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### April 17, 1997

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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# ARKANSAS BAPTIST



news magazine

## Celebrate the Call

More than 5,000 Arkansans gathered at the Statehouse Convention Center in Little Rock April 8 to honor 63 foreign missionaries appointed during a Foreign Mission Board Appointment Service.



# State Acteens honored during '97 Encounter

Millie Gill

Executive Assistant, Arkansas Baptist

**F**our Acteens from Immanuel Church in Little Rock were awarded their Acteens Citation during the 1997 Arkansas Baptist Acteens Encounter held at their church April 4-5. The annual event, sponsored by Arkansas Woman's Missionary Union, was coordinated by state Acteens director Angela Lowe.

Presenting citations to Jenny Miller, Molly McKnight, Amy Starrett and Chris Utley, Lowe noted that these awards set a statewide precedent with Immanuel being the first church in the state to have this many Acteens receive the award at one time. The Acteens Citation, the sixth and final step in Studiaact levels, is available only to high school seniors who have completed all other Studiaact levels and one activity from state missions, Campus Women on Mission, missions careers or creative communication categories. Recipients also are required to complete an individual mission project or a second activity in one of the four categories.

Brandy Ussery of Westview Church in Paragould received the Acteen's Service Award, the second highest level in Studiaact, for having completed all of the other Studiaact levels. Several other participants from across the state were recognized for their completion of other levels in Studiaact.

## Commissioning service

A commissioning service for the 1997 Acteens Activator teams was another highlight of the 1997 "Take Up Your Cross" Encounter. Teams commissioned and their areas of service include Strawflooer Church of Jonesboro which will serve in Independence, Mo.; First Church of Gentry and Pulaski Association which will serve at Hope Migrant Mission Center; and the state Activator team which will serve in Keokuk, Iowa.

State Acteens panelists Crystal Bentley of Lexa Church; Amy Starrett of Immanuel Church, Little Rock; Serenity Turner of Geyer Springs First Church in Little Rock; and Emily Watts of Second Church in Arkadelphia cited the importance of Jesus Christ in their lives and shared life changes they have experienced through Acteens Studiaact activities and missions projects.

Another dimension of the Encounter involved juniors spending Saturday morning ministering to residents at the Jesse Powell Retirement Towers and Dorcas House in Little Rock. Sharing during the afternoon session about their work were Leann Hurst of Oak Cliff Church, Fort Smith; Amy Starrett of Immanuel Church, Little Rock; and Lynn Dillard of Second Church, Cabot.

A large number of Acteens responded to the "What Are U Going to Do With Your Cross?" commitment session led by Becky Nelson, youth missions team director for national Woman's Missionary Union.

Nelson challenged the Acteens to move from the protection of the stable where Christ was born to the cross where He died for the sins of the world. "Until you look at the cross, you will never see nor feel the power of Christ nor receive hope which is the miracle of the cross," she declared.

She urged the girls to not stay in the tomb but to see Christ's resurrection and then go forth, sharing this glorious news with others. "I call you today to make a commitment to be about your Father's business of carrying the message of salvation to the world, individually or as Acteens groups," she added.

Mike Raymond, pastor of Chapel Hill Church in Jacksonville, led praise and worship sessions and furloughing missionary Alana Greenwich led a series of missions moments.

# ARKANSAS BAPTIST

news magazine



## Cover Story

### 'Celebrate the Call' ....8-8

Arkansas Baptists packed the Statehouse Convention Center in Little Rock April 8 for worship and prayer and to "Celebrate the call" of 63 Southern Baptist foreign missionaries appointed during the service.

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# Legislative impact

## Observers cite partial-birth abortion ban, Defense of Marriage Act as 'victories'

**W**hen the 81st session of the Arkansas General Assembly concluded business April 4, many religious groups were able to celebrate wins among new state legislation.

Larry Page, executive director of the Christian Civic Foundation of Arkansas, cited laws banning a controversial abortion process and another one refusing to recognize gay marriages among "wonderful victories" for Christians in the state.

Topping Page's list of legislation affecting Christian moral concerns passed during the session was a ban on partial-birth abortions, signed into law by Gov. Mike Huckabee during an April 1 ceremony at the state capitol.

Affirming that "there is a place for the people's voice to be heard," Huckabee noted that many Arkansans "did not want to be embarrassed by being a state that would tolerate the abortion of a child who was just literally inches and seconds from birth. We have spared our state that embarrassment."

Page noted that the radical process involved with partial-birth abortion helped win the debate. A partial-birth abortion terminates the life of an infant which has been delivered with the exception of its head.

"I believe this marks a change in the debate over abortion nationally as well as statewide," Page said. "For the first time I can recall, we have begun to frame the issue within the context of not whether the woman has the right to choose. The partial-birth abortion debate focused the issue on the unborn child. One of the reasons we've had trouble changing hearts and minds on the abortion issue is because we're talking about, for the most part, an unseen victim."

### Defense of marriage

Page also sees the passage of the Defense of Marriage Act, "which allows Arkansas to refuse to recognize the marriage of people of the same sex, even if their wedding was legal in the state where it was performed," as another victory.

The law was passed despite an unsuccessful attempt to amend it to grant special group rights to homosexual couples.

"Had such a bill been successful, we would be granting special group rights to people based solely on their aberrant behavior," Page noted. "And that would be a dangerous precedent to set."

Other Arkansas Baptists point to an additional piece of legislation providing stiffer legal penalties for church arsonists as a victory for Christian concerns.

Gov. Huckabee signed the bill into law at a March 28 ceremony at Kentucky Missionary Baptist Church west of Benton, a church burned by arsonists last year.

"This legislation points to the fact that we

recognize that places where a corporate community comes together in a place of worship...are places that do hold a very special place in our society," said Huckabee. "An attack against a place of worship, an attack against a public school is not simply an attack or infliction on an individual. It is showing a level of contempt for all of us and the institutions of our society which form the foundation of who we are as a people, what we stand for and what we honor and respect."

Arkansas Baptist State Convention president Rex Horne attended the ceremony. "This is something that is a right thing to do," he said of the legislation.

"We do live in a time that we cannot take for granted that everybody's going to do what's right or treat folks right," Horne acknowledged. "It's very good legislation."

Jimmy Barrentine, director of the state convention missions department, agreed. "The truth is, every church building, every ward house, every temple, every synagogue and every mosque in this state needs to be safe. If we aren't all safe, none of us are."

Page pointed out that other moral victories over homosexual behavior and gambling were notable because of their omission in the General Assembly's legislative business.

"It's important to note that a repeal of our state's ban on sodomy was not even attempted this session," he said. "I believe that's because we so soundly defeated those efforts in the last three sessions, it was clear any effort at repeal would fail."

He called the lack of legislation seeking the expansion of gambling in the state "another victory that is clearly apparent to me which might escape others' notice because no vote was ever taken. In fact, no bill was even filed."

Although Page noted advances made for key moral concerns, he also called attention to "setbacks" during the session.

Lawmakers "failed to pass a bill that would lower from .10 to .08 the amount of blood alcohol necessary to prosecute and convict a motorist for DWI (driving while intoxicated)," Page said, as well as failing to repeal a law passed in 1993 "that requires bingo...to register annually and that imposes a gross receipts tax on the commercial bingo operators."



Gov. Mike Huckabee signed a law banning the practice of partial-birth abortions in Arkansas during an April 1 ceremony on the steps of the state capitol.

**“** This marks a change in the debate over abortion nationally as well as statewide....The partial-birth abortion debate focused the issue on the unborn child.

Larry Page  
Executive director  
Christian Civic Foundation



## A Pastor's Heart



Emil Turner

ABCS Executive Director

**"T**here are two kinds of people in the world — hardworking, bill paying, good people and religious fanatics that want to run everyone else's lives." This statement was followed by the radio personality's continued criticism of people who believe in morality and godliness. I was shocked. I listened to this "hate speech" long enough to hear the next commercial break. Then, I did something I've never done before.

I called the company whose advertisements were paying for the program and spoke with their director of marketing. This was a gracious Christian who, too, was shocked to hear what the company's advertising dollars were buying. The director of marketing promised a change would be forthcoming in the company's

advertising policy.

There are two things that became apparent to me from this experience. First, we live in a lost world. The lost world has no ability to appreciate godliness. I cannot expect the lost world to behave in a godly manner. Secondly, I must win the lost world to Christ. My complaint was well received, but nothing was accomplished that changed the hearts of the speaker or his audience.

Our world is in decay. We must win the lost world to Christ.

■ Have you read *The Common Made Holy* by Nell Anderson and Robert Saucy? (Harvest House, 1997). This is an exhaustive work on sanctification. The entire process of God's work in making us like Him is the focus of this book. A great textbook on the subject.

### Executive director's schedule:

- April 17 Inter-Agency Meeting
- April 19 Arkansas River Valley Pastors' Meeting
- April 20 (a.m.) FBC, Hot Springs
- April 21-22 Partners in Ministry, Baptist Building
- April 27 (a.m.) Wilmot Baptist
- April 28-29 SALT, Park Hill, North Little Rock

maligned or misrepresented. Contrary to some popular thought, words do matter. The pain of being unfairly criticized by peers, employers, church members or strangers is experienced by too many.

Oates walked to home plate in Texas for the opening game. He was met by a loud roar of approval from 45,000 people. Oates, his wife and children were ecstatic at such a reception.

A baseball manager (and most preachers) knows this commendation can quickly change to condemnation. Oates remarked, "I don't care who you are, we all like to be appreciated." Parenthetically, Oates' former employer, Angelos, has a player who just recently served out his suspension for spitting on an umpire. Angelos, not responsible for the actions of a grown man, considered, however, paying this player while he sat out a few games!

We all have demands on our time. We all define how we will use the days, expend the energy that God has given us. Christians have the resources, mission and message to change the world positively.

We may never stand before a crowd of 45,000 and receive thunderous applause. One day, however, we will stand before the only One who really counts. All we need hear to be blessed for eternity are two words, "Well done."

**Rax Horns**, pastor of Immanuel Church in Little Rock, is president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

## President's Perspective



Rax Horns

ABCS President

**J**ohnny Oates, manager of the Texas Rangers professional baseball team, carries an article around with him all the time. He read it recently to Randy Galloway of the *Dallas Morning News* who interviewed Oates. The article read in part, "The guy is a problem...he's obstinate...an insecure man...not a very good manager...I don't think he's a good leader."

The quote was made in June of 1994. It was made by Peter Angelos, owner of the Baltimore Orioles — the team Oates was managing. It surprised no one that Oates was relieved of his managerial duties that year. Any other resolution would have been shocking.

Oates says he is not bitter about the quote or experience. In fact, he keeps it with him to motivate him to do his best. "All I have to do is take that out and read it," he remarked. "My attitude changes right away."

I know of no one who enjoys being

## quotes

**"I think each of us must realize how important it is for us to share our joy rather than letting today's sinful, worrying world lead us to become part of it."**

—Tom Lester  
Christian entertainer

**"In the center of His will is the safest place to be."**

—Jerry Rankin  
President, Foreign Mission Board

**"Jesus also will give you a mountain top experience... because you have shared that wonderful gift of salvation with others."**

—Marge Caldwell  
Christian author, speaker

# ARKANSAS BAPTIST

new magazine

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ARKANSAS BAPTIST NEWSMAGAZINE

# 'Celebrate the Call'

**M**ore than a missions celebration, last week's Foreign Mission Board appointment service at the Statehouse Convention Center in Little Rock was a missions challenge for the more than 5,000 Arkansas Baptists who attended the historic service.

Highlighting the theme, "Celebrate the Call," the appointment service clearly focused on both celebration and call. The celebration included affirming God's call of 63 new Southern Baptist foreign missionaries who will have the opportunity to make a spiritual impact for decades to come in more than 20 countries around the globe.

Preparing to serve in such diverse locations as Uganda, Russia and the Philippines, Southern Baptists' newest missionaries will continue the missions legacy of Lottie Moon, Bill Wallace and Bertha Smith. They will join more than 4,200 other Southern Baptist foreign missionaries currently serving in more than 125 nations.

One underlying aspect of the celebration is the fact that all Southern Baptists have the opportunity to undergird the work of these missionaries through Cooperative Program gifts, the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and ongoing prayer support.

## Straight from the Editor



**Trennis Henderson**  
Editor, Arkansas Baptist

The April 8 gathering was not merely a celebration of what a group of dedicated missionaries can do. It was an affirmation of what God can accomplish through every Southern Baptist as we cooperate together to help spread the gospel throughout the world.

In addition to celebrating the call of career missionaries, Foreign Mission Board president Jerry Rankin challenged Arkansas Baptists to personally respond to God's call to missions service.

Warning pastors and others to not place geographic restrictions on God's call to ministry, Rankin encouraged the crowd of more than 5,000 participants to prayerfully consider the possibility of serving in international missions. During an altar call at the conclusion of the service, more than

50 people made public commitments to answer God's call to missions.

Hundreds of people were involved in planning and participating in the appointment service to help make it a memorable missions experience. From local arrangements and prayer support to the choirs, flag bearers and ushers, scores of volunteers played key roles in bringing Southern Baptists' international missions focus to Little Rock.

The cooperation demonstrated throughout the planning and hosting of the event is a timely example of the importance of cooperating together to share the message of Christ at home and around the world. Just as the apostle Paul emphasized in I Corinthians 3:6, one person plants, another waters, but God gives the increase. He went on to affirm in verse 9 that "we are laborers together with God."

As Arkansas Baptists gathered April 8 to "Celebrate the Call" of missions service, it is essential to remember that God calls each of us to be involved in communicating His eternal message of hope and love to a world in need. Whether we plant or water through praying, giving or going, we can have the confidence that God will give the increase as we celebrate His call in our lives.



## letters to the editor

### Cooperate with the majority

First, let me say I think your editorials are wonderful. They glorify the Holy Spirit and edify man. Your work as our editor has been excellent and I for one thank you for your dedication.

Now in response to the March 20 article, "Group seeks to block Ouachita agreement." I am worried about the actions of some of our pastors. Many of the so-called conservative pastors are becoming dictators, not leaders. The church and everyone else must do what they want or they retaliate. I think Barry King is wrong in opposing the reconciliation committee agreement.

I have been a Southern Baptist over 50 years and a deacon for 30. I found Baptist churches were always operated as a pure democracy under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Everyone had their say. Once the vote was cast and the decision made, everyone supported the decision.

It seems that King lost his vote in the committee and now has "led" his church to use its state convention Cooperative Program gifts to start a newspaper. He and

his group want to change policies, control board members and dictate to Ouachita Baptist University. I say let the school alone. It has produced a lot of good pastors, laymen and solid Christians in the past. I call on Mr. King and his associates to cooperate with the majority.

**Ed Tucker**  
Hot Springs, AR

### Prayer partners sought

Greetings in Christ from Cyprus, island home of Barnabas, in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea.

We Southern Baptist workers across the Middle East and North Africa have a goal to sign up 5,000 prayer partners—and we are hoping many of them will come from Arkansas.

Why are we looking for "urgent" prayer support? It's because we serve in one of the most unreached million fields in the world. About 280 million people live in the countries where we serve. Most of them are Muslims. More than half these people are under the age of 20!

You have heard of the "Last Frontier" in missions—where people have little access to the gospel? That's the Middle East and North Africa! People we work with here include major people groups who need the gospel, such as the Arabs in North Africa and 19.1 million Bedouin tribes people all across the region. Many of these Bedouin still wander from place to place as they did in the day of Moses.

Arkansas Baptists who commit to pray for us weekly will receive information about our work and reports on what is happening. You and your church have given money to support our work. Here is a chance to join hands with us in praying for results! Responses should be addressed to: Hugh Provost; On Mission Through Prayer, coordinator; P.O. Box 835; 6307 Lamaca, Cyprus.

We are seeing precious souls come to Christ here—not in big numbers, but the response has been growing in recent years. We are excited about the possibilities. Join us in prayer!

**Hugh Provost**  
Lamaca, Cyprus



## Missions celebration

### 5,150 gather to 'Celebrate the Call' of 63 new foreign missionaries

Arkansas Baptists gathered at the Statehouse Convention Center in Little Rock April 8 to "Celebrate the Call" of 63 new Southern Baptist missionaries appointed during the Foreign Mission Board appointment service.

The service, the first of its type held in Arkansas since 1989, attracted an estimated 5,150 people, making it one of the largest gatherings of Arkansas Baptists ever.

Highlighting the meeting's historical significance, FMB president Jerry Rankin told participants that the appointees would be "the last foreign missionaries sent out by Southern Baptists. In subsequent services, we will be appointing international missionaries." Rankin's reference was to the FMB's scheduled June name change to International Mission Board.

During the service, the congregation was led into worship by a 460-voice massed choir and orchestra which included students from Ouachita Baptist University and Williams Baptist College as well as the Arkansas Master Singers, Singing Women of Arkansas and adult choir members from central Arkansas-area churches.

Worship was led by Rob Hewell, director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention's church music ministries department. The congregation sang, "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name," "O Zion, Haste" and "We've a Story to Tell to the

Nations" as a flag procession highlighted countries where Southern Baptist foreign missionaries serve. An "honor guard" including missionary kids attending college in Arkansas, led the procession.

ABSC executive director Emil Turner told participants that the service "is, perhaps, one of the most important meetings that has occurred in Little Rock and the state of Arkansas for a long, long time. We are convinced that eternity will be touched tonight."

Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee agreed, calling the event a celebration of "the deliverance of thousands who will come to know Christ through the appointment of these missionaries. The best we can ever do in the capitol is change a law for a while, but when these go forth to other countries, the Lord will bless for eternity."

Following a recommendation from FMB board chairman Bill Blanchard, trustees unanimously appointed the candidates.

#### 'You heard God's call'

During his charge to the newly-appointed missionaries, Rankin said that "for many in this auditorium, it seems strange that the place you call the center of God's will would be someplace like Uganda, Suriname or China. But you heard God's call as you became aware of a world in need and lost without Jesus Christ and

were willing to say, 'Yes, Lord.' Some of you will go where no one has ever shared the gospel among unreached people groups."

Preaching from 1 Kings 17, Rankin told the appointees that "being there" was to be in:

■ God's provision. "Elijah was obedient to go to that specific place that God directed him," said Rankin. "Because Elijah responded to God's call and was obedient to His direction, God provided for Elijah there. As you go to mission fields around the world, being there where God has called you is a place of God's provision."

■ God's protection. "Because Elijah was there, God protected him and cared for him," he said. "Some of you are going to places of risk and danger. When you respond to God's call, He protects you."

"Being there and being in God's will doesn't keep you from harm's way," he added, "but you can go wherever God is leading with perfect peace because you know that God goes with you. In the center of His will is the safest place to be."

■ God's power. "Who would have dared to stand alone before 3,000 prophets of Baal?" Rankin asked. "Elijah, because he knew he was in the place of God's power. Just as the hand of God was on Elijah, His hand is on you."

Rankin then turned his words from the missionaries to the audience, noting "that Elijah, discouraged, fearful, his faith beginning to wither, finds himself in the cave of Horeb. In a still, small voice, God said, 'Elijah, what are you doing here?'"

"You see, Elijah was no longer there, where God had called him," he said. "Is God saying to you, 'What are you doing here' when there are so many needs in the world?" Where is there for you?

"God is saying to many here tonight... when there are so many unprecedented opportunities, 'What are you doing here? Where is there for you?'"

More than 50 participants answered Rankin's question by coming forward to answer a call to missions service.

The program was preceded by an hour-long prayer meeting attended by about 75 people at the Statehouse Center's Pope Room.

Bill Elliff, pastor of First Church in Little Rock, moderated the prayer meeting. He told participants that "I think the Lord is honored by us taking the time to thank Him and praise Him for what He has done in preparing for this service. Pray conversationally as the Lord impresses your heart."

Participants followed Elliff's lead, praying for such specifics as the missionary appointees and service leaders, for individuals to be called to missionary service during the event and even for the service's witness to convention center workers.



▲ "God is saying to many here tonight... 'What are you doing here?'" noted Jerry Rankin, emphasizing the need to hear God's call to serve as missionaries. Rankin, Foreign Mission Board president, made his comments during a charge to 63 foreign missionaries appointed during the service.

Rob Hewell directed a 465-member ► massed choir and orchestra during last week's Foreign Mission Board appointment service. The musicians included students from Ouachita Baptist University, Williams Baptist College, the Arkansas Master Singers, Singing Women of Arkansas and adult choir members from central Arkansas-area churches. Hewell, director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention church music ministries department, also led congregational worship.



▲ Bill Elliff, pastor of First Church in Little Rock, led 75 Arkansans in a pre-appointment service prayer meeting, offering prayers for the appointees, for God to call missionaries during the service and for the program.



▲ Appointment service participants were greeted with several interpretive displays in the Statehouse Convention Center. Many participants used one of the Foreign Mission Board's interactive information kiosks to learn about career missions opportunities overseas. Using a screen touchpad, individuals had the options of accessing information by area, receiving photographs and printing desired information.



# Nine with Arkansas ties appointed



Ken and Alison Blackwood



Billy and Betty Capps



Charlie and Angie Lechner



Mike and Lori McDaniel

Nine people with Arkansas Baptist ties were among 63 missionaries appointed during the Foreign Mission Board appointment service April 8 at the Statehouse Convention Center in Little Rock. They will be serving in Africa, Asia and Central and South America in a variety of ministries.

**Ken and Alison Blackwood** will serve as missionaries to Venezuela, Ken as a general evangelist and Alison in church and home outreach evangelism. Following his graduation from Mid-America Seminary, he served as pastor of First Church in Marvell from 1991-94.

It was during his tenure at Marvell that Ken said they began to feel a call. "We began to wonder if God would call us to missions, but were still not completely sure. I was able to go on a mission trip to India in 1993 and really felt the Lord leading toward missions again."

That call was solidified during a 1990 crusade in Kenya, he said. "On the first day of that crusade, we met a woman who was working in a small field of corn."

"As she leaned on her hoe," explained Alison, "Ken shared the gospel with her and she trusted Jesus as her Lord and Savior."

"Since the Lord led us to witness to that woman in a Kenyan corn field, we have never been the same again," he added.

"Now we are following God's leading to...Venezuela, to share the good news there," she confirmed.

**Billy and Betty Capps**, most recently members of Lakeside Church in Hot Springs, will serve in Honduras as a dentist/church developer and in church and home outreach evangelism, respectively. Billy Capps, a Prescott native, was a dentist in Hope for 25 years and both were members of First Church in Hope from 1975-96. He currently attends Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Capps said that while a member of First, Hope, he and Betty had felt called to the missions field, "but never really sought God's direction during that period of time."

"In 1989, Bro. Stan (Parris)...became our pastor," he said. "Bro. Stan placed a lot of emphasis on foreign missions and our desires began to fire up again."

"He took three of us to Guatemala in 1990," said Billy, recalling a mission trip, "and coming back on the

plane, I knew that I would never be satisfied with my life of service until I became a foreign missionary."

"The question that we had struggled with during this time was, 'Could God really use us this way?'" Betty related. "Well, God has made it clear that He is able to use us to share the love of Jesus with people who have never heard in Honduras."

**Charlie and Angie Lechner** will serve as missionaries in Madagascar. Charlie will serve as an evangelist and Angie, daughter of former FMB missionaries to St. Vincent Orvell and Suzan Bryant, will serve in church and home outreach evangelism. Both are graduates of Ouachita Baptist University and credit OBU with being influential in their call to missions.

"During my first year at OBU, we had a foreign missions emphasis called 'Global Focus Week,'" recalled Charlie, who is also a Southwestern Seminary graduate. "We saw the role missions played as missionaries from all over the globe converged on our little campus. From that point on, God began steering me in the direction of foreign missions."

"God used our involvement in BSU...to bring us to this point in our lives," agreed Angie.

Charlie noted that the couple had made a public commitment to missions during a similar FMB service in Little Rock in 1989.

**Mike and Lori McDaniel** will serve as missionaries to Zambia, he as a general evangelist and she in church and home outreach evangelism.

The couple noted that when Mike approached Lori about his call to missions, "I said, 'That's wonderful, you go right ahead, but I'm staying,'" she recalled. "But God began to change my heart as well and I learned that God does not call me to do things my size. He calls me to do things God's size."

Mike, a Rogers native, is a graduate of Mid-America Seminary and received his call to ministry at Arkansas Baptist Assembly in Siloam Springs while serving there on staff. In 1996, he added, "during the Week of Foreign Missions at Mid-America...I felt an overwhelming conviction to surrender to missions."

**Prada Hopler**, a native of Fayetteville who grew up in Immanuel Church there and is a member of University Church, also was appointed. She will serve as a Cooperative Services International representative to Asia.

## FMB trustees approve overseas restructuring plan

Following two closed-door sessions during meetings last week in Little Rock, Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board trustees voted in open session to unanimously approve a new organizational plan for international mission efforts.

Seeking to "bring all the peoples of the world to saving faith in Jesus Christ," the plan will divide the FMB's overseas work into 14 geographic regions. The proposal, developed by an overseas organization and administration task force, is designed to be "flexible, responsive, change-oriented and innovative."

The goal of the changes, according to board chairman Bill Blanchard, is to create a regional structure that is "more vision-driven and purpose-driven."

"God is accelerating a movement toward fulfilling His purpose of bringing a lost world to redemption," FMB president Jerry Rankin told trustees. "We are in the greatest era of mission opportunity in history, and we must be willing to make whatever changes are

necessary to keep pace with what God is doing."

One of the restructure's key components calls for integrating Cooperative Services International's work into all 14 regions and, "as appropriate," using its approaches to unreached people groups in each region. CSI is the FMB's humanitarian arm, which has worked in areas of the world where traditional missionary methods are unwelcome. Under the new plan, most regions will have their own CSI-type components.

The plan also calls for the current 10 area directors who oversee work in nine geographical areas and CSI to vacate their positions during the transition. Each will be considered for reassignment to any of the new positions, but to be named to one, each must be nominated by the task force.

In other actions, trustees approved spending \$6.4 million for building renovation and improvement to the agency's Richmond, Va., facilities, to be funded by reserve and general funds.

## Youth convention challenges teens: 'Experience Calm'

**M**ore than 1,500 teens gathered at the Statehouse Convention Center in Little Rock on Good Friday to hear ways to "Survive the Storm: Experience the Calm" during the State Youth Convention.

Jeff Jones, associate pastor for education and family ministry at First Church in Monticello, said that the program "dealt with the storms that teens face in their lives and how the home ought to be the place where they experience the calm.

"It also focused on how they can develop skills and scriptural principles on how to apply the Bible in their daily lives at home and in the area of conflict in their relationships," Jones added.

The convention program featured a variety of mediums, including drama, worship and praise, speaking and a "Family Feud" game show segment that dealt with areas of conflict that teenagers face in their daily lives.

Tammy Jordan, 18, a member of Rowe's Chapel Church in Caraway, said she "enjoyed the drama and the music because of the way they can tie in a point and not be boring. They talked about storms and how everybody has storms in their lives and that they are easily taken to God."

Preaching from Matthew 18, keynote speaker Curt Bradford, a South Carolina pastor, told participants that lack of forgiveness is a storm that causes family problems.

"Even if we forgive somebody seven times or 70 times seven, we still have not forgiven other people as much as God has forgiven us," he said. "Jesus knew everything that was ever going to happen to you in your life when He said, 'Forgive others.'"

The program also featured a Bible Drill competition and a Youth Speakers Tournament. Placing first in the Bible Drill was Beverly Flagg of Bull Shoals First Church, representing White River Association and the North Central District; placing second was Joseph Ragland of Pea Ridge First Church, representing Northwest Association and the Northwest District.

Katie Stueart of Ridgeway Church in Nashville placed first in the Speakers Tournament and Nancy Rogers of Lake-side Church in Hot Springs placed second.

## 'Who do you say that I am?'



The following is a portion of the winning speech given by Katie Stueart of Ridgeway Church in Nashville at the Youth Speakers Tournament, held in conjunction with the State Youth Convention March 28 at the Statehouse Convention Center in Little Rock.

When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

"But what about you?" He asked. "Who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

What would you have said if He had asked you the question, "Who do you say that I am?" People still have trouble with this question. Less than a century ago, Rev. Nells Farrars said that Jesus Christ was the illegitimate son of a Roman soldier. If this is the belief of a supposed Christian, a man of God, you can see how confused this issue has become. I can tell you what I believe about Jesus Christ, but you must make up your own mind. What do you think? Who is Jesus Christ?

### Was Jesus a man?

Many people, and even some major religions, believe that Jesus was only a man or great moral leader of men. C. S. Lewis once said, "I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept His claim to be God. That is the one thing that we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic...or else He would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God; or else a madman or something worse." C.S. Lewis makes the point that if Jesus claimed to be the Messiah and was not, He would not be a great moral teacher. He would be crazy. Jesus did not claim to be anything less than the Messiah.

In Mark 2, Jesus took pity and healed a paralyzed man after his friends desperately lifted him down into the room. He also openly forgave his sins. His enemies, the Pharisees, were appalled and screamed that Jesus was committing blasphemy. However, He replied, "But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins..." Jesus was claiming not only to be capable of forgiveness of sins, but He was claiming to be the Messiah.

Most people who do not believe Jesus is the Messiah, do believe in some concept of God. However, as the Messiah, Jesus was one with God. The Bible compares

God with Jesus in Isaiah 43:11, saying, "I am Lord, I myself, and none but I can deliver." Later, in Titus 2:13, Paul called Jesus "God and Savior." These verses prove that Jesus was more than a man and that He and God shared the same powers.

### Was Jesus a prophet?

Some might argue that Jesus...was a prophet. Even when He was alive, people thought that He might be a reincarnation of Elijah, Jeremiah or another of the prophets. Yes, Jesus did tell the future...much like the prophets of the Old Testament, but He was much greater. God defines Jesus before He is even born in Deuteronomy 18:17-19, "I will raise up for them a prophet like me from among their brothers, I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him." In this scripture, God compares Himself to Jesus and gives proof that He was a prophet. Jesus was in fact the greatest prophet that had ever lived, but with one great difference; He was the Messiah.

### Was Jesus the Messiah?

The word "Messiah" is defined in *Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary* as "the One anointed by God and empowered by the Spirit to deliver His people and establish His kingdom." We must ask ourselves: Was Jesus anointed by God? Was He empowered by God's Spirit? Jesus shows Himself to be anointed by God in John 8:46. Jesus could not lead a blameless life unless He was anointed by God and given God's power. John 20:31 shows that God empowered Jesus. "But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name." This was His purpose. His reason for being on earth, so that He could deliver God's people.

Jesus delivered us when He died on the cross for our sins. If He was not the Messiah, Jesus was a strange person. After all, who would die for a lie? He made the ultimate sacrifice to save a world of lost people. In the end, the decision is yours.

The greatest testimony I can give to His being the Messiah is my own life. He came into my heart and changed me. I cannot say that my life is perfect or that I have handled all situations the way Christ would want me to, but I try my best. He came to earth...not merely to save us, but to give us the greatest example we can have - His life. Do not be confused; be saved. Know who Jesus is...the Son of the Living God.

# 'A world of choices'

## Campus revival gives ASU students opportunity to choose Christian life



Rex Horne, pastor of Immanuel Church in Little Rock, told about 300 students at Arkansas State University to "turn around if you're lost" during the second night of Springfest Celebration '97 campus revival, held March 31-April 1.



A campus revival that planners said was the first of its kind at Arkansas State University involved hundreds of students and resulted in several decisions.

"Springfest '97 Celebration: A World of Choices" was the product of a collaboration between the ASU Baptist Student

Union and student ministers from four Jonesboro-area churches. It was held at the university's Reng Center March 31-April 1.

Arless Dickerson, BSU director at ASU, said the event was attended by 200 students during the first night's athletes' emphasis and 300 during Tuesday's Greek emphasis. "To my knowledge, it was the largest Christian gathering of students on campus in the last 15 years."

"We are so excited about the crowds and the fact that we had a response at all," emphasized John Dresbach, associate minister of music and university students for Central Church in Jonesboro. "In today's society, students are scattered with their priorities and schedules. I was surprised by the crowd."

The event, held in conjunction with the school's Springfest activities, featured state convention president Rex Horne, pastor of Immanuel Church in Little Rock, and worship and praise led by Partners in Christ, Christian musicians from Nashville, Tenn.

Horne told students during Greek Night of a man who had told him that he had grown up "feeling worthless: that everybody else was better than he was. In fact, if he had lived as a child today, he would probably have qualified for being an abused child."

"There's a word that would be used for a person like me," the man told Horne. "The word is lost. I was lost."

"It is amazing to me to think about how Jesus moved among people," Horne remarked. "The Bible says that sinners loved being with Him. Jesus was sinless, but sinners were drawn to Him and the religious leaders of the day repelled them. It was not that He catered to them, but He cared for them."

Preaching from Luke 15, he noted that Jesus "talked to them about the word this

man used; the word lost. Lost means missing, confused, unable to find a way.

"Telling the story of the prodigal son, Jesus was not telling the story just about the young man and his father," said Horne. "This story is a story about God and men. That's the reason it's in the Bible.

"Jesus knew that I would have the opportunity to stand before 300 folks at Arkansas State University and that there would be some men and women in the group who were far away from home," he related. "It may be that you have come to the point this young man came to. He was guilty. But here he was courageous enough to go home and face up to things.

"He was convicted by guilt, but confronted by grace," Horne said. "When we are convicted by our own guilt, God confronts us with His grace. No matter who you are, no matter what you've done...God says through this story, 'I forgive you.'

"If you're lost, the God of all the universe is looking for you, just waiting for you to turn around."

"I had never looked at John 15 like that," affirmed Marci Allen, a sophomore from Jonesboro. "The way he said we look for lost things, but God is looking for us."

Eleven students responded to Horne's invitation by making professions of faith. Several others registered rededications on commitment cards provided to each student.

### Campus Impact

Calvin Key, a senior from Jacksonville and member of the ASU baseball team, said he "came both nights and I really enjoyed it. Dr. Horne's a good preacher to listen to. He's a guy who knows a lot and can talk to college students and relay it to where we can understand. The people I was sitting around enjoyed it and I would like to see it happen again. It is good for the campus."

Part of Horne's draw on students, said Dickerson, was his tie to his most famous church member, Bill Clinton. "ASU students were fascinated by the fact that there is a Baptist pastor that the president of the United States calls every week. Whether they like him (Clinton) or not, they were fascinated."

The vision for the event came from meetings between area student ministers and BSU leaders.

"It's an exciting aspect of ministry in Jonesboro," noted Allen Elkins, minister to students for Walnut Street Church in Jonesboro. "We meet together to plan things in order to reach students. We meet for one reason: to win students to Christ and meet the needs of those students that live away from home and love them."

"When we started meeting with student ministers, two things came out real strong," said Darrell Cook, associate BSU director. "One was the need for spiritual encouragement to the Christian community and the other was to reach a lot of folks hearing the gospel for the first time and to have an evangelistic push."

During one planning meeting, recalled Dickerson, one student minister "asked whether we were going to do the annual Greek breakfast and another said, 'Let's do a revival.' We had never been able to do one on campus, but I went to the new administration and they said yes."

"This is the first religious meeting we've been able to hold inside one of the rooms here," noted Nancy Burke, minister of education for First Church in Jonesboro. "We just decided this year to trust God and do it. We've been told before that we could do it, but not hold an invitation. This time we had no stipulations at all."

The revival, which Dickerson said has been tentatively planned again for next year, "is an example of collegiate ministry working the way it's supposed to."

"The churches could not have been on campus without the BSU and without the resources and manpower of the churches," he said, "and we could not have put on that kind of event."

"The churches did what was right for students and not what would benefit one church."

# 'Golden agers' urged to share faith

Millie Gill

Executive Assistant, Arkansas Baptist

**M**ore than 1,600 "golden agers" attending the 1997 Arkansas Baptist Golden Age Evangelism Conference were encouraged to celebrate and share with others what God has done for them through Christ Jesus.

The April 3-4 conference, held in Tucker Coliseum at Arkansas Tech University in Russellville, was coordinated by Paul McClung, acting director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention evangelism department.

"You are a special group which can be used by God to share the joy of your salvation with a lost world," declared actor Tom Lester, best known for his role as "Eb" on the '60s television series, *Green Acres*. He noted that "God will use you in a special way because of the knowledge that has come to you through your years of experience."

"I think each of us must realize how important it is for us to share our joy rather than letting today's sinful, worrying world lead us to become a part of it."

Lester emphasized that God will provide for all the needs that face believers today just as He daily provided manna to the Israelites for 40 years in the wilderness. "If with joy through faith we glorify God wherever we go, then He will strengthen us and provide for us in our trials and tribulations," he affirmed. "Just think how quickly our world could be changed if each one of today's 15 million Southern Baptists won one to Christ."

"We just need to be aware every day

and be excited about who we are in Jesus Christ," he concluded. "If we will do this with joy then we will see our world changed."

Marge Caldwell of Houston, Texas, encouraged participants to celebrate the Lord and share His Word with people everywhere. She used personal experiences in her life to illustrate the importance of sharing God's love, even when going through "valley experiences" such as she had experienced in having an alcoholic father, the death of her fiancé weeks prior to their marriage, a period of depression in her life and the death of a daughter.

"Though my mother had always been the Christian role model in my life and though I later married a wonderful Christian man, it took a 1952 Billy Graham crusade to bring both me and my husband, Chuck, to a mountaintop and life-changing experience with God," she shared.

Caldwell added that her father became a Christian at age 63 because he recognized the change that had come to them following the crusade. "Then my mother was able to realize all those things for which she had prayed and hoped for," she noted.

"Jesus also will give you a mountaintop experience when lives are changed because you have shared that wonderful gift of salvation with others which He has freely given to you," she continued.

"God wants you to be a joyful Christian and He loves you unconditionally," she declared. "He also has forgiven and will continue to forgive all of your sins, as far as the east is the from the west."

Harper Shannon, retired associate execu-



Marge Caldwell of Houston, Texas, encouraged seniors to celebrate their Lord and share their faith with others.

utive secretary and director of evangelism for the Alabama Baptist Convention, challenged senior adults to continue to boldly remember and celebrate with others the forgiveness of God.

"As you remember what God has done through Christ Jesus for you," he said, "then you will make a phone call or go boldly to share with someone concerning the redemptive power of the Lord Jesus Christ." He also encouraged participants to fill daily gaps with prayer. "Christians are commanded by God to pray and if they don't pray than their souls shrivel up and die."

Emil Turner, ABCS executive director, encouraged the senior adults to assist him in reaching the lost in Arkansas for Jesus Christ. "The Great Commission commands us to bring the lost to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ," he said.

"However, in my first year as your executive director as I have visited in Arkansas Baptist churches, I have found a myriad of opinions of what churches and Christians need to do," he added. "These have included anything from changing styles of worship and music to enforcing church discipline and strengthening education programs."

He emphasized that the thing most needed in churches is for members to return to sharing with joy the love of Jesus with boys, girls, men and women. "I would suggest to you that what Arkansas Baptist churches need is the heart-crushing urgency of reaching the lost for Jesus Christ whose heart is still broken for the lost in this world."

## Senior evangelism theme: 'Celebrate Jesus'

"Celebrate Jesus 2000," an evangelistic emphasis coordinated by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, will be the evangelism focus for Arkansas Baptist senior adults through the end of this century, according to Paul McClung, acting director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention evangelism department.

McClung said the statewide emphasis is in response to the state convention's Bold Mission Thrust goal established in 1978 to carry the gospel to everyone in the state by the end of the year 2000. The state goal was adopted in conjunction with the national BMT goal set by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1976.

"Senior adults are a powerful resource that our state, as well as the Southern Baptist Convention, has for reaching the lost," McClung said. "They have discretionary time and money, they are healthier than they have ever been, they don't want to be put on the shelf and they need something significant to do in their future."

"Evangelism can be that significant thing and our department is committed to assist and train them in reaching the lost of our state," he remarked. "Success will come as senior adults form community survey teams and witnessing teams in which they will carry the gospel door-to-door so that everyone will have the opportunity to hear the gospel and respond. Churches can request us to assist in training efforts, as well as seed-sowing events and relationship-building projects."

Training materials are available by contacting McClung at P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203; phone 1-800-838-ABSC, ext. 5132.

## TRANSITIONS

**Milton Cowling** began serving April 6 as pastor of First Church of Dardanelle, coming there from First Church of Prescott. He previously was pastor of Oakridge Church of Mineral Wells, Texas. He also has served on the staff of First Southern Church of Bryant and First Church of Warren. He is a graduate of Southern Arkansas University in Magnolia and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Rozan, have two children, Ross and Laura.

**Terry Fortner** began serving April 6 as pastor of Zion Hill Church of Cabot, coming there from First Church of Clever, Mo. He previously was pastor of other churches in Missouri and Texas. Fortner is a graduate of Wayland University in Plainview, Texas, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Robbie, have four children, Jon, Ricky, Mark and Abbey.

**Zake Moore** began his ministry April 6 as pastor of Greenlee Church of Pine Bluff. He is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Moore and his wife, Ruth, will move to Pine Bluff from Shelbyville, Ky., where he has been pastor of Buffalo Lick Church.

**James Bynum** began his ministry April 6 as pastor of South Pine Wood Church of Pine Bluff. He is a graduate of Williams Baptist College and Hardin-Simmons University of Abilene, Texas. Bynum and his wife, Cheryl, will come to Pine Bluff from Abilene where he has been pastor of Immanuel Church.

**Barry Dean Bates** joined the staff of First Church of Marion April 1 as minister of music and youth, coming there from First Church of Smackover where he had served in a similar position. He previously has served on the staff of other churches in Arkansas and Texas. Bates is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Vicki, also have served two years as Southern Baptist foreign missionaries in Portugal. They have two children, Traci and Kelsey.

**Jimmy Holness** has accepted the call to join the staff of Danville Church as associate pastor and minister to youth. He will come there from Cedarville where he has served on the staff of First Church.

**James David Hughes** will join the staff of First Church of Siloam Springs May 4 as minister of youth and education. He previously has been a staff member of

churches in Texas. Hughes is a graduate of East Texas Baptist University in Marshall and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Katrina, have a daughter, Hannah Rene.

**Halley Reed** will begin serving May 18 as summer intern youth leader for Parkway Place Church of Little Rock. A native of Marianna, she is a sophomore at the University of Arkansas.

**Al and Beth Major** of West Helena and members of First Church of Helena are in Naples, Italy, where he is serving as pastor of the International Church of Naples, formerly known as Calvary Church. The Majors were recently in the Czech Republic with the International Church of Prague. He previously was interim pastor of West Acres Church of West Helena and retired in 1986 as pastor of Elaine Church.

**Paul Silvio** has resigned as part-time minister of music for First Church of Glenwood. He has moved to Arkadelphia where he is a faculty member at Arkadelphia High School.

**Richard Maness** has resigned as pastor of Immanuel Church in Fort Smith to serve as associate pastor of Trinity Church in Pocola, Okla.

**Joese W. Whitby** recently completed 10 months of service as supply pastor for Greenlee Church in Pine Bluff. He may be contacted at 9110 E. Sardis Road, Mabelvale, AR 72103; phone 501-557-2540.

**Sharon Kemp** has resigned as minister of youth for First Church of Glenwood with plans to enroll in seminary this fall. He currently is available to serve as a supply preacher or to lead revivals. Kemp may be contacted at P.O. Box 2128, Glenwood, AR 71943; phone 870-356-4880.

## CHURCH LIFE

**Mount Holborn Church** of Joy dedicated a new church building April 6, one year after construction was begun. The facility was dedicated debt-free because of labor provided by volunteers from the church, community and Calvary Association. Nalldenders for Jesus framed the building in September 1996. Harry Black, director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Brotherhood department, preached the dedication message. Harold Hansell is pastor.

**Della Vista Church** has begun home Bible studies in the Highlands with a goal of constituting a new church within three

years. Members also approved a building committee recommendation to initiate a program for building a new auditorium on the present site of the church.

**Six Arkansas Baptist churches**, including Third Street Church of Arkadelphia, First Church of Hope, Lake Hamilton Church of Hot Springs, Rover Church, Strawfellow Church of Jonesboro and Eastside Church of Paragould were recently involved in two mission construction teams serving in Belize. The volunteers funded and constructed a three-bedroom block home for an indigenous pastor, Carlos Balaam, and his family. They also led evening revival services which resulted in nine professions of faith. The trip was coordinated by evangelist Phillip Brown of Arkadelphia, president of the Arkansas Festival of Evangelists, and his son, Brandon Brown, of Jonesboro.

**Little Rock Second Church** will observe *Jaque Jones Day* on April 27. Jones, who retired March 31 following 45 years of service as pastor's secretary, will be recognized during the morning worship service.

**Hector First Church** will host a Nalldenders for Jesus construction project May 1-17. Volunteers will assist in the construction of a new 5,200-square-foot sanctuary. Additional information is available by calling Harry Black at 501-376-4791, ext. 5158, or David Maddox at 501-642-3413.

**Pine Bluff First Church** is launching a new prayer ministry as the result of a recent Disciple's Prayer Life course. The initial goal of the ministry is to organize and furnish a prayer room. Ann Clague and Carolyn Howell are serving as the prayer ministry coordinators.

## OBITUARIES

**Raymon A. Jackson** of Hot Springs died March 23 at age 97. He had been a member of Park Place Church in Hot Springs since 1928, serving there as a deacon and church treasurer for more than 30 years and as a Sunday School department director. Survivors are a daughter, Helen B. Turman; eight grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren; and one great-great-grandchild.

**Ray Edward Snider** of Camden died April 7 at age 83. He was a member of First Church of Camden where he served as a deacon and Sunday School teacher. He was owner of Snider Oil Company and Snider Mobile Homes. Survivors are his wife, Ruby I. Snider of Camden, a former president of Arkansas Woman's Missionary Union; three sons, R. Edward Snider Jr. of Arkadelphia, Clyde H. Snider and Robert L. Snider, both of Little Rock; six grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren. Memorials may be made to First Church in Camden.

**Ouachita Baptist University** recently honored three retiring directors of missions at a banquet on campus. OBU president Ben Elrod (far left) presented plaques to (left to right) Harrison Johns of Centennial Association, Jimmie Gerner of Trinity Association and Billy Kite of Ashley Association.



**Hot Springs Church** observed its first anniversary of ministry April 6 by breaking ground for an estimated \$3 million multi-purpose building on property located at 144 Weston Road. The 48,500-square-foot facility will house an 850-seat worship center, educational rooms, administrative offices, a library, fellowship area and kitchen. The church had a Sunday School high attendance goal of 513 with 620 in worship and 650 at the groundbreaking service. Participants included (left to right) member Frances Bayless, interim pastor Bill Steeger, location committee chairman Gene Coombe, bank executive Steve Moore, building committee chairman Jim Hale, constitution committee chairman J.E. Sanders, budget and finance chairman Terry Brown, groundbreaking chairman Martha Walker, architect representative John McMorran and building representative Larry Hill.



**Mount Carmel Church of Cabot** recently dedicated a \$2 million building project which included sanctuary renovation as well as the addition of both a 20,000-square-foot educational facility and a 5,000-square-foot gym and the purchase of seven acres of property to add to the church's existing 18 acres. This project completed the church's three-year plan which included the elimination of a \$225,000 debt; calling a minister of education and constructing new facilities to meet expected growth needs. Participating in the dedication were (left to right) building committee chairman Danny Vance, pastor Mitch Tapson, architect Darrel Odom and fund-raising campaign chairman David Land.



**"Sharing the Love of Christ"** was the theme for the 50th anniversary celebration of Park Hill Church in North Little held April 5-6. Activities included a men's prayer breakfast, ladies' coffee, Saturday evening banquet and two Sunday morning worship services, followed by a noon luncheon. Park Hill has grown from 94 charter members to a current membership of 3,486. The church has had three pastors in its history, including the late Taylor Stanfill and Rheaun South and current pastor Cary Heard. Former ministers of music (left to right) Jim Raymick, Max Alexander and David Doty and current minister of music Joe Fitzpatrick provided special banquet music.

**University Church of Fayetteville** held its first services in its new sanctuary Palm Sunday, March 23, and had a high attendance of 2,000 people on Easter Sunday. The 1,600-seat facility will be dedicated April 27 at 4 p.m., with Gov. Mike Huckabee as the guest speaker. In addition to the sanctuary, choir area and balcony, the 75,000-square-foot facility valued at \$8.2 million includes rehearsal rooms for choir, orchestra and handbells as well as classrooms and kitchen and space for future expansion. H.D. McCarty has served as senior pastor since 1964.

# Leadership Profile for ABSC Nominating Committee

Members of the Nominating Committee for the 1997 Arkansas Baptist State Convention want Arkansas Baptists to submit names of persons to that committee to consider when they bring the convention nominations for state committees and boards.

This recommendation will not insure nomination, but the committee will consider each recommendation. The committee will not contact any person recommended until they approve the nominations. The Nominating Committee will hold its first meeting in early August and needs all recommendations no later than May 30.

Members of the committee: Rodney Reeves, chairman; Bob Harper; Bill Hatfield; Ed Hinkson; Don Nali; Roy Parker; Lew Sorrells; C.B. Thompson; Don Walsh.

## May 30 is the deadline for recommendations

Nominee \_\_\_\_\_  Layperson  Minister Age \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Member of what church? \_\_\_\_\_ Association \_\_\_\_\_

### Current leadership responsibilities

Professional \_\_\_\_\_

Civic \_\_\_\_\_

Church \_\_\_\_\_

Association \_\_\_\_\_

State or SBC Boards \_\_\_\_\_

### Past leadership experience (within last five years)

State or SBC Boards \_\_\_\_\_

Association \_\_\_\_\_

Local Church \_\_\_\_\_

### Personal

This person's greatest contributions, based on his or her past record, knowledge and experience, should be in the area of:

Is this person currently active in a local church? \_\_\_\_\_

Is this person able to be away from family and work for at least one or two days, three times a year?  Yes  No

Give the name and phone number of at least one person, other than his or her pastor or director of missions, who knows of the nominee's involvement in Baptist life. \_\_\_\_\_

On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rank this person's understanding of and commitment to the way Southern Baptists work together? (Circle) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Check the board, committee or commission on which you believe this person could best serve.

#### Board of Trustees

- Executive Board
- Baptist Memorial Health Care System, Inc., Memphis
- Children's Homes and Family Ministries
- Foundation
- Ouachita Baptist University
- Williams Baptist University
- Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

#### Committees and Commission

- History Commission
- BSU Advisory Committee
- Constitution and Bylaws Committee
- Convention Program Committee

**MAIL THIS FORM TO:**  
**JOY FAUCETT**  
c/o Executive Director's Office  
P.O. Box 552  
Little Rock, AR 72203

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

(Name of person making this recommendation)

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

# HMB cuts, job offers begin for new agency

ATLANTA (ABP/BP)—Layoffs at the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board began April 1, according to Gary Jones, HMB vice president of services. He said the process of hiring staff for the North American Mission Board and terminating those employees who will not be offered positions will continue for two to three weeks.

The notification process primarily began with clerical and lower-level professional staff. Layoffs in trustee-elected management positions will follow.

Jones said the exact number of positions offered and number of people being terminated will not be available until completion of the process. He said 27 positions were offered and 15 HMB employees were severed the first day of the process. All positions being offered are subject to action by the new board of directors at an organizational meeting in Dallas June 19.

The process was approved by the Implementation Task Force, an SBC Executive Committee-appointed group which has guided the creation of NAMB as part of the denomination's restructuring.

Officials have said the new agency will employ 350 workers—165 fewer than the combined payrolls of the three affected agencies: the HMB, Brotherhood Commission and Radio and Television Commission. The restructuring, approved in convention votes in 1995 and 1996, also phased out several smaller SBC agencies.

## Counseling, assistance offered

Most of the people in HMB jobs being eliminated were given four weeks' severance pay and terminated within two days.

That decision is intended to help laid-off workers get a jump on job markets before a glut is caused by upcoming graduations, according to Martin King, the HMB's director of public relations and development. Pastoral counseling and assistance in job searches also are being offered to terminated employees.

People offered new jobs were given a position description and salary range and given a week to decide. Some accepted jobs immediately, King said, while others said they needed time to decide. The workers must decide before knowing who

their new bosses might be, he noted.


Those offered NAMB positions say they are excited about being part of the new agency but are hurting for co-workers who will not be.

"This time of transition is difficult," said Lois Mitchell, a secretary in the promotions department who has accepted a similar position in NAMB. "But I am thrilled to be part of something that could have such a tremendous impact on North America and eternity."

Reactions from employees have been varied, Jones noted. "Some staff are surprised and some are hurt, but most knew the possibility of their separation and have accepted it," he said. "Many have expressed their reliance on the Lord and say they trust God to care for them in this transition."

HMB interim president Ernest Kelley urged Southern Baptists to pray for the staff as they experience this difficult time and for those who will be a part of the new agency.

"We trust that God has been and continues to guide all those who are shaping this new organization which will have the awesome task of helping our churches reach North America for Jesus Christ," Kelley added.



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# The UBC Sanctuary Dedication

A Sanctuary for Classic Christianity

Sunday, April 27, 1997, 4:00 p.m.

We invite all former members and friends of our ministry  
to be present for this celebration of thanksgiving and praise.

*Special Guest Speaker:*

**the Honorable Mike Huckabee, Governor of Arkansas**

*Guest Musician*

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**Dr. H.D. McCarty**

Senior Pastor of UBC  
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The new Sanctuary Complex of 80,000 square feet doubles the church's facilities.

The former Worship Center has been renamed the Chapel of the Dove.

After remodeling, it will serve as the main center for the church's collegiate ministry.

*Guest pastors leading us in this dedication include:*

Dr. Jere Mitchell, First Baptist Church, Fayetteville

Rev. Aaron Hawkins, St. James Baptist Church, Fayetteville

Rev. Tony Holifield, Central United Methodist Church, Fayetteville

Rev. Steve Dixon, Christian Life Cathedral, Fayetteville

Dr. Ronnie Floyd, First Baptist Church, Springdale

Dr. Robert Cupp, Fellowship Bible Church, Lowell

A reception honoring the Governor and other guests will be held in the spacious lobby areas and in the beautiful new Legacy Room immediately following the Service of Dedication.

We ask for your prayers that the Lord Jesus alone will receive all the honor.

*"The Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes." —Psalm 113:23*

**University Baptist Church**

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## MK, age 16, dies in Kenya

NAIROBI, KENYA (BP)—Benjamin Ray Perkins, 16-year-old son of Southern Baptist foreign missionaries Ken and Beth Perkins, died early Easter Sunday, March 30, in Nairobi, Kenya, during a severe asthma attack. His parents are involved in relief and development work in east Africa from a base in Nairobi.

Ben, a student at Rosslyn Academy in Nairobi, suffered the attack about 1:30 a.m. and died on the way to the hospital, despite injections of medication and attempts to resuscitate him.

"Ben was a leader in his class, a fine student and an outstanding Christian young man," said a friend of the family. Ben had recently told his mother that after college he wanted to return to Kenya as a journeyman.

A funeral service was held April 5, in Nairobi, with burial in a cemetery there. Ben is survived by his parents; two brothers, Jeremy and Jesse; his maternal grandparents, Jesse and Elva Stricker of Louisville, Ky.; and his paternal grandfather, R.C. Perkins of Owenton, Ky.

## 1997 SBC Mission Day Camp, housing changes announced

DALLAS (BP)—Children attending Missions Day Camp during the 1997 Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting, June 17-19, will be able to visit the Dallas Aquarium; experience hands-on, interactive experiments at The Science Place; watch a show at the IMAX theater; and picnic on the Texas State Fair grounds.

Other features will include a show from Bunny Martin, "the yo-yo guy," and a trip on the DART train to the Dallas Zoo.

The SBC Missions Day Camp is for boys and girls who will have completed grades K-6 by camp time and whose parents are attending the annual meeting. The camp provides a missions education program during daytime sessions of the SBC annual meeting, Tuesday through Thursday.

Parents who had children registered in Missions Day Camp last year will receive a pre-registration packet. Parents who did not have children in last year's day camp may call 214-969-2447 for information.

A three-day option of \$75 per child is available as well as a two-day option of \$60 or a one-day option of \$40.

In other convention-related developments, 600 rooms in a major Dallas hotel

have become unavailable for the SBC, necessitating transferring reservations to other hotels, according to convention manager Jack Wilkerson, SBC Executive Committee vice president for business and finance.

The Wyndham Anatole Hotel in the Market Center area of Dallas notified Wilkerson recently that the rooms previously reserved under contract for the convention would not be available because of a scheduling conflict.

"The Dallas Convention and Visitors Bureau housing office is working with us to quickly relocate all reservations and groups to hotel properties of comparable value and quality. Through agreement with the Wyndham Anatole, persons moved to other hotels will not pay more than the rate which the Wyndham Anatole had guaranteed," Wilkerson said.

All persons who held reservations with the Wyndham Anatole hotel will be notified of the change, he said. Questions may be directed to the Dallas Convention and Visitors Bureau Housing Office at 1-800-792-1029 or to SBC housing coordinator Lynn Richmond at 615-782-8612.

## Southwestern at Little Rock

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# Southwestern connection offers seminary training in Little Rock

"You can receive ministerial training in Little Rock," emphasized Burton Perry, Arkansas Baptist State Convention assistant director for theological education. He noted that Arkansians can receive a master of divinity degree through Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary with a minimum of travel to Southwestern's campus in Fort Worth, Texas.

"In 1990, *Christianity Today* indicated that Southwestern Seminary is the number one seminary in the nation," Perry added. "The magazine surveyed 1,000 evangelical Christians and out of that survey, the seminary ranked overall number one using the criteria of affordability, majors available, career training, campus facilities, academic reputation, doctrinal soundness and spiritual atmosphere.

"The dominant element of all of these attributes is career training," he pointed out. "Southwestern is bringing to Little Rock the tremendous career training elements that it uses on its Fort Worth campus. We in Arkansas, with our pastoral corps, have available the educational elements that are meaningful to church life."

Perry noted that Southwestern training in Little Rock can "lead to a master's degree which is available in four years of study, nearly all of which is done here off-campus. A minimal number of hours is required by the American Theological Society accrediting agency. These campus credits can be earned by attending concentrated, short-term courses on the campus during the summers."

### Preparing for ministry

Dianne Swaim, a member of Second Church in Little Rock, expects to graduate with a master of divinity degree from the Little Rock program in May. She said that although she could choose from one of several degrees, she chose the divinity degree because "God called me into the ministry, but not the pastorate. The master of divinity is a great way to educate yourself if for no other reason than to prepare for whatever God has in store for you."

Swaim noted that the Little Rock off-campus center "is the best-kept secret in

Arkansas. It is wonderful for training but also wonderful for lay training."

She recommended the program not only for prospective pastors and ministers, but also "for Sunday School teachers, women's ministry leaders and other laypeople in the local church."

The Little Rock classes, held Mondays at the Baptist Building, "offer three classes a day in the theological arena and one a day concurrently in the religious education field," Perry explained. "The concentrated courses are one week in length, Monday-Friday, and usually include pre-class work assigned by the professor and a post-class term paper."

Perry emphasized that the cost for classes at the Little Rock campus "is a good deal because of the Cooperative Program," explaining that a semester tuition for students is approximately \$100 per semester hour for Southern Baptist students. "Scholarships are available and easy terms are available," he added.

Individuals interested in beginning the registration process may contact Southwestern's director of admissions at 1-800-792-8701 and ask for an admissions package or call Perry at 1-800-838-ABSC ext. 4279.

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## Berryville church closes day care

Why would an Arkansas Baptist church vote to abruptly shut down its day care center following 11 years of operation? There's more to it than recent media reports indicate, according to Clyde Gray, pastor of First Church, Berryville.

The congregation's recent actions have been reported by Associated Press, "Good Morning America," Religious News Service and other state and national media.

It is accurate that the day care board notified parents in February that the church planned to close the center in May due to philosophical concerns over enabling mothers to work outside the home. Gray added, however, that the church's decision last month to immediately shut down the center was due to "an unmanageably volatile situation" sparked by disgruntled day care workers and parents.

After notifying staff members and parents in February of the initial plan to close the center, the church began to receive "ugly phone calls and letters," Gray said. That was followed by a series of "deliberate abuses of the resources of the church."

Noting that the uproar "was giving us a real black eye in the community," Gray added, "The situation was creating a bad environment in the community and a bad environment for the children in the day care." After deliberating in business meeting for an hour and a half and determining that "we couldn't keep the day care center open any longer," church members voted unanimously to immediately close the operation.

Acknowledging the hardship on parents caused by the timing of the church's action, Gray said church members agreed to refund a week's tuition to each family and to provide \$50 per family to compensate for a day's lost wages.

One primary concern raised by media reports is that the day care board initially mailed parents a 10-point statement published by Bill Gothard that describes the practice of mothers working outside the home as unscriptural. The February letter from the day care board also claims that many mothers work outside the home to provide "two vehicles, a big TV, a microwave, new clothes, eating out, nice vacations, etc."

Insisting that he and the congregation "don't have an axe to grind with day care, per se," Gray said church members decided that "operating a day care was sending a mixed signal with home and family values. We want to be conscientious about the message that we're sending out."

## TRAINING

### Workshop offers computer users practical help

The "Help! I Have a Computer!" workshop, scheduled for May 20 at Park Hill Church in North Little Rock, will answer several of the most-asked questions many church staff member have about their computers, said Jimmie Sheffield, associate executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

He noted that the individual workshops "are designed for you if you are just beginning to use a computer or are interested in using computers in the areas of your church's ministry." The program will feature five workshops, including:

■ "Using the Computer in Sermon Preparation," featuring Bill Steeger, chairman of Ouachita Baptist University's religion department.

■ "Using the Computer in Publications," featuring Jan Kelley, director of ABSC media services.

■ "On Being Part of the Information Highway" with OBU staff member Bill Phelps demonstrating the use of electronic mail and the Internet.

■ "Accounting Made Easy," featuring a representative of Shelby Systems discussing several accounting systems currently available to churches.

■ "Selecting a Computer," with Al Farmer, ABSC computer services manager, answering questions about hardware, software, printers and networking.

The program will begin at 10 a.m. and conclude with a "Computer Fair" at 5 p.m. The workshop cost is \$10 per person.

To register by May 12 or for additional information, contact Sheffield toll-free in state at 1-800-838-ABSC or locally in Little Rock at 376-4791, ext. 5103.

### **MK** prayer calendar

Missionary kids with birthdays in May attending college in Arkansas:

■ May 5: Joel Gaddis, OBU Box 4188, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001; senior from Malaysia.

■ May 15: John Davidson, OBU Box 3098; senior from Nigeria.

■ May 22; Khara Milam, OBU Box 4174; freshman from Indonesia.

■ May 24: Ryan Vaughn, OBU Box 3954; freshman from Senegal.

■ May 25: Joanna Bruce, OBU Box 3836; sophomore from Guatemala.

■ May 26: Nathan Cartwright, OBU Box 4158; sophomore from the Philippines.

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**Position** — Full-time minister to youth. First Baptist Church, Shawnee, Oklahoma. Please submit detailed resume. Send to P.O. Box 1928, Shawnee, OK 74802-1928.

**Accepting resumes** — Kansas City, Missouri, area church is currently seeking a full-time minister of music and youth. Send resume to: Personnel Committee, Linden Baptist Church, 611 NE 69th, Kansas City, MO 64118.

**Needed** — Pastors, ministers of music, youth and education. We compile a list of ministry vacancies each month. For information, send a S.A.S.E. to the Southern Baptist Connection, Box 86653, Baton Rouge, LA 70879-6653.

**Needed** — Full-time minister of youth, education and activities for growing church in growing community. Salary commensurate with education and experience. Send resume to Search Committee, Union Hill Baptist Church, 460 S. Summit Dr., Hots Summit, MO 65043-1434.

**Seeking** — Bivocational pastor for small rural church. Send resumes to: Sulphur Springs Baptist Church, Pulpit Search Committee, 9127 Sulphur Springs Road, Pine Bluff, AR 71603.

**Wanted** — Music director and assistant to the pastor. This is a full-time position including the music program and assisting in outreach. Send resume with references to: First Baptist Church, 2 S.E. Jefferson, P.O. Box 357, Idabel, OK 74745, 405-286-3379.

**Accepting resumes** — for bivocational pastor. Small country church. Hector FBC, P.O. Box 18, Hector, AR 72843.

**Accepting** — full-time youth and education director resumes. Send to: First Baptist Church, 600 Franklin, Helena, AR 72342.

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**Immediate openings** — Oklahoma Baptist Homes for Children has immediate openings for loving, Christian couples to be houseparents at Baptist Children's Homes, Owasso, Okla., call Tandy James at 918-272-2233; and at Boys Ranch Town, Edmond, Okla., call George Whitekeller at 405-341-3608.

**Vans** — New & used for sale. Contact Ken Griffin 501-646-2000, Fort Smith, Ark.

Classified ads must be submitted in writing to the ABN office no less than 10 days prior to the date of publication desired. Ad rate: 90 cents per word.

## Discipleship Institute to focus on strengthening the family

Arkansas Baptists' 1997 Institute for Christian Discipleship will focus on "Strengthening the Family" May 12-13 at Parkway Place Church in Little Rock.

Bob Holley, director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention discipleship and family ministry department, said the institute "is planned especially to give support to the ABSC emphasis for 1997 on 'Strengthening the Family.'"

He emphasized that the institute's "speakers, special features and a wide variety of workshops will challenge participants to lead their churches to address those issues and concerns that impact families" during five sessions beginning Monday at 1:30 p.m. and concluding Tuesday night.

The program will feature keynote speakers Irene Indico, Calvin Miller and Gary Chapman.

Indico, a nationally-known radio talk show host from Seattle, Wash., will speak on grandparenting during the Monday afternoon session. She is the author of *Grandparenting by Grace and Grandparenting Redefined*.

Miller, professor of communications and ministry studies at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, will speak Monday night and Chapman, associate pastor and marriage counselor at First Baptist Church, Winston-Salem, N.C., will be Tuesday night's speaker. Chapman is the author of *Covenant Marriage: Communication and Intimacy, The Five*

*Love Languages and Building Relationships: A Discipleship Guide for Married Couples*.

The institute program also will feature a variety of workshops, including: "Christian Sexuality Education," "Marriage Enrichment Leadership Training" and "Life Support Group Ministry" led by Betty Hassler, a consultant in the discipleship and family development division of the Baptist Sunday School Board, and "Counsel for the Newly and Newly Married" led by Phil Waugh, also a BSSB consultant.

David Carter, BSSB Life/MasterLife Specialist, will lead two workshops introducing the newly designed MasterLife materials. These workshops will offer help to those who are new to MasterLife as well as experienced MasterLife leaders who are making the transition to the newly designed materials.

Other workshops will focus on: "Preaching to Strengthen Families," "Building Relationships," "Jesus on Leadership," "Ministering to Senior Adults," "The Blending Family," Christian Sexuality Education" and "Developing Ministries with Single Parents."

The cost for the institute is \$10 per person. There is no cost for those attending the evening sessions only.

For more information or to register by May 7, contact Holley at the ABSC discipleship and family ministry department toll-free in state at 1-800-838-ABSC or locally in Little Rock at 876-4791, ext. 5160.



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### Family Bible **Church of the open door**

By Grant Ethridge, pastor,  
 First Church, Lavaca

**Basic passage:**  
 Revelation 3:7-22

**Focal passage:**  
 Revelation 3:7-9; 14:20

**Central truth:**  
 With the open doors God has  
 given us, there is no place for  
 mediocrity.

**T**his is the church of the open door. There is no rebuke, only praise. Christ is the Holy One. He is the True One. He is the one who can open doors for you that no man can shut. All of us struggle with opportunities. We need to remember that Jesus holds the key to life and happiness. Too often we try to open doors ourselves. We need to spend less time recommending ourselves and trust God to guide us. Believers have great potential and opportunities. Do not ignore or neglect them.

With opportunity comes obstacles and opposition. The synagogue of Satan tried to hinder the church. Satan tries to hold back every true church. Are you looking at the opportunities or the obstacles? Remember the battle is the Lord's. He will humiliate those who oppose His work. As we walk through open doors, we must say confidently, "If God be for us, who can be against us." Hold fast and be an overcomer!

The church of Laodicea was a worldly church.

It was a wealthy church but did not know how poor off it really was. They were not cold or hot.

How is your spiritual temperature? When a believer is comfortable, complacent, and indifferent, it is a dangerous place to be. If we are not careful, Christian families seek to be fashionable, but end up foolish.

James 4:4 settles the issue. "...Friendship with the world is enmity with God. Whoever therefore is the friend of the world is an enemy of God." Revelation 3:20 is written to the church and Christians.

Is Jesus left on the outside of your life? Do you lack enthusiasm concerning spiritual things? No Christian family is helpless and no situation is hopeless if only you will repent. According to verse 19, God loves us so much, He can not let his children get by with our sins.

Jesus says, "Behold I come quickly." Return to Him today!

**R**ecorded in the book of Acts are the acts of the Holy Spirit, not the apostles. He has empowered the church in order to bear witness of Christ in the world.

The command is that we all witness, no exceptions. A witness is one who testifies of the truth, telling what he has seen and heard. We are to bear the truth of Jesus to the world. While there is a gift allocated for evangelists, there is no gift of evangelism. It is a divine expectation. We are even given the strategy. Acts 1:8 outlines the book of Acts in the expansion of the gospel. It starts at home, reaches to our neighbors and fellow citizens and extends to strangers and foreigners alike.

■ **Empowered on Pentecost** (vv. 1-8). Pentecost, also known as "First Fruits," is one of three great Jewish festivals. Held 50 days after Passover, it celebrated the giving of the law at Sinai as well. Tradition holds that at that time all nations were represented, but only Israel accepted the covenant.

■ **The phenomena that accompanies the outpouring of the Spirit symbolize the presence of God.** Not visionary in their appearance, they are actual realities, both seen and heard by all.

The effect of the Spirit's coming is that they were all filled, inaugurating the church as the body of Christ to bear witness. It was a unique, unrepeatable event, the dawning of a new era. Here it was both a baptism and a filling. Let us be careful to distinguish the two. Since Pentecost, the baptism is a once-for-all act at the time of conversion (I Cor. 12:13), while the filling is a command that bears repeating (Eph. 5:18).

■ **The tongues spoken were foreign languages previously unspoken by the disciples.** It could have been unnecessary, seeing that Greek was universally understood, but notice, "each one heard them speaking in his own language." Miracle! One might say that this is a reversal of Babel (Gen. 11:1-8) and, in light of the intertestamental Jewish tradition concerning the giving of the law at Sinai, the list of representative nations in verses 9-11 have even more significance. Pentecost was the giving of the new covenant to the nations.

The disciples were emboldened to proclaim the good news of God's salvation to the multitudes. We are empowered to do the same.

### Life and Work **The church empowered**

By Rahdy P. Magar, pastor,  
 Newark Southern Church

**Basic passage:**  
 Acts 1,2

**Focal passage:**  
 Acts 1:8; 2:1-8

**Central truth:**  
 The church is empowered to bear  
 witness of Christ.

**A**fter the exodus from Egypt, the children of Israel lived in tribes within a very loose-knit society. Following the death of the priest Eli, Samuel became the sole leader of the Israelites. Samuel tried to bring the fragments of the nation back together to serve the Lord. His sons, like Eli's, were too corrupt to become judges; so what would become of the nation after Samuel died?

This sets the scene for our focal passage. The people come to Samuel and ask for a king, "like all of the other nations." Samuel took this request as rejection of his leadership. The Lord told Samuel that it was not only rejection of Samuel but rejection of the Lord.

What did the people want? Was it iron swords (v. 20), like some of the other nations, so that they would have strong armies? Or was it a desire for something tangible to worship such as idols, like many of their neighbors. This rejection caused grief to the Lord.

The children of Israel had cried out to the Lord,

just as they did when they were in Egypt. We see that he again heard their cries (9:16), though they did not receive exactly what they asked for. His answer to their prayers for a king was not "as all the other nations." Their king was to be a bit different. The footnote in the NIV Bible states that God is always sovereign over the nations in His providential control. He chose their king, and the king was made personally responsible to God for his actions.

Our God is sovereign and He will intervene in our lives when we serve Him and involve Him in all aspects of our life.

Today we often want to be like everybody else, "like all of the other nations." We want to have what everybody else has, and want to do what everybody else does, so we pray that the Lord will provide. When we serve Him in faithfulness, He hears and answers our prayers. The answer may not be "like everybody else," but He will provide what we need just as He did the Israelites.

### Explore the Bible **God is a sovereign God**

By Katsy McAllister, member,  
 First Church, El Dorado

**Basic passage:**  
 I Samuel 8:1-12:25

**Focal passage:**  
 I Samuel 8:4-8, 20; 9:16

**Central truth:**  
 God provides for His people.

**T**hese two chapters are about worship. It is not so important how we worship as it is **Who** we worship. Our worship on earth should be patterned after the worship that is ongoing in Heaven.

Satan may appear to be winning on earth, but believers know that God is still in control. He rules over all and will not be defeated. The rainbow depicts the grace of God. It is seen on earth after a storm. Christians have the assurance of God's grace even before the storms of life come. Judgment is coming, but those who trust in Jesus need not fear. God is as good as His word and will keep His promises.

The living creatures and the 24 elders represent all of God's creation and people worshipping Him. We worship the creator because He is worthy. Heaven is a place of worship. If you don't like to be with God's people and sing praises to His name, you are going to be miserable in Heaven!

The question asked in Chapter 5 is, "Who is

worthy?" We live in a world that worships self. Satan desires worship. However, Jesus is the only one who has earned the right to be worshipped because of His supreme sacrifice for sin. John was so carried away that he overlooked the Lamb. On earth, people can get so caught up that they miss the Lord Jesus Christ who is both Lion and Lamb. Is there something missing in your life?

Once John saw Jesus, he could not take his eyes off of Him. He is both creator and redeemer. They sing a new song to Him and shout with a loud voice, "Amen!" Heaven is a real place of worship. Christians need to prepare for the shouting and singing that will take place up there. No one ever goes to sleep in a worship service in Heaven!

Incense denotes prayer. Every believer needs to make prayer and praise a regular part of your life. The way we worship on Sunday, is a witness. The way we worship all during the week should become a way of life.

**R**omans 6:8 is a treatment of the doctrine of sanctification. These characterize a new life of the believer by holiness, freedom (from the law) and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. In chapter 8, life in the Spirit results in victory, status, hope and assurance. Let us focus on our victory.

■ **Victory over Sin** (vv. 1-8) The opposite of justification is condemnation. No longer condemned, we are free, having been acquitted of our guilt and sin by the atoning work of Christ. Not just simply pardoned, but declared innocent. Paul begins to contrast two differing principles that rule our lives, the law of sin and death and the law of spirit of life. The former kills, the latter gives life. It is the unregenerate verses the regenerate.

How? God the Father acted in our behalf by sending His Son, who became like us, to die in our stead. The incarnation and atonement are two elements of the gospel. No longer ruled by the flesh, but by the Spirit. We are not empowered just to keep the law unto salvation. That's justification by works. We are empowered from within to a conduct heretofore made impossible by the law. That's sanctification. In verses 5-8, Paul further elaborates

on the consequences of life ruled by the flesh as opposed to the benefits of life ruled by the Spirit.

■ **Victory over Death** (vv. 9-11). In verse 9, we find a clear-cut argument that we are indwelt by the Spirit at the very moment of conversion (of 1 Cor. 12-13). There is no waiting upon a second blessing or baptism unto holiness. If so, it would then follow that the Spirit would be absent between conversion and the so-called second Blessing. That contradicts what Paul writes, "He lives in you!" Furthermore, a person without the Spirit does not belong to Christ (of 1 Cor. 12:3). Would we then say that because of this delay that here would be a period when the Spirit does not occupy the believer that we would not belong to Christ until then? God forbid!

The guarantee also is our hope of a future resurrection, a third element of the gospel. Our mortal bodies will be raised up by the same Spirit who raised up Jesus from the dead. Death is the result of life ruled by the flesh. Life and peace are the result of life ruled by the Spirit. "Thanks be to God! He gives us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 14:57 NIV).

**A** group from our church went to a small town in Nevada to help them build a church. For many years, the congregation had been meeting in an old drug store building. Each time they would save enough money to start a building for themselves they would decide instead to start a new work in a neighboring town. After five such new church starts, they were finally building a church of their own. They had tremendous vision.

David's vision was a bit different. He wanted to build a temple. He was living in a palace of cedar, while the ark of the Lord remained in a tent. The lack of a Temple had not restrained the Lord from using David, just as the lack of a building had not hindered the congregation in Nevada.

David was told by Nathan that the word of the Lord came to him and David was not to be the one to build the temple. When the word of the Lord came to Nathan, God called David "my servant." God speaks of only three men as "my" servants, Moses, Joshua and David. What were the character-

istics of these three "servants?" Each of these men sought God's direction for their lives and the Lord was with them. Do you seek God's direction for your life? Are you a "servant" of the Lord?

David's covenant with the Lord was that he would be a great name, a great nation and a place would be provided for his people. David's name did become great as a leader, a warrior and a king. Israel's homeland was secured by the conquering of their enemies, and David's descendants were to become a dynasty. All of the ancient promises were fulfilled in David.

Following World War II, the Israeli nation was formed. The Israelis still believe that God gave the land to them, "that they may dwell in a place of their own" (v. 7:10). Though this has remained a hot political topic, and there are also different religious views on the Promised Land, the promise to David to establish his throne forever still stands firm and it includes us in the kingdom of Christ. "And of His kingdom there shall be no end."

## Family Bible

### Who we worship

By Grant Eldridge, pastor,  
First Church, Lavaca

#### Basic passage:

Revelation 4-5

#### Focal passage:

Revelation 4:2-4, 6, 8-11;

5:2-4, 6, 8-14

#### Central truth:

When we look at creation and the cross, it awakens us to worship.

## Life and Work

### Victory in the Spirit

By Randy P. Magar, pastor,  
Newark Southern Church

#### Basic passage:

Romans 8:1-17

#### Focal passage:

Romans 8:1-11

#### Central truth:

The life of the Spirit is opposed to life according to the flesh.

## Explore the Bible

### Three promises

By Katsy McAlister, member,  
First Church, El Dorado

#### Basic passage:

1 Samuel 5-7

#### Focal passage:

1 Samuel 7:1-17

#### Central truth:

Seek God's direction in your life.



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**Prayer and fasting for Libya scheduled for May 16-17**

RICHMOND, VA (BP)—Southern Baptists have set aside a 24-hour period beginning at 6 p.m. May 16 to pray and fast for the Axis of Libya, a people group that makes up nearly the entire population of the controversial nation in North Africa. While Libya is viewed by most Americans as an enemy of the United States, Christian leaders are calling on people to pray for the Libyan people during this year's Day of Prayer and Fasting for World Hunger Relief.

Each spring, southern Baptists and other Christian groups seeking to help reach the world with the message of Christ devote one day to prayer for a specific group of people without free access to the gospel. Only a few Libyans living inside the country or abroad are known to be Christians.

A resource kit to support the prayer emphasis is available from the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. The materials can be ordered by calling the FMB at 1-800-866-3621.

**Southern Baptist hunger relief gifts reflect increase**

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—After years of decline, gifts to the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund grew by more than 5 percent in 1996. Hunger giving rose from nearly \$6.7 million in 1995 to more than \$7.1 million in 1996.

The increased rate of giving appears to be setting a new trendline upward, according to Donoso Escobar, director of church and community ministries for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. He noted that hunger receipts for the HMB are up 45 percent for the first two months of 1997 compared to the same months in 1996.

Gifts to the SBC World Hunger Fund are distributed between the Foreign Mission Board and Home Mission Board, with 80 percent to the FMB and 20 percent to the HMB.

While expressing appreciation for the increase in gifts, an FMB specialist in hunger relief said the need worldwide remains enormous.

"While we are grateful for the increased giving in 1996, we challenge Southern Baptists to an even greater effort," said Bill Cashlon, the FMB's human needs consultant. "On average, Southern Baptists continue to give less than one dollar per member to world hunger relief," he said when Southern Baptists fail to give, opportunities to share the gospel are missed.

**Supreme Court reinstates parental-notification law**

WASHINGTON (BP)—The U.S. Supreme Court has revived a Montana law that requires notification of a parent or a judge's approval before an unmarried minor can undergo an abortion. In an unsigned opinion, justices reversed lower-court decisions that struck down the Montana law.

A group of Montana physicians argued that the law was unconstitutional because it did not sufficiently protect a minor's right to have an abortion. The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, affirming a lower court, agreed with the physicians.

But the nation's high court said Montana's statute is "indistinguishable in any relevant way" from an Ohio law it upheld in 1990. The court said both "allow for judicial bypass if the minor shows that parental notification is not in her interests."

**Glorieta admits mistake in hosting New Age group**

GLORIETA, NM (BP)—After a "New Age" group was mistakenly allowed to hold a recent meeting at Glorieta Conference Center officials at the Baptist Sunday School Board-owned facility are taking steps to ensure it never happens again.

"This should not have happened. We made a mistake," Glorieta director Larry Haslam admitted, referring to a Feb. 13-16 meeting at the conference center involving the group "Star Visions." The organization is apparently linked with the Colorado-based World Health Alliance Limited.

The Star Visions event involved 179 guests, Haslam said, noting that references to New Age practices and philosophies were made in the group's conferences and in printed materials distributed during its meeting. After Glorieta personnel learned of the group's practices and beliefs, Haslam said leaders of the organization were immediately informed they could not use the conference center for future events. Glorieta officials also apologized to representatives from other groups present on campus during the meeting.

"We are committed to maintaining a Christian environment at Glorieta," Haslam said. "We will not compromise on that."

