacons in the ministry efforts.

North Crossett First Church Brotherhood recently began a ministry to widows, handicapped individuals and others with special needs as a result of a Needs Assessment Survey coordinated by Tommy Goode, a missions associate for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, and Sandy Newberry of First Church in Crossett. Construction of two porches and wheelchair ramps were the first projects completed. In addition, the

Brotherhood is responding to requests of the Mississippi River Ministry and coordinating work projects with Mary Ellis, a representative of Ashley County Home Health Care. Bennis Cherry is pastor.

Clarksville Second Church's Spanish Mission witnessed its first two baptisms March 17 as Second Church pastor Joe Craft and mission pastor Hector Mendez baptized two converts simultaneously. The Second Church mission began last July as a mission partnership between Second Church, which provides facilities for the mission, and members of the First Church, Fort Smith, Spanish mission who provide worship leadership.

Blytheville First Church recently launched the Deacon Family Ministry through which each deacon will contact 13 to 15 families, assisting pastor Bill Fuller in a visitation program. The deacons also will minister to families in times of need or grief.

Obituaries

Homer Weldon Haltom of Little Rock died March 23 at age 73. He was a retired Southern Baptist minister who had been pastor of Arkansas churches, including First Church of Hoxie, Reynolds Memorial Church of Little Rock and Batson Church and Woodland Church, both of Clarksville. He also had served as interim pastor of Brookwood First Church in Little Rock and had served churches in Texas. Haltom was a member of First Church in Shannon Hills and a U.S. Army veteran of World War II. He is survived by his wife, Helen Haltom; three sons, Larry Haltom of Conway, Leslie Haltom of Little Rock and Gerald Haltom of Clarksville; two stepdaughters, Sherry Harrison of Conway and Judith Ann Hill of Malvern; three brothers; three sisters; 12 grandchildren; one great-grandchild; and four step-grandchildren. Memorials may be made to the Arkansas Lung Association.

Fredlene Thomason of Lonoke died March 13 at age 77. Her funeral services were held March 15 at Wattensaw Church in Lonoke where she had been teacher of the JOY Sunday School class. She also had served as pianist, organist, song leader and a leader of the children's choir. In 1956, she organized the first Vacation Bible School to be held at the church. Prior to moving to Lonoke she had been an employee of the Baptist Building and Baptist Book Store, both in Little Rock. She is survived by two daughters, Mary Abshire and Susie Thomason, both of Lonoke; one son, Freddy Thomason of Antioch; four grandsons and two great-grandchildren.

Hispanic Evangelism Conference expands to three locations

Arkansas Baptists' annual Hispanic Evangelism Conference will take on a different look this year as it is held in three locations in April.

Jim Hausler, language associate in the Arkansas Baptist State Convention missions department, noted that each conference program, prepared by Hispanic pastors, "will be held in the Spanish language and will feature keynote sermons, training in personal evangelism, devotionals, testimonials and special music.

Third Street Church in Arkadelphia will host a conference April 19-20, featuring keynote speaker Bob Sena of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. The program will begin Friday night at 7 p.m. and again at 9 a.m. the following day. It will conclude at 4 p.m.

An April 20 conference will be held from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at First Church in Fort Smith and will feature keynote speaker Daniel Sanchez, professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

South Side Church in Pine Bluff will host an April 27 conference from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., featuring keynote speaker Donoso Escobar, a professor at Mississippi College.

There is no cost for the program, but there is a small cost for lunch for adults during the Saturday sessions.

For lunch costs at each conference or for more information, contact Hausler at 1-800-838-2272 or locally at 376-4791, ext. 5150.

La Conferencia de Evangelismo en la lengua español

La Conferencia anual de Evangelismo tendrá un nuevo "look" cuando se celebre el próximo mes de abril en tres lugares diferentes.

La iglesia de la calle Tercera, en Arkadelphia, será uno de los lugares donde se celebrará la conferencia los días 19 y 20 de Abril. El predicador será el hno. Bob Sena de la Junta de Misiones Domésticas.

Otro lugar será la Primera Iglesia Bautista

en Fort Smith. La conferencia en esta iglesia comenzará el día 20. El predicador será el hno. Daniel Sanchez, profesor en el seminario Southwestern.

La tercera conferencia se llevará a cabo en la iglesia South Side de la ciudad de Pine Bluff el sábado 27 de abril. El profesor Donoso Escobar será el orador especial para este encuentro.

El programa será gratuito, pero habrá un pequeño costo por el almuerzo de adultos. Si usted desea mayor información, puede llamar al hno. Jim Hausler en la convención estatal, 1-800-838-2272 o si está en Little Rock 376-4791, ext. 5150.

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ARKANSAS BAPTISTS

Four GA camps at Camp Paron will highlight Olympic theme

Arkansas Girls in Action will have the choice of attending four GA camps this summer at Camp Paron. GA Mother-Daughter Camps for girls in first through third grades will be held May 31-June 1 and June 14-15. GA Mini-Camps for girls in grades three through six will be held July 15-17 and July 18-20.

Sandy Wisdom-Martin, an associate in the Arkansas Baptist Woman's Missionary Union department, said the camps will use an Olympic theme, "Let the Games Begin," to focus on missions.

"This summer the world will come to the United States," she said. "We can use this occasion to share Jesus with the peoples of the world. Many Southern Baptists will do that when the Olympic Games open in Atlanta. We want girls to experience the excitement of the Olympics during camp."

She said the theme will be highlighted several ways. "Each cabin will be assigned

as a different country, mission volunteers will be talking about their work at the '96 Olympics, we will have activities encouraging exercise and a Missions Decathlon."

Other camp activities will include "missionaries, singing, quiet times, crafts, swimming and recreation," Wisdom-Martin added.

The cost for the Mother-Daughter Camps is \$20 per person; the Mini-Camps' cost is \$32 per person. The cost for each includes all meals and lodging.

Wisdom-Martin encouraged each camp participant to bring their own bedding, personal items "and a willingness to have fun. Travel light, because we'll be going around the world."

For more information or to register, contact Wisdom-Martin at the ABCS Woman's Missionary Union office toll-free in state at 1-800-838-ABSC or locally in Little Rock at 376-4791, ext. 5137.

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SBC leaders challenged to become 'bungee Baptists'

ATLANTA (BP)—Like bungee jumpers who leap off a platform and depend on an elasticized rope to break their fall, Southern Baptists need to dive into the process of reconciliation even if it means losing control, said denominational leaders.

"We need to be bungee Baptists," said Ernest Mosley, executive vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee. "We may have to say, 'Yes, I'm afraid, but I'll jump anyway.'"

Invited to Atlanta by Reid Hardin, Home Mission Board coordinator of renewal and marketplace evangelism, the informal group discussed institutional and personal reconciliation for 10 hours. Among hindrances they identified were the desire to maintain control, lack of personal involvement and fear of compromising.

The March 18-19 meeting was designed in part to prepare leaders for Reconciliation 97, an international, interdenominational reconciliation gathering slated for Sept. 1-7, 1997, in Coventry, England. Similar forums will be held in 10 cities throughout the nation this year.

Milton Ferguson, former president of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, said Baptists making the jump toward reconciliation can find security in the gospel message of salvation for all people.

"Reconciliation calls us to remember that we live in need of grace," Ferguson said. "Reconciliation means giving up the power games and being vulnerable."

The group briefly discussed reconciliation among SBC political factions. HMB president Larry Lewis called himself a "strong supporter of the conservative resurgence in the SBC." He added, however, that "love for my brother in Christ must be unconditional; never

predicted on his agreeing with me."

Most of the discussion, however, focused on racial reconciliation. Russell Begay, HMB director of language church starting, credited Southern Baptists for allowing ethnics to be leaders among their own people. But he and Willie McPherson, director of the HMB's black church extension, said minorities must be included in broader denominational leadership.

"We can say on paper that we're the

most ethnically diverse denomination, but that's not reflected in the structure of our convention," McPherson said.

Dellanna O'Brien, national Woman's Missionary Union executive director, said the main obstacle to reconciliation is people who don't take the responsibility personally. "I can't take care of all the problems, but I can do something. We need to bring it to the front burner and develop a passion to do something about it."

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NATION

BSSB president Draper pledges to help 'eliminate duplication' among SBC agencies

RICHMOND, VA (BP)—Baptist Sunday School Board president James T. Draper Jr. pledged to bind with other Southern Baptist agencies to "eliminate duplication" among them during a message at the Foreign Mission Board March 20.

Visiting Foreign Mission Board offices with about a dozen of his staff, Draper spoke during a staff chapel service.

"We're making progress, but there is a great deal of wasted energy and wasted funds through duplication across the agencies," he said. "We're committed to trying to maximize the resources, the energies that we have together.

"If we're doing something that can help you, wonderful. If you're doing something that can help us, wonderful. Let's don't both do it and double the cost."

The dialogue between administrative staff of the two agencies grew out of a session between Draper and FMB president Jerry Rankin following Rankin's election in 1993. The two agency heads "spent a couple days together dreaming and brainstorming," Draper said.

As he introduced Draper, Rankin said the consultation would help move the two agencies into a new dimension of partnership. "We have said it is not the responsibility of the Foreign Mission Board to do missions on behalf of Southern Baptists, but to mobilize them," Rankin said. "We have no stronger partner in this than the Baptist Sunday School Board."

Although missions education is not the BSSB's role, missions awareness is, Draper said. "I don't know of anyone who can do it like we can." In his message, Draper pointed out Southern Baptists' strength lies in their willingness to work together, bringing unique gifts as servants energized, not exhausted, by performing God's purposes.

"Being a missionary is not the greatest calling," he declared. "Being in the will of God is the greatest calling."

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Philanthropist Jones receives presidential award from Clinton

Philanthropist Bernice Young Jones, a member of Elm Dale Church in Springdale, became the first Arkansan to receive the Presidential Citizens Medal, which recognizes Americans for their community service.

Jones received the honor from President Bill Clinton during a recent Oval Office ceremony. According to a report in the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, the presidential citation recognized her for giving "gifts of hope and inspiration that will enrich Americans for generations to come. Bernice Young Jones has spent a lifetime sharing her time, vision and resources with others. She exemplifies our nation's finest tradition of service."

Jones told the *Democrat-Gazette* that she donates money because "I feel that's what I am supposed to do. It's what God wants me to do."

Jones' generosity has made a difference in many Arkansas Baptist agencies and educational ministries. David Perry, executive director of the Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries, said gifts given by Jones "have allowed us to develop a premier residential child care program in north Arkansas at the Baptist Boys Ranch in Harrison."

Jones also has provided funds for the remodeling of residential cottages at the Arkansas Baptist Home for Children in Monticello and for educational endowment to ABCHFM youth.

Williams Baptist College and Ouachita Baptist University also have benefited from Jones' generosity.

Jerol Swaim, president of Williams, noted that gifts from Jones funded "several renovation projects that just wouldn't have been completed," adding that "at least 25 students couldn't be here without scholarships from Mrs. Jones."

From Jones' tangible gifts have come intangible, eternal benefits at Arkansas Baptist Assembly at Siloam Springs after she provided needed finances for a worship center and children's center there.

"We've been able to see hundreds of children and young people brought to Christ because of the children's center and worship center," said assembly director Pat Batchelor. "Most of the salvation experiences take place in those two buildings."

Swaim noted that Jones has more than a generous spirit. "You're with her 15 minutes and you say, 'This is one of the godly people in the world.' When we get a gift from Mrs. Jones, we know it's a thoughtful and prayerful contribution. She is an extremely responsible steward."



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NATION

Supreme Court allows Arkansas to maintain abortion restrictions

WASHINGTON (ABP) — Lower federal courts went too far when they overturned a 1985 Arkansas constitutional provision that bars public financing of abortions except to save the life of the mother, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled March 18.

Amendment 68, added to the Arkansas Constitution in 1985, declares that it is state policy "to protect the life of every unborn child from conception until birth, to the extent permitted by the federal constitution." The amendment prohibits public funding of abortions except to save the life of the mother.

Two lower courts invalidated the amendment, holding that the 1994 Hyde Amendment requires states that participate in the joint federal-state Medicaid program to finance abortions in pregnancies resulting from rape or incest, as well as those performed to save the life of the mother.

The Supreme Court agreed with the lower courts that the Hyde Amendment requires Medicaid funding of abortions in cases of rape or incest. But the high court reversed the blanket invalidation of Amendment 68, noting that the amendment could properly restrict funding of abortions in a state-funded program outside of Medicaid.

The court also noted that the Hyde Amendment is not permanent legislation. While the 1994 version of the amendment requires funding of abortions in the cases of rape or incest, previous versions limited funding to abortions necessary to save the life of the mother. The amendment is routinely attached to federal health-care appropriations bills.

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Stewardship Commission trustees endorse merger plan, staff incentives

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—Southern Baptist Stewardship Commission trustees endorsed the portion of the convention restructuring plan which will dissolve the agency and also approved incentive packages for employees who stay until the plan is implemented.

If messengers to the SBC national meeting this June approve, for a second time, a change in SBC bylaw 15, the Stewardship Commission — and seven other SBC agencies — will be dissolved, merged or eliminated by June 1997 as part of the restructuring plan.

Stewardship Commission trustees approved a resolution endorsing a plan which would merge the commission with the SBC Executive Committee and transfer two program assignments to the Baptist Sunday School Board. The resolution also expressed appreciation to the "Implementation Task Force for their sensitivity to the commission and its staff."

Stewardship Commission president

Ronald Chandler, who a year ago publicly opposed the restructuring plan, told trustees he was "confident the second vote on the (bylaw) will be approved." Referencing last year's SBC vote on restructuring, he added, "Any opposition (by me) ceased to be, after the vote."

Chandler did voice concern that the commission's request for additional funds "in order to transfer effective programs over to the BSSB and Executive Committee was not granted." He added that "the budget being presented is not one of great vision and effectiveness."

Chandler noted, however, that he is optimistic about negotiations with the Baptist Sunday School Board. "My fears of stewardship getting lost in the board organization were wrong. Just the opposite seems to be true — the plans the board has for these two areas of ministry have my endorsement for whatever that is worth."

He added there is still "an element of disappointment that the dreams I had in leading this commission will not be realized." He was elected to the post in 1994.

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Convention Uniform

The loving God

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

Basic passage: Luke 15:1-10

Focal passage: Luke 15:10

Central truth: God loves and seeks the lost.

The great missionary to Africa, Dr. David Livingston, was not understood by the English society that produced him. Believing him to be lost and perhaps dead, it was inconceivable to his "rescuers" that he would choose to stay with savages in Africa rather than return to England a hero.

Jesus was never understood by the Pharisees and teachers of the law. His association with sinners was proof, by their standards, that He was not of God. Their criticism caused Jesus to pick up the brush and paint a God that they did not know.

The entire chapter of Luke 15 is focused on the love of God for a single lost sinner. Jesus puts it in terms that instantly relate. Shepherds care about sheep. When one is lost, all the ingenuity and energy of the shepherd is activated to find and restore it. Until that is done, there is no consolation in the fact that the shepherd has 99 "unlost" sheep (vv. 3-7).

The widow's wealth consisted of 10 coins. The loss of one caused great consternation, but when it was found, her emotions exploded to the other end of the scales as she cried with joy over the recovery (vv. 8-10).

The rest of the chapter tells what Charles Dickens described as the greatest story ever told, the story of the prodigal son (vv. 11-31). In building His case for God's love, Jesus had progressed by related stories from one sheep — to one coin — to one son.

Sinners were not the object of God's scorn, as supposed by the Pharisees. To the contrary, each of them was the focus of such love that God's grief could not be consoled without their redemption. To deliver "rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents" (v. 10), Jesus would go to the cross.

Blind self-righteousness would prevent the Pharisees from realizing that they were among those needing forgiveness. Thus, they would miss the joy of their own redemption and the rejoicing with God's angels over the redemption of others.

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Life and Work

You're making progress

By Suzanne Dilday, member,
First Church, Benton
Basic passage: I Thessalonians 1
Focal passage: I Thessalonians 1: 6-9
Central truth: You never know who's watching.

One of the most memorable things my mother ever told me was, "Be careful who you do. You never know who's watching you." And she was right.

At the time, I interpreted her advice as a tactic to scare me into behaving when she wasn't in sight: That someone would report all my misdoings in due time. But as I got older, I realized she wasn't trying to threaten me; she wanted me to understand how other people watched my life, even when I wasn't aware. I discovered that my teachers noticed how I conducted myself on the playground. I found that my friends looked to see if I was "for real" or just put on a good show. Now that I'm a teacher, students I've never had in class know more about me than I'm willing to admit because they've watched me in the halls. It's a little scary to realize how powerful the influence of a lifestyle can be.

In speaking to the Thessalonian Christians, Paul seemed to say the same thing to their church — "People have been watching you." Thankfully, they had been careful with their lifestyles and Paul was able to praise them for an example well-set. He told them, "You became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia" (v. 7). The news of their faith had gone out to these regions so far in advance that Paul and Timothy had no need to tell the Macedonian believers about them. The Macedonians were telling Paul and Timothy about the faithfulness of the Thessalonians! (vv. 8-9).

Every Christmas in one of my favorite cartoons, "Calvin and Hobbes," the mischievous little boy Calvin tries to fool Santa into thinking what a sweet little boy he is by beginning a "reform campaign" a week before Christmas. His stuffed tiger, Hobbes, who lives with him all year, is never fooled. It is easy to put on a good show, especially when we know someone's watching and it will only be for a little while. It becomes more difficult when we realize that people are watching all the time, even when we don't want them to. The example we set takes a lifetime to create. Only God's power in our lives can give us the perseverance and goodness necessary to be worthy examples for Him.

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Bible Book

The price of hatred

By Bill Steeger, chairman,
department of religion,
Ouchita Baptist University
Basic passage: Obadiah
Focal passage: Obadiah 3:10, 12, 21
Central truth: A lasting grudge leaves a lasting pain.

Obadiah ("the servant of the Lord") preached judgment and hope. Edomites were descendants of Esau, Jacob's older brother. Esau's frivolous treatment of his birthright cost him his inheritance. Bitterness, rivalry and hatred nursed this ancient grudge. Edom was charged with "violence against his brother Jacob" (v. 10).

Edom refused Israel passage during the Exodus (Num. 20:14-21). Amos condemned Edom because "he kept his wrath for ever" (Amos 1:11). The Psalmist reported how Edom rejoiced at Jerusalem's destruction (Psalm 137:7). Anger pushed the Edomites into the false security their fortresses afforded them. Obadiah's three-fold indictment speaks words of warning:

■ *The deception of pride* (vv. 3-4). Like Edom, many of us find false security in the fortunes carved out of life. Houses, lands and bank accounts afford no protection against pride. "Thus saith the Lord" brings us back into the reality of our need for absolute dependence upon Him.

■ *The weakness of wisdom* (v. 8). Praised for wisdom, Edom learned that earthly reason, experience and counsel were no match for the issues of life. Paul reminded the Corinthians of the appropriate balance between earthly and spiritual wisdom (1 Cor. 1:18-2:16). We are tempted to make man the measure of all things and the human mind the basis for knowledge. While God gives us a mind to cope with life's challenges, He also instructs us to base wisdom on Him (Prov. 1:7; 3:5-10).

■ *The mistakes of the mighty* (v. 9). The blessings of good health and great strength can be distorted. The mighty often mistakenly trust in their own resources. Such was Edom's error.

The judgment on Edom sounds ominous and absolute, but God will draw His people from the remnant of all who call upon Him. Obadiah said, "The kingdom shall be the Lord's" (v. 21). Indeed, it is! Even in Edom a remnant will be found (Amos 9:12). What if that remnant were truly "salt" and "light" in the cities of Edom? We have a mission in society to herald the deceitfulness of pride, the weakness of wisdom, and the mistakes of the mighty.

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Convention Uniform

The good shepherd

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

Basic passage: John 10:1-30

Focal passage: John 10:14

Central truth: There is but one Good Shepherd.

When Jesus opened the eyes of a man who had been blind from birth, a violent argument erupted (v. 9). Pharisees, who had already ordered that anyone who acknowledged Jesus as the Christ would be put out of the synagogue, raised theological arguments to rebut the obvious appearance that the miracle was God's acknowledgment of Jesus.

Failing to discredit the miracle by attacking the witnesses, they smugly pronounced that Jesus was not of God because He performed the miracle on the Sabbath.

In chapter 10, from the eye of the storm, Jesus delivered a masterpiece on discernment between a counterfeit and the real thing. In seeking a comparison to Himself, he talked about the fidelity of the good shepherd (v. 11). In quick order, He raised the test that a false shepherd cannot pass:

- He does not run away in the face of danger.
- He does not steal or kill the sheep.
- The sheep know His voice alone.
- He knows His sheep by name.
- He lays down His life for the sheep.

Jesus used the ultimate test (laying down His life) to bridge from the shepherd to Himself (vv. 17-18). Looking toward the cross, He explained that He would, by His own accord, lay down His life — only to take it up again.

This is the vision that the great mind of Paul saw when he wrote, "He humbled Himself and became obedient to death, even death on the cross. Therefore God exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow...and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord" (Phil. 2:8-11).

Every pretender fails the test of the good shepherd. Jesus alone is the gate, the voice, the sacrificer, the victor over death and the cross.

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Life and Work

Friends care about you

By Suzanne Dilday, member,
First Church, Benton
Basic passage: 1 Thessalonians 2:4-12,
3:11-13

Focal passage: 1 Thessalonians 2:4-12
Central truth: Motives make the man.

Sometimes it's a question of motivation. Every day in America's courts, cases are heard and the outcomes for millions of individuals are often based not on actions or results, but on the motivations that prompted them. Juries often decide sympathetically for a mother who explains that she stole money to feed her starving children, until it is discovered she actually stole in order to support a drug habit. Her actions were unchanged, but what provoked them made all the difference. In our everyday lives, motivation is crucial. It's not enough to judge our results. Our motives say more about us in the end.

In writing to the Thessalonians, Paul seemed to realize that while results matter, perhaps motivation matters more. Paul made his case to those early believers to underscore not just his deeds among them, but his motives. He spoke as one "approved by God" not to flatter the Thessalonians or wheedle money from them (vv. 4-5). In fact, he reminded them how he worked to support himself during his ministry (v. 9). He said that while he could have sought personal recognition as an apostle, he did not. He served humbly as a mother caring for her children (vv. 6-7). In the end, the Thessalonians received the Word of God, unobstructed by human interference.

Perhaps Paul simply wanted to use himself as a living, breathing illustration to reinforce one of Christ's most challenging teachings. Jesus was careful many times to remind His listeners that it's not what's on the outside that matters, but what's on the inside that counts. The Pharisees looked holy, but Jesus frankly described them as "whitewashed tombs," inwardly full of "hypocrisy and lawlessness" (Matt. 23:27-28). He says that keeping the commandment forbidding murder is nothing to brag about when thinking angry thoughts about a brother makes us just as guilty (Matt. 5:21-22).

Results are easy to come by. Having the right motivation for action is probably one of the hardest lessons we continue to learn. We can hold ourselves up to Paul's model as a yardstick of Christian servanthood in our activities today.

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Bible Book

The Lord of wrath, love

By Bill Steeger, chairman,
department of religion,
Ouachita Baptist University
Basic passage: Nahum 1:1-3:19

Focal passage: Nahum 1:2-7

Central truth: God's justice is sure, but His love is secure.

The terrified people of Judah feared the menacing power of Assyria. The Northern Kingdom, Israel, was now a distant memory. Nahum ("comforted") stood in the gap between fears and hopes, singing his songs of God's wrath and love.

Like you and me, Judah asked how long God would allow the wicked to go unpunished. The world often seems unfair. The wicked seem to prosper and the righteous suffer. Job and Habakkuk asked these questions, too (Hab. 1:2-5). The slowness of God's anger (v. 3) is no indication of the certainty of wrath (v. 8).

The opening lines of Nahum's song describe vividly the coming doom of Nineveh, capital of Assyria. Can you list the characteristics of God that Nahum mentions? Can you list the many ways God's wrath is displayed in nature in the opening verses? Judgment is sure! Who can stand before God's anger (v. 6)? Nahum gives a powerful threefold answer (v. 7).

■ *The Lord's goodness.* In the midst of these questions Nahum proclaimed that the LORD is good. Notice how LORD is spelled in your Bible ("LORD," not "Lord"). Whenever "LORD" is used in all capital letters, the word behind the translation is the special "covenant name" for God ("Jehovah" or "Yahweh"). Used more than any other name for God in the Old Testament, this term is never found on the lips of non-believers. Consequently, Nahum says with assurance that those who know the LORD in a covenant relationship also can be assured of His goodness.

■ *The Lord's protection.* Even though we have peace in a covenant relationship with Him, there will be days of trouble (Jesus reminded His disciples of that too in John 16:33). People in covenant with God have a fortress in troubled times.

■ *The Lord's loving care.* Nahum said, "He knoweth them that trust in Him." The word "know" in Scripture refers to experiential knowledge, the most intimate relationship known to man (see Gen. 4:1). "Trusting in Him" is that faith relationship we have through Jesus Christ. God is intimate, personal and loving to those trusting in Him. We are secure in Him.

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National Council of Churches decries fire-bombings

NEW YORK (ABP) — Church leaders have issued a call to government agencies to "investigate aggressively" a series of fire-bomb attacks on black churches in the South.

Leaders of the National Council of Churches held a recent news conference to decry the racially motivated attacks.

More than 25 African-American churches have been bombed in southern states in recent months, more than half of them since December. During one recent incident — the Jan. 8 fire-bombing of a church in Knoxville — racial slurs reportedly were sprayed on the church building.

"Our country is in denial about racism," said Robert Polk, general secretary for national ministries at the National Council of Churches, "but in fact the climate has really spawned these outrageous events."

Texas judge sides with charities in gift annuities ruling

DENTON, TX (BP)—Justice has come down on the side of charities in a lawsuit that has threatened their ability to function nationwide. Judge Don Windle of Denton, Texas, has ruled that the Lutheran Foundation of Texas did not break any laws when it issued charitable gift annuities to a 96-year-old north Texas woman.

Relatives of Louise T. Peter of Wichita Falls, Texas, sued the foundation, contending it did not have the legal right to issue the gift annuities. That action was later expanded to a class-action lawsuit that included the Baptist Foundation of Texas, the Southern Baptist Convention, the American Red Cross, the Salvation Army and about 1,900 other charities.

Subsequently, two Texas laws and two federal laws were passed in 1995. All four bills were aimed at guaranteeing charities the right to issue the gift annuities. Judge Windle ruled the 1995 Texas laws could be applied retroactively to the Peter case, which began in 1992.

New Orleans seminary trustees hear president's plans

NEW ORLEANS (BP)—The health of a seminary should not be measured by the number of students or the size of the endowment, the new president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary told trustees March 13 during their annual meeting.

Rather, the health of a seminary should be measured "by the health of the churches where its graduates lead," said Charles S. Kelley Jr., elected Feb. 23 as the seminary's eighth president.

Referring to an estimate that 70 percent of Southern Baptist churches are plateaued or declining, Kelley said he wants NOBTS to raise up graduates to reverse that trend.

In other action, trustees approved a record \$9.66 million operating budget for the coming year, a 5 percent increase over the current budget. A new fee schedule will increase matriculation fees to \$800 per semester.

Arkansas Baptists elected to seminary leadership posts

NASHVILLE, TN (BP/ABN) — Arkansas Baptists were elected to key positions of leadership during recent trustee meetings at three Southern Baptist seminaries.

Greg Lawson was elected assistant professor of Christian education at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. He currently is assistant professor of religious education and director of counseling at Williams Baptist College in Walnut Ridge.

Arnold A. Burk, a pharmacist from London, Ark., was elected trustee vice chairman at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He was among three laymen elected as trustee officers for the coming year.

Ed Saucier, pastor of Grand Avenue Church in Fort Smith, was elected trustee secretary for Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Former SBC president Stanley's wife drops divorce suit

ATLANTA (BP)—Anna Stanley, wife of former Southern Baptist Convention president Charles Stanley, has dropped her nearly 3-year-old divorce suit, according to her attorney.

A statement from Mrs. Stanley was read recently at First Baptist Church of Atlanta where Stanley is pastor. "I am pleased to announce that Charles and I are making progress toward reconciling our marriage differences," the statement noted. "Although we are not living together at this time, we are working toward that end. Thank you for standing by our family during this difficult time."

The announcement apparently ends speculation about Stanley's leadership at First Baptist. Stanley had stated if the divorce became final he would resign from the church, which has not allowed divorced men to serve as deacons or pastors.