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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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More space
for Executive Board Staff
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February 4, 1982
Arkansas Baptist
NEWSMAGAZINE



Arkansas Baptists may soon have room to relieve crowded conditions at the Baptist Building in Little Rock since messengers to a special session of the annual meeting voted to buy a one-story office building and surrounding land. The purchase completes the task of the Baptist Building Expansion Study Committee, who had sought a realistic method to provide for space needs of Executive Board staff and agencies.

New Bold Mission Thrust Goal more grassroots participation

by Jim Lowry

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Southern Baptists' Bold Mission Thrust goal to share the gospel with everyone in the world by the year 2000 has yet to become a grassroots movement, according to several denominational leaders.

Participants in the Bold Mission Thrust Steering Committee meeting in Nashville learned there are more people involved in missions and more money is being given but in some areas, results still fall short of goals.

The committee, led by Woman's Mission Union Executive Director Carolyn Weatherford, met with representatives of seven SBC agencies to hear reports by which to gauge the denomination's progress.

Gerald Palmer, vice president of the Home Mission Board's missions section, said he does not expect Southern Baptists to have placed the gospel in hearing of the world by the year 2000, but the convention will be farther toward it than ever before.

Denominational leaders are developing plans and working to create a mindset of missions participation to make Bold Mission Thrust a true grassroots movement in which any size church can have a part.

Sunday School Board Bible Teaching Division Director Ralph McIntyre said Sunday School enrollment is projected at 7.5 million for 1980-81, toward the goal of 8.5 million by 1985.

The Home Mission Board report estimates the goal of 5,800 new churches and missions in the 1977-82 period will be met, since the total stands now at 5,690.

Palmer said half the increase in new churches is lost each year because of churches which cease to operate. Most of these are established churches in large cities.

Palmer said since the inception of Mission Service Corps in 1977, 534 volunteers have been placed. The goal is 5,000 by 1985.

Short-term volunteers assigned by the Home Mission Board in 1981 totaled 34,200. Of that number, 28,000, or almost

82 percent, were touring youth groups.

The mission education report indicated coordinate curriculum among SBC agencies was beginning to disseminate information to a greater number of church members. The coordinated curriculum is to teach small and large churches how to have a mission effort in the local church — no matter what the size.

"There is a willingness and a commitment of the leadership of the Southern Baptist Convention for potentially a saturation of local church members with mission information," according to William R. O'Brien, executive vice president of the Foreign Mission Board.

O'Brien said if Bold Mission Thrust fails, he hopes it is because Southern Baptists choose not to participate, not because they had never heard about it. He added that these are historic times in the Southern Baptist Convention because of the new levels of cooperation among agencies.

The number of missionaries assigned by the Foreign Mission Board totaled 3,136 during 1981, of which 2,668 were career missionaries. O'Brien said he expects the denomination to reach the goal of 5,000 career missionaries by the turn of the century.

Giving by Southern Baptists since the inception of Bold Mission Thrust in 1977 has outpaced inflation, according to A. R. Fagan, executive director-treasurer of the SBC Stewardship Commission. All but one of the state conventions have increased the percentage of giving to the national Cooperative Program since 1977.

Since 1977, the Cooperative Program has increased 61.8 percent to more than \$84 million in 1981, while Lottie Moon and Annie Armstrong offerings for foreign and home missions have risen by 63.8 percent to total nearly \$63.5 million last year.

The report of the Bold Mission Thrust Steering Committee will be compiled and distributed to members of the Executive Committee of the SBC in their semi-annual meeting in February.

First missionaries arrive in islands

SOUTH CAICOS, Turks and Caicos Islands — The first Southern Baptist missionaries assigned to the Turks and Caicos Islands, which lie at the south end of the Bahamas string, arrived on the field Jan. 2.

Edwin and Joyce Perimon, missionary associates who transferred to the islands after four years in Trinidad, will work to develop new churches. They will live on South Caicos Island in a mission house owned by the Turks and Caicos Baptist Union, which will also pay a portion of their travel expenses on the islands.

The Foreign Mission Board designated

the islands a Southern Baptist mission field last year at the request of the Baptist union. Though the Perimons are the first Southern Baptist missionaries assigned there, the board has provided volunteer help to Baptists on the islands in the past.

Baptist work on the islands was formerly under the auspices of the Jamaica Baptist Union and has been undergirded by the Bahamas national convention and the Bahamas Southern Baptist Mission, according to Bill Graves, associate to the director for Middle America and the Caribbean.

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Arkansas Baptists have voted to buy a place to expand office space in Little Rock. More information about the terms of the purchase and financing are included in a story on page 6.

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State Convention President Dillard Miller, who began serving last November, says he wants to lead Arkansas Baptists in the direction they want to go.



Sometimes people boast, "I'm my own man. Nobody forces me to do anything." It is true that we have great freedom in America and we should thank God for it. We, also, should protect it by understanding the true meaning of freedom. There is a sense, however, in which everyone is a slave. We are only free to choose who will be our master.

Paul places all of humanity in two categories. Everyone is either a slave to sin, or a slave to righteousness. He says, "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants (slaves) to obey, his servants (slaves) ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" (Rom. 6:16). So we are all slaves. We only have the right to choose our master.

It is necessary for us to understand the status of a slave in Paul's day. Today, we think of a servant or a worker as a person who gives an agreement to his employer to work a certain number of hours, for which labor he is to receive a given wage. Within the agreed time he is at the disposal of his employer. But when the time is completed each day, he is free to do exactly as he wishes. For example, a man may be a clerk by day but at night play a violin in an orchestra.

In Paul's day the status of a slave was quite different. Literally, he had no time of his own. Every moment belonged to his master. Hence, he could not serve two masters, because he was the exclusive property of one master.

The apostle said, "At one time you were the exclusive property of sin. You were totally enslaved by it. But now you have taken God as your master. God has exclusive possession of you. So you should not even talk about sinning. Your life is to be controlled by righteousness."

Likely, Paul used the illustration of slavery frequently because so many in the so-called civilized world of his day were slaves. Some estimate that more than half of the people were owned by earthly masters. In Christ, people are set free from the bondage of sin. But we are not free to do just as we wish. The apostle said, "What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For

ye are bought with a price..." (I Cor. 6:19-20). It is the Christian's responsibility to do as Christ directs.

The same principle applies to a church. Although every Baptist church is independent and self-governing, it does not have the right to do just as it pleases. The church, like the individual Christian, is not its own, it has been "bought with a price."

The church, like the Christian, has no right to choose apart from what Christ would have it to do. We should never say, "How do I feel about this?" or "What shall we do about this?" But we should ask, "What does Christ want us to do about this?" The right approach is not merely to vote and let the majority rule. But to seek direction from the Word of God and the Holy Spirit, so that we can do what Christ would have us to do.

A Christian is not his own. And a church is an institution that belongs to Christ. The question is not my will but the direction of Christ to whom all Christians belong.

Praying specifically

A pastor friend of mine had developed a plan several years ago of praying specifically for his church members. After he had prayed for them he would drop them a note to let them know that he had remembered them specifically on a given date.

Some of his members began to say, "I wish I had known that you were going to pray for me. I had a problem I would have told you about so that you could have mentioned it specifically in your prayer." With that the pastor began to write in advance to tell them that he planned to pray for them on a certain day in the near future.

Now he gets letters, cards and phone calls asking him to pray for specific matters. He now prays specifically for the matters that his members request. People often assure him that they are praying for him daily. When a pastor prays for his church members and the people pray for their pastor, they will find that the Lord can join them together in a mighty work.

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One layman's opinion

Daniel R. Grant/President, OBU

Learning from Hawaiian Baptists

There seems to be little doubt what most American "mainlanders" want when they go to Hawaii. A quick review of all the travel brochures makes it clear that sunshine on the beautiful beaches, entertainment from hula dancers in grass skirts, and heavy doses of alcoholic beverages in the bars and nightclubs of Waikiki Beach are the top three purposes in Hawaii's number one industry of tourism.

Ouachita's outstanding singing group, the Ouachi-Tones, and their director Mary Shambarger, were invited to give nine sacred concerts in the churches and schools of the Honolulu region. Feeling a strong sense of administrative responsibility for the welfare of the Ouachi-Tones, I decided that Mrs. Grant and I should join them on the trip. Needless to say, the send-off given us by our friends was interspersed with condolences for our expected hardships in Hawaii, and for missing the snow and ice of

Arkansas.

We all went fully expecting to enjoy the sunshine and the beauty of the island, but also to have many opportunities to share our Christian testimony. All of that we did, but the surprise was receiving a tremendous blessing from the wonderful spirit of Hawaiian Baptists, led by Edmond Walker, an Arkansan and Ouachitonian. We received and learned far more than we could possibly give. The churches in Hawaii are physically built with a great deal of openness to the light, fresh air, and beauty of the great outdoors. But more important, the Christian people within the church congregation express a loving openness to all kinds of people without regard to cultural background or economic status in life.

The Mililani Baptist Church, for example, pastored by Dub Eford, enjoys the participation of members of Chinese, Japanese, Hawaiian, Black, and Caucasian ancestry,

and it seems to enrich rather than divide the fellowship. Their choir sang the dogology in Hawaiian and then the congregation joined them in singing it in English.

As the Ouachi-Tones sang one of their favorites, "Amazing Grace," it was obviously a favorite of Baptist congregations in the Aloha State. I have never seen so many beautiful flowers, orchid leis, and garlands as they gave to the Ouachi-Tones, the Shambargers, and the Grants, as we shared in worship, after-church fellowship, potluck suppers, and singing.

It is quite possible that Mrs. Grant and I will need to visit Hawaii every year at this time to check up on Ouachita graduates and on the giving spirit of Hawaiian Christians.

Daniel R. Grant is president of Ouachita Baptist University at Arkadelphia.



The Southern accent

D. Jack Nicholas/President, SBC

Public schools belong to the public

Considerable controversy overshadows modern public education. There appears to be a growing disaffection with the public schools and a disturbing number of complaints about them. No one seems to be quite sure what went wrong.

I submit that a significant number of the problems derive from the fact that a fundamental principle has been overlooked — that is, that the public schools belong to the public and that the will of the public as to what the schools should be and should do has in recent decades been generally disregarded.

The public has found itself in a situation in which its schools proceeded to teach its young people subject matter and moral precepts which are neither embraced by nor accepted to the public.

In fairness to the local school personnel, it should be pointed out that they are not the chief villains, although it is they who usually catch the heat. Contemporary social theorists, behavioral scientists, and textbook authors and publishers have pursued a course of making the public schools organs of radical social change by promulgating through them their notions concerning

the origin and nature of man and the values (or absence thereof) by which he should live.

The local public school personnel are generally not enthusiastic advocates of the "new theology" or the "new morality." Many public school teachers and administrators are uneasy and unhappy about many of the changes that have occurred over the past decades.

They must, however, avoid being defensive as the public moves to correct the existing disparity between what is and what should be. For public education belongs to the public. Parents have a legitimate interest in the subject matter and the value systems to which their young people are subjected and have every right to express themselves when they feel that interest is not being properly served.

The principle responsibility of the professional educator is to his local public, not to the social change protagonists, advocates of the "new morality," or the textbook authors and publishers.

D. Jack Nicholas is president of Southern Baptist College at Walnut Ridge.

HMB approves changes

ATLANTA (BP) — In its first meeting of 1982, the executive committee of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board elected a new director of the personnel division and named an acting director of the evangelism section.

In other actions, three persons were appointed missionaries, three persons were appointed missionary associates and 86 persons were approved for church and language pastoral assistance, including seven missionary pastor interns.

Margarette Stevenson, director of HMB business services division since May 1, 1981, was approved as new director of the personnel division, replacing E. Warren Woolf. Woolf is now a national consultant for student work for the HMB.

Stevenson joined the HMB staff in 1975 as director of payroll and employee benefits. Before HMB employment, she was an administrative assistant and service consultant for the Annuity Board, SBC.

Joe Ford, director of the evangelism development division, was named acting director of the evangelism section, filling the vacancy created by the resignation of C. B. Hogue. Hogue, vice president for evangelism since 1973, resigned that post to become senior pastor of Eastwood Baptist Church in Tulsa, Okla. Ford, author of "WOW" (Win Our World) materials for the HMB, joined the HMB staff in 1974 as director of evangelism for young adults. He assumed his present post in 1978.

by Millie Gill/ABN staff writer

by Stan Haste

J. Lowell Ponder was recently called as associate pastor of Fayetteville First Church. His responsibilities will be to work with senior adults, assist with hospital visitation and minister to the homebound. He is a native of Texas where he served as administrator of the Baptist Home for the Aging in Dallas, as director of missions in two associations and as pastor of churches. He and his wife, Ora, moved to Fayetteville in 1975.

Boyd Wayne Hall was licensed to the ministry recently by Jonesboro Fisher Street Church. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Jimmy Hall of Jonesboro. Hall, a 1981 graduate of Jonesboro High School, is a student at Ouachita Baptist University.

Ronnie Thompson has accepted the call to serve as pastor of the Lambrook Church. He has been serving as associate pastor of the Osceola First Church. Thompson and his wife, Janet, have a son, Kyle.

Dennis Tyner is serving as pastor of the Yorktown First Church near Star City. He was pastor for nine years of the North Little Rock Grace Church.

Jane Andrews has been selected as one of the "Outstanding Young Women of America for 1981." She is music professor at Southern Baptist College.

Richard Perry is serving as pastor of the Tupelo First Church. He and his wife, Valera, moved

there from Baton Rouge, La.

Jerry McNeer is pastor of the Hughes Lakeshore Church. He is a student at Mid-America Seminary.

Jessie McKee is pastor of the Shell Lake Church at Heth. He began serving there Dec. 13, 1981.

James C. Simons has resigned as pastor of the Van Buren Shady Grove Church following three years of service there.

Norton Rainwater has resigned after four years as pastor of the Cass Church.

briefly

Harrison Eagle Heights Church recently presented 47 members with 1981 Bible Readers Certificates. Pastor Jack L. Ramsey made the presentations.

North Little Rock Baring Cross Church men met Jan. 8 to organize themselves into a working ministry of the church. The 41 present volunteered to assist the pastor; provide transportation as needed; assist in building maintenance; deliver taped church services to shut-ins and assist in care of church property.

Liberty Association Woman's Missionary Union is sponsoring its first "Couples Appreciation Luncheon" Feb. 15 at El Dorado Immanuel Church. Pastors, associate pastors, ministers of education/music and youth, and their spouses will be honored guests.

Baptists sponsor fewer refugees in 1981

ATLANTA (BP) — Southern Baptists resettled only half as many refugees in 1981 as they did in 1980, although they sponsored a consistent nine percent of the total cases assigned to Church World Service in both years, according to Donoso Escobar, head of the SBC Home Mission Board's refugee resettlement office in Atlanta.

Final figures for 1981 showed 2,024 persons sponsored, compared to 4,031 for 1980. The number of sponsors also dropped from 1,453 in 1980 to 722 in 1981. Only seven Southern Baptist state conventions sponsored more refugees in 1981 than in 1980, with Ohio raising its total from 17 in 1980 to 89 in the past 12 months.

Escobar, formerly a Spanish congregation pastor in Little Rock, attributed the overall decline in part to the strained economy. "People are concerned about refugees, but hesitant to take on responsibilities they fear they won't be able to meet," he

explained. "We've had calls from some churches who are willing to be sponsors but don't have the funds."

As an alternative, the Home Mission Board has encouraged churches to form partnerships, with two or three churches combining resources to sponsor one refugee family. Escobar predicted some Baptist associations may follow suit, drawing on the collected strength of area churches.

Among the 722 sponsors of 1981, "probably 300 sponsored more than one case," Escobar estimated. "Many churches don't know we have refugee programs or else they think we are only concerned with resettling the Indo-Chinese refugees."

Oscar Romo, director of the board's language missions division, stressed the continuing need for sponsors, "not just for the Indo-Chinese but for European refugees and others, too."

Currently, the Home Mission Board refugee office is seeking sponsors for 85 cases.

WASHINGTON (BP) — The fact that a juvenile convicted of first degree murder was reared in a violent atmosphere must be considered by trial judges before imposing a death sentence, the Supreme Court has ruled 5-4.

Contrary to some initial reports, the high court decision did not forbid judges and juries from sentencing juveniles to death. But it did order an Oklahoma judge to consider the fact that convicted murderer Monty Lee Eddings was brought up in a violent home before deciding whether to impose a sentence of death.

Eddings killed an Oklahoma highway patrolman in April 1977 after being stopped for a traffic offense. Then 16, Eddings and several younger companions had run away from their Missouri homes, traveling in a car owned by Eddings' brother.

After pleading no contest at his trial, Eddings was convicted of first degree murder by a jury. At a separate sentencing hearing, required by Oklahoma law in capital murder cases, a state judge imposed the death sentence.

The judge held that the state had successfully shown the crime was especially heinous, atrocious and cruel, that it was committed in order to avoid arrest and that there was a probability that Eddings would commit other acts of violence if ever released.

Besides permitting the state to argue such "aggravating" circumstances, the Oklahoma law instructs the sentencing judge to consider "mitigating" circumstances such as the defendant's background, age and state of mind at the time of the killing.

In Eddings' case, the sentencing judge condemned him to death after giving "very serious consideration" to his youth and rejecting the argument that his violent background was a sufficiently "mitigating" circumstance.

In its ruling the slim high court majority cited an earlier decision in an Ohio murder case requiring that "individualized consideration of mitigating factors" are required by the Eighth Amendment's ban on "cruel and unusual punishment" and the Fourteenth Amendment's guarantee of equal protection under the law.

The court ordered the case sent back to the Oklahoma judge to reconsider the death sentence. It did not say the judge may not reimpose the same sentence.

Special session messengers approve purchase for expansion

Arkansas Baptists have instructed their Baptist Building Expansion Study Committee to proceed with the purchase of a building and land at 601 West Capitol in Little Rock, across the street from the present Baptist Building.

The purchase approval was voted by more than 700 messengers to a special session of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Tuesday, Jan. 26. The 30-minute session, described by President Dillard Miller as the shortest on record, came before the evening and final session of the two-day State Evangelism Conference at Park Hill Church in North Little Rock.

As a result of the apparently unanimous standing vote, the convention will buy the 5,000 feet of office space and adjoining land enough for 25-30 parking spaces. The property is adjacent to the Baptist Building's present parking lot. Total cost to the convention will be \$425,000.

Charles Barfield of Little Rock, chairman of the space study committee, explained that money for the purchase will come from convention reserve funds, which will be replenished as soon as the convention finishes paying for the present property at 525 West Capitol.

He assured messengers that the committee intended to be open and honest about the transaction's disadvantages, also. While the action of borrowing from reserve funds would save interest costs, he noted, the plan also would tie up the money for several years.

Barfield said that, because a condition of the sale required the convention to put up the full purchase amount by Jan. 1, the money had been placed in an escrow account to await final action by the messengers. The money would have been refunded entirely had the purchase been turned down, Barfield said.

The committee, the chairman explained, felt that the purchase had several advantages over other methods of expansion: (1) it would allow state convention offices to remain at an easy access location; (2) it would enhance the value of current property; (3) it would relieve the immediate pressure on parking; and (4) it could be done without immediate pressure on the budget.

Convention committees have been looking for years for ways to improve Baptist Building space conditions. The present study committee was appointed in 1978. Other studies already had concluded that more room was needed for the Executive Board Staff, housed in the two story office building bought and remodeled in 1968. However, messengers to the 1976 annual meeting rejected a proposal to erect an office building and parking garage on the site

of the present parking lot.

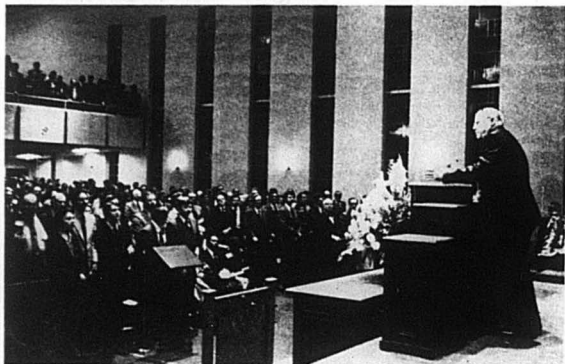
Barfield's committee had reported to messengers last November that moving the Arkansas Baptist Foundation into an office building next door to the Baptist Building had relieved immediate office space needs, but still left the convention short on storage and parking space.

They recommended the purchase of the property across Arch Street as a way of solving the space and parking problems for some time to come.

Executive Board President Ken Lilly, a Fort Smith physician, prefaced the proposal presentation by explaining the sequence of events that led to the recommendation. A Nov. 24 phone call was the first contact. Interim Secretary L. L. Collins had with the

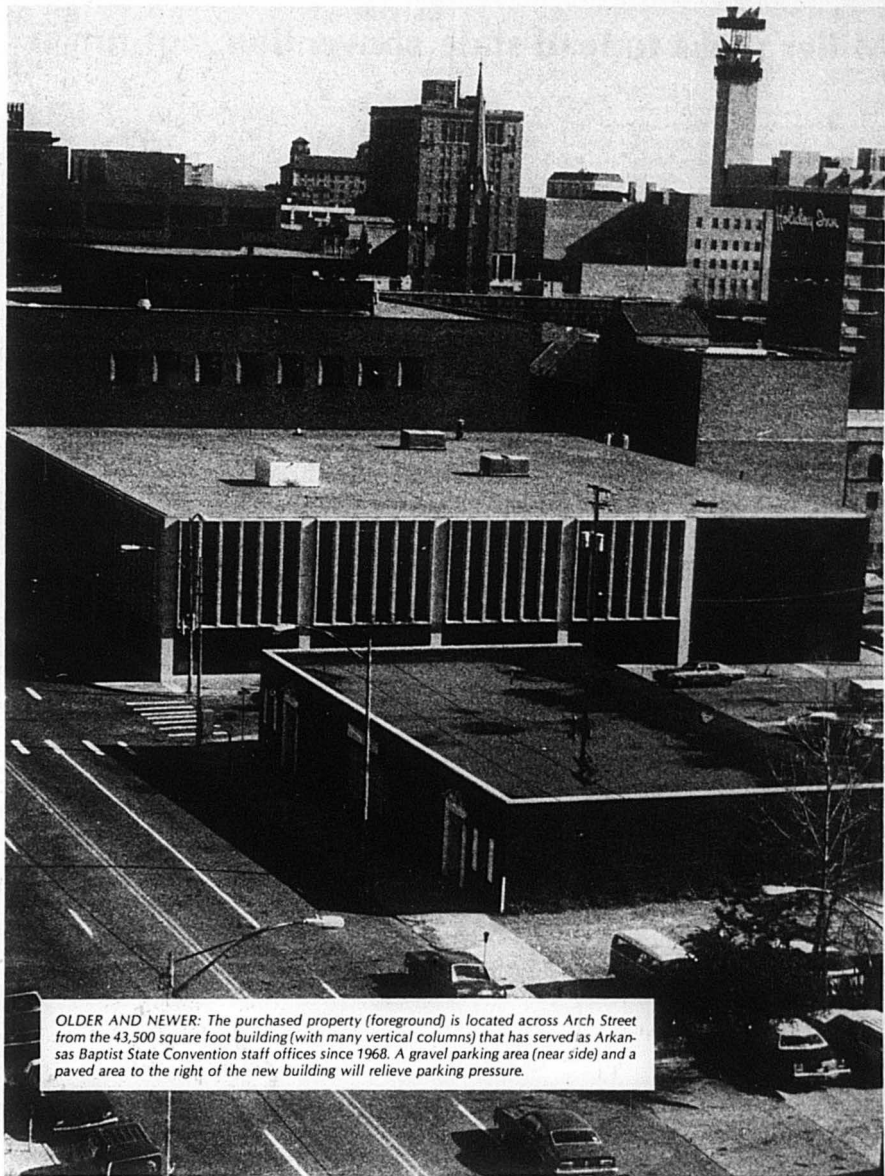
owners of the building and land. After that events moved rapidly because of the projected selling date of Jan. 1. Lilly and Collins discussed the offer Jan. 29, and the study committee met Dec. 4. The committee brought the proposal to the state convention's Executive Board Dec. 8 and they decided to call a special session and get the messengers to vote for or against the purchase.

The convention may not gain immediate possession of the property they voted to buy because the present occupants of the office space have two more years on their lease. However, Barfield noted, the \$30,000 per year rent money would help offset the purchase cost, if the occupants decide to stay. — Betty J. Kennedy



ABOVE: Messengers to the special session stood in approval of the plan to buy the office building and parking space. President Dillard Miller had no trouble determining that the proposal had been adopted as the capacity crowd signaled their "yes" votes.

LEFT: Charles Barfield explained the terms of the purchase and the financing in detail as chairman of the Baptist Building Expansion Study Committee.



OLDER AND NEWER: The purchased property (foreground) is located across Arch Street from the 43,500 square foot building (with many vertical columns) that has served as Arkansas Baptist State Convention staff offices since 1968. A gravel parking area (near side) and a paved area to the right of the new building will relieve parking pressure.

Miller seeks to lead state convention, not run it

by Bob Allen

A spirit of cooperation is prevailing among Arkansas Baptists, Dillard Miller believes, and the president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention hopes it stays that way.

In an interview at First Church in Mena, where Miller is in his 26th year as pastor, the 62-year-old convention president described his goals for the ABSC during the next several months.

"I am hoping that the fellowship in our convention will be a sweet fellowship," he said, "and each of us will realize we need one another, that all of us have a job to do. That we'll respect one another on various points of agreement and disagreement — maybe even in disagreement we could love one another, respect one another, and fellowship with one another."

So far, Miller continued, so good. "I think the spirit is great. I've been in this office since November, and I have not gotten one negative letter. Knowing Arkansas Baptists like I do, if they were not for it, brother, you'd know they were against it."

Aside from his primary aim, Miller said there are few specific issues facing Arkansas Baptists in the near future. "I do not know yet what the executive board has planned, but I don't think that there are any divisive issues facing us at this point. There are some things that need to be worked out."

Of obvious importance, the president said, is the task of selecting a new executive secretary, a post vacated last November by the untimely death of Huber L. Drumwright.

Miller also listed as a priority continuing support of the Bold Mission Thrust, a plan by which Southern Baptists aim to reach the world for Christ by the year 2000. He also hopes to see the state continue to be active in an effort to establish churches in Indiana, and to emphasize a balance of evangelistic efforts with support of missions and Christian education. "My goal is to try to encourage us to reach the lost for Jesus, to promote missions around the world and at home, to promote Christian education to the highest degree possible, and to be a friend and a helper to those who have an assigned task."

Miller said he sees his role of convention president as that of a helper. "The role of the president of a convention is to sustain

and give support to the work of the executive board. Our executive board, with the president, is the working body of a convention. My responsibility is to push the convention in the direction that the convention feels it should go. I don't chart the course. I don't feel that is my assignment.

"To me, a person ought to participate in his convention. It doesn't take all that much time away from the pastorate — for me it doesn't. For me it's sort of an avocation — a time to get away. Seldom do I have time to take a vacation or take a day off. This is my way of getting out from under the routine of my ministry."

Miller has maintained his routine at Mena since June 3, 1956, his 37th birthday. Born in New Boston, Texas, the son of "a one-room school teacher and a one-horse farmer," Miller moved at a young age to Texarkana, where he grew up. He worked a short time as a bookkeeper in a lumber company at Horatio before surrendering to preach in 1939.

Miller and his wife Nellie entered Ouachita Baptist University in 1942. Mrs. Miller left college to begin teaching, but Miller graduated with the class of 1946. The Millers went to Golden Gate Seminary, then located in Berkeley, Calif., in 1947, but poor health forced Miller to leave school after a short time. He returned to Wilmont Church in Delta Association to accept a pastorate. From there he served at Eudora Church and First Church in Bauxite before coming to Mena.

At Mena, Miller has overseen the erection



ABN photo/Bob Allen

tion of a new building, has conducted "right at a thousand" funerals and has participated in mission trips to several foreign countries including South Africa, Scotland and the Philippines, where his daughter, 34-year-old Karr La, serves as a missionary. He and Mrs. Miller also have a son Rod, 28, who has been on church staffs while attending school.

Miller offered some reflection on a long-term pastorate. "In order to grow, you may have to stay long enough for a church to break old habits. You may have to stay long enough to establish stability. That's for the church. The minister himself needs the discipline of staying put. And it does take discipline.

"My pastorate is first — absolutely. I've got too much built into it. My people here are my first loved and my first obligation. I am a pastor at heart."

Miller feels it is good for a church to be involved in its state convention. "There were two things I wanted to do when I came to Mena. I wanted the church to have a good reputation in the state and I wanted the church to be involved in the total program of the state."

Miller held his first volunteer job with the state convention before he came to Mena, serving as a member of the executive board. He has since served 12 more years on the board. He was chairman of the executive board two years.

When he was asked to consider the convention presidency, Miller said he would consent but "I would never politic for it."



President Miller and his wife of 42 years, Nellie, relax at home with their English sheepdog. The Millers own a home built on the side of a wooded hill just north of Mena in western Arkansas.

Theologians seek answers to problems of secularism

by Linda Lawson

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP) — "Secularism — people living their lives as if there were no God" — is one of the biggest problems facing Christians today, Grady C. Cothen told 70 theological educators from 28 nations.

Cothen, chairman of the Baptist World Alliance ad hoc committee on theological education which convened a four-day conference, said, "We are in all parts of the world being plagued with a new assault of secularism which threatens our understanding of the Christian faith."

He said the purpose of the meeting, the first of its kind sponsored by the BWA, was to enable participants to recognize common problems and "the responsibility we bear for trying to understand problems and emphasize Christian solutions."

As an example, Cothen noted, "We must come to an understanding of what the gospel says to the oppressed peoples of the world."

Cothen, who also is president of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville, Tenn., emphasized the importance of theological education in dealing with secularism, calling for a sharing of ideas and resources and the formation of "a bond of fellowship and mutual love that will enable us to help each other."

The conference program included reports on the status of theological education from five continents and small-group sharing sessions as well as major addresses by theologians from Switzerland, England, Nigeria and Sri Lanka.

Thorwald Lorenzen, professor of systematic theology and ethics at the Baptist Theological Seminary, Ruschlikon, Switzerland, said he believes most Christians are "practical atheists" because God plays an unimportant role in their daily lives.

"We have forgotten that God loves the world," said Lorenzen. "We often go to the altar but we have forgotten that we must first be reconciled with our fellow human beings."

The role of Christians is to be credible witnesses of the truth of the gospel, said Lorenzen. "To know God means to participate in his passion for the world. The only real and convincing arguments for God are people who are willing to stake their lives on him."

Speaking on recovering biblical authority, Beasley-Murray said, "I'm not sure we're ready to talk about the authority of the Bible to the secular world when we have so much difficulty talking about this to our own people."

Beasley-Murray, former principal of Spurgeon's College, London, and retired professor of New Testament interpretation at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

in Louisville, Ky., called "the authority to save" the major theme and purpose of the Bible.

Tracing the historical development of the concept of biblical inerrancy, currently a subject of debate among some Baptist groups, Beasley-Murray said Christians "are probably going to differ about it for some time to come."

"The authority of the Scriptures resides in God in Christ who works through the Holy Spirit with the Scriptures," said Beasley-Murray.

W. G. Wickramasinghe, principal of Trinity College, Kandy, Sri Lanka, said "the secular assault on Christian values is most seen in the devaluing of the person." He cited racial and social injustice in a world in which he said the wealthy nations are becoming more wealthy and the Third World nations are becoming poorer.

In Asia, Wickramasinghe said Eastern religions play a minimal role in the day-to-day lives of people. "Unless moral and spiritual values undergird the education of young people, they will grow up with only a secular view," he said.

Osadolor Imasogie, president of the Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, Ogbomoso, said Christians must follow the teachings of Christ and share the gospel with all persons.

"The presence of the church, made up of men and women of all walks of life and levels of sophistication, points to the eternal reality of the person of Christ in the midst of the secular world," said Imasogie.

In reports from regional sharing groups, participants urged the BWA to consider planning both regional and international theological education conferences in the future.

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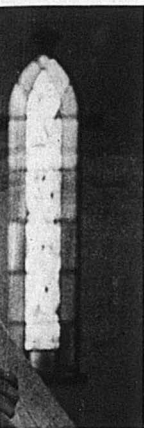
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Dillard Miller talks about his aims for the ABSC in the coming months.

"I'm not high-powered in procedural matters and knowing how to do things. But people have asked me to do things, and I try to function."

About his future, Miller said, "I am going to do my dead-level best to minister to my church and to lead the work of our convention. After that, I'm going to leave it in the hands of the Lord."

Bob Allen, a student at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, is ABN intern for the year 1982.



Miller pauses in front of First Church of Mena, where he has served as pastor nearly 26 years.

WMU President sees home mission study

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — The graffiti scrawled across the dilapidated building riveted my attention. "This is the last hope," it read.

The surrounding rubble and gutted high-rise tenements didn't offer much hope. But the home missionary at my side did.

The scene before me was New York City's South Bronx, an area laid waste by human destructiveness. Several years ago, frustrated landlords, tenants, and vandals set fire to block after block of slum housing. The remaining devastation has become a national symbol of all the ills that afflict our cities — brutality, the wretchedness, the human misery.

I had come to the South Bronx at the invitation of the Home Mission Board. On my first official missions tour since my election to the national presidency of Woman's Missionary Union, I was to visit Baptist work in several major American cities. On this tour, I saw firsthand what other Baptists will be learning as they study *Challenge of the Cities* during February.

I found despair and decay in the South Bronx as well as other cities I visited. But I also found hope. I saw hope in the healing presence of Southern Baptists who live, minister, and witness in the name of Jesus.

One of these healers is Sam Simpson, pastor of Bronx Baptist Church. "The love of Christ constrains me to be here," is the way he explains his presence.

Sam practices what he calls "sweat evangelism." He is using hammer, saw, and nails to demonstrate Jesus' love among people in this burned-out area. Sam is part of an interdenominational team with which Southern Baptists voluntarily assist. Called Shepherds of the Bronx, its aim is to rebuild some of the damaged apartment buildings.

When a building reopens, Baptists move in to minister and introduce Bible study. At times the work crawls with agonizing slowness. But the results are measured not just in restored buildings, but in lives which have been restored through Jesus Christ.

Some big city despair is not poverty, but in high position. At the United Nations, enjoying lunch in the elegant dining room, I saw a vast mission field. Here in the harvest was our missionary, Elias Golonka. He moves freely through the United Nations complex, speaking many languages, and ministers to their inner turmoil. This Baptist missionary at the UN is an ambassador of hope.



Sample sees cities close up

On her first official missions tour as national president of Woman's Missionary Union, SBC, Dorothy Sample views firsthand what other Baptists will be learning about in the February "Challenge of the Cities" study. Quinn Pugh, director of the Metropolitan New York Baptist Association, is pictured with Sample atop the Metro Association building in New York City.

Jim Queen is another healer. He lives in Chicago, where he is pastor of Uptown Baptist Church.

East meets West at Uptown each week when five language groups come together to worship. They are united in this one church where members speak Vietnamese, Cambodian, Hmong, English, and Spanish.

Uptown accurately reflects the world-character of our nation's second-largest city. Every major ethnic group is now represented here.

As I watched members engaged in a Bible study, I also thought of this year's theme for the Week of Prayer for Home Missions — "The World Is Here." The

Seminary keeps door open; Poland Baptists growing

WARSAW, Poland (BP) — Despite difficult times in Poland, the Baptist Theological Seminary in Warsaw has kept its doors open, and Baptist churches are growing.

Universities in Poland reopened only for graduating classes and postgraduate stu-

dents after the holiday break but the seminary started a new class with 14 beginning students, according to Knud Wumpelmann, general secretary of the European Baptist Federation, who recently returned to Germany after a trip into Poland.

Polish Baptists baptized more than 100 converts during 1981, Wumpelmann reported, increasing the membership of the Polish Baptist Union's congregations to 2,600 believers.

by Dorothy Elliott Sample

world has indeed come to Chicago. And to Christ through the witness of Jim Queen and Uptown Baptist Church.

I found a fourth healer in Washington, D.C. His name is Bill Roundtree, director of the Johnenig Baptist Center.

Bill and his staff are committed to witness through ministry as they meet almost every human need imaginable. "Our policy really is to love our neighbor," Bill told me. I like that.

As I gazed at the magnificent government buildings, I thought of a line from Shakespeare — "What is the city but the people." Washington, D.C., home of some of the world's most influential and affluent people, is also the home of some of the most poverty-stricken, materially as well as spiritually.

I believe that reaching America's cities for Christ is the most awesome task that we as Southern Baptists face in the last two decades of this century.

If this is going to be accomplished, there must be some drastic changes in the way we're going about it.

There must be more personal involvement on our part. Jim Queen told me that he makes door-to-door visits each week in the neighborhood of Uptown Baptist Church. But 128,000 people live in a 10-block-square area that surrounds it. How many Jim Queens will it take to reach all of Chicago's 3 million residents?

We will have to give more financial support to missions through the Cooperative Program and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions.

This year's Easter offering goal is \$22 million. But how far will that go to reach the missions in our cities?

We will have to abandon our rural mindsets. As I walked down city streets engulfed by people, buildings, and traffic, I became aware of the enormous complexity of our cities. To reach these people, we will have to try new approaches to witness and ministry — things we've never attempted in small towns or in rural areas.

Once again the graffiti message returns to haunt me. "This is the last hope."

Are these next 18 years the last hope that Southern Baptists have to change the direction of our cities? I wonder.

Dorothy Elliott Sample, of Flint, Mich., is the national president of Woman's Missionary Union, Auxiliary to Southern Baptist Convention.

Americans United loses appeal

WASHINGTON (BP) — A divided Supreme Court ruled that Americans United for Separation of Church and State did not have legal standing to sue the federal government for donating land and buildings to an Assemblies of God college in Pennsylvania.

In a 5-4 opinion, the high court held that the Silver Spring, Md.-based group failed to prove, either as taxpayers or as citizens, that it was injured by the transfer of a 77-acre plot of ground valued at \$1.3 million to Valley Forge Christian College.

Americans United argued that the gift of the land and buildings violated the no establishment of religion clause of the First Amendment and said it represented the right of all 90,000 of its members not to be taxed for the support of a religious organization.

Writing for the slim majority, Justice William H. Rehnquist ruled that the federal government has the right under Article IV of the Constitution to dispose of land which it owns. That right has been spelled out further in subsequent laws to include such transfers to private groups, he said.

He added the watchdog group failed to prove "any injury of any kind, economic or otherwise sufficient to confer standing."

Rehnquist, whose opinion was joined by Burger and Justices Byron R. White, Lewis F. Powell Jr. and Sandra Day O'Connor, decried what he called "the philosophy that the business of the federal courts is correcting constitutional errors."

"This philosophy," he declared, "has no place in our constitutional scheme," nor is it made "more palatable when the underlying merits concern the establishment clause."

In a biting dissent, Justice William J. Brennan Jr. accused the majority of using the question of standing "to slam the courthouse door against plaintiffs who are enti-

pled to full consideration of their claims on the merits."

The court's decision, he said, is a "stark example" of an "unfortunate trend" to resolve cases on technical grounds "while obscuring the nature of the underlying rights and interests at stake." That trend, he added, tends "merely to obfuscate, rather than inform, our understanding of the meaning of rights under the law."

Brennan declared that excluding the establishment clause as sufficient ground for allowing an injured class of citizens such as Americans United to bring its case to the court "simply turns the constitution on its head."

Joining Brennan's dissent were Justices Thurgood Marshall and Harry A. Blackmun. Justice John Paul Stevens filed a separate dissenting opinion.

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Southwestern gets \$250,000 gift

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — Southwest-ern Baptist Theological Seminary has received an anonymous gift of \$250,000 for the seminary's World Mission/Church Growth Center, according to John Earl Seelig, vice president for public affairs and chief fund raising officer.

In addition to the monetary gift, the seminary received records and equipment formerly owned by the World Evangelism Foundation, established in 1968 by W. H. Jackson of Dallas to promote evangelistic and missions endeavors around the world.

The World Mission/Church Growth Center was established in 1979 as a research and resource facility. It provides specialized mission and church growth strategy study in each of the seminary's degree programs, as well as continuing education opportunities for current missionaries.

A portion of the gift will be used to establish a teaching program of partnership evangelism within the center, Seelig said. Partnership evangelism involves laypersons and churches in the United States teaming with laypersons and churches in other countries in personal evangelism and church growth efforts.

The gift also will enable teams of students and faculty to do on-site research and/or participate in partnership evangelism.

McCall deplors refugee camps

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP) — Baptist World Alliance President Duke K. McCall said he will speak out against any government, including the United States, which locks up

refugees in "concentration camps."

Citing a camp for Haitian-refugees near Miami, Fla., McCall said, "You can't tell any difference between the barbed wire around this place and a concentration camp," even though the food and medical care may be better.

To the government, McCall said, "Under

God it is your responsibility to disband that place of evil and pain where the scars of the barbed wire are on the bodies and the hearts of those people."

Acknowledging that most refugees arrive illegally, McCall said, "Our concept of legal is sometimes immoral. Refugees are always illegal."



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You can know God

by W. T. Holland, Boyce Bible School

Basic passage: John 4:7-26

Focal passages: John 4:7-14; 19-26

Central truth: The text, "Whoever will, let him take of the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17b), is illustrated in this passage as true for people of all races, of all social levels, and of all moral conditions of life.

1. People of all races may know God. One Sunday morning in 1930, there were two additions to the Calvary Baptist Church in Washington, D.C. One, a humble Chinese Coolie, had been won to Christ in his shirt laundry by customers who were members of that church. The other was Charles Evans Hughes, Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court. The pastor was graciously restrained in presenting them, saying, "God's throne of grace is exceedingly broad."

2. People of all social levels may know God. A "loner," though probably not by choice, an outcast because of her home situation, ostracized by the other women in the village, this woman did not seem a likely prospect. Yet, Jesus gave her "living water" (v. 10b).

It is tragic when churches become class conscious seeking to win only those of their own social strata (James 2:1-4).

3. People of all moral conditions may know God. In a small Missouri town, a pastor and his wife won a mother of five small children, all by the same father but all born out of wedlock. When urged to be baptized into the church, she protested that the women in the church would not accept her. But they did, surrounding her life with love and kindness and helping with her children. Those children are grown now. All five are strong, useful Christians. How fortunate that one church was truly Christian in its attitudes.

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Life and Work

Questions of conscience

by Cary Heard, Park Hill Church, North Little Rock

Basic passage: I Corinthians 8; 10:23-11:1

Focal passages: I Corinthians 8:9-13; 10:23-29a, 31

Central truth: Questions of conscience should be decided not only by what is right for the individual, but also by what is best for others and what brings glory to God.

1. Sociologists have observed that the Darwinian principle, "the survival of the fittest," operates in human as well as animal society. For Christians, however, the motivation must be the fitting of as many as possible for survival rather than the survival of the fittest. This means that because of his superior knowledge and strength, the more mature Christian has responsibility for the less mature rather than rights over them. Any act that wounds a weak Christian is a sin against Christ. This being so, personal privileges must be waived in favor of protecting the weak. To do otherwise is to contradict the meaning of the cross (8:9-13).

2. Even when a Christian has scriptural authority for his behavior and his own conscience is clear (10:25-26), he still is not free to act until he has considered "the interests of others" (10:24) and "God's glory" (10:31). The freedom that Christ has given us is not a freedom to do as we please, but a freedom from selfishness and a freedom to love and help others. As Paul says elsewhere: "You were called to be free. But do not let this freedom become an excuse for letting your physical desires control you. Instead, let love make you serve one another" (Gal. 5:13).

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Bible Book

The King declares himself in Jerusalem

by Vester Wolber, Ouachita Baptist University

Basic passage: Matthew 21:1-22

Central truth: In his triumphal entry Jesus orchestrated the divergent roles of Scripture, his incarnate self, his ecstatic followers, the ass, and envious opponents into one dramatic declaration of his Messianic fulfillment.

1. Modern victorious warriors ride on armored vehicles to celebrate their conquests. Ancient conquerors rode white horses leading their manacled prisoners. But Jesus rode a donkey to indicate the peaceful nature of his reign.

2. Some people who get caught up in emotional ecstasy and religious fervor, on other occasions march to the cadence of a different drummer and thus negate their former commitment. Precisely so, some of those who chanted "Hosanna" unto Jesus on Sunday shouted for his crucifixion on Friday. But the Christian movement is not accurately evaluated by considering those who join and then desert it, but those who stick with it through rough goings, and bear fruit.

3. Religious institutions do not justify their existence by maintaining power and prestige, but must put their influence to practical use. Jesus often refused to use power merely to show that he had power; he employed power to establish and maintain right, to put down and keep down wrong.

It was because Jewish leaders had converted an ancient religious institution into a dean of robbers that Jesus asserted his religious authority and drove the merchants from its premises. After he had been in glory some two-thirds of a century, the risen Lord sent word to one of his churches that if it did not return to its first love (Rev. 2) he would disown it as a spiritual institution.

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Church Training

Drill/tournament response growing

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Falkner

As churches and associations plan for their drills and tournaments, please keep in mind that the dates for the district tournaments have been changed. This change was deemed necessary to avoid conflict with the schedule of simultaneous revivals in our state.

The new schedule is as follows (district, date and location): Northwest, March 22 at Rogers First; Southwest, March 22 at Hope First; West Central, March 23 at Paris First; Southeast, March 23 at Warren First; North Central, March 25 at Melbourne First; Northeast, March 25 at Jonesboro Central; Central, March 26 at Benton First; and East Central, March 26 at Forrest City First.

Please feel free to contact the Church Training Department for additional help or information pertaining to Bible drill and speakers' tournament. — **Bill Falkner, associate**

Christian Life Council They're off!

The horse portion of pari mutuel (bettors set the odds) gambling in Arkansas is about to begin. Hundreds of times during weeks to come, track announcers will declare, "They're off," as the jockeys and animals leave their assigned positions at the starting gate.

While serving pastorates in various sections of our state, I have heard merchants speak of the detrimental effects the racing season had on their businesses. An amazing thing is that even during the depression years of the '30s, horse racing in Arkansas flourished.

Generally speaking, while the horses are off, so is business.

Off also are the racing fans of Arkansas and the immediate area. Many are off from homes and businesses that often suffer during their absences. Time is stolen that rightfully should be spent with wives, husbands and children. Valuable time and money is taken from businesses that can stand little neglect these economically tough days. Sometimes embezzlement of business

funds takes place.

Ask law enforcement people throughout the state about the rise in crime, prostitution, robberies, etc., that take place during the "they're off" season. Already short handed and short funded, law enforcement agencies have tremendous burdens placed upon them during the exciting "race days of Arkansas."

Those who study the problem of compulsive gambling observe that the most addictive type gambling takes place in casinos. The second most addictive type gambling involves horse racing and other sports betting.

Family Ministry

Marriage Enrichment Retreat set

Dr. and Mrs. Bill Carpenter will lead the spring Marriage Enrichment Retreat March 25-27 at the Ozark Folk Center. The retreat is sponsored by the Family Ministry Department of the Sunday School Board and the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

The Marriage Enrichment Retreat provides a positive growth experience for couples interested in making their good marriages better. Couples learn to improve communication skills, how to discover and meet needs, and how to handle positive and negative feelings in relationships. All aspects of the retreat come together in a closing worship time for reaffirming vows and sharing gifts.

Dr. Carpenter is chaplain at the Baptist Hospital in Oklahoma City. Mrs. Carpenter is a realtor. They are experienced retreat leaders and have worked together in leading other family ministry events.

Participating couples who want to learn how to lead marriage enrichment projects will be invited to attend a leadership training workshop later in the year.

Additional information about registration, costs, retreat agenda and training opportunities may be obtained by writing: Gerald Jackson, Church Training Department, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, Arkansas 72203. — **Gerald Jackson**

Stewardship

Who counts the cash?

A church treasurer took a twenty dollar bill from the offering plate and handed it to the visiting preacher.

This practice, while not repeated often,

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raises some questions about how a church handles its offerings.

Is an accurate record of contributions kept by the church? How could the giver prove he gave \$20 if he were questioned by an IRS agent? Churches encourage accurate records through the use of envelopes and by recording all gifts.

Was the \$20 counted as a part of the total contribution received by the church? If so, was it also counted as an expenditure? Churches need detailed records of all contributions and expenditures. Had the church authorized the cash method of disbursement?

Who receives the offerings, who counts them, and is a record kept of each Sunday's receipts? Committees, elected by the church and bonded, should be authorized to receive, count, and deposit all funds.

Where is the money placed after it is received? Does one person take the church's receipts home and keep them until it is convenient to make a deposit? All monies should be counted and placed in the bank as soon as possible. Church buildings and homes are not safe places for church funds.

What kind of reports are given to the church? All public funds, especially gifts to the church, require a public accounting. Members are entitled to information on all monies received and disbursed.

For information on proper accounting of all church monies, contact the Stewardship Department. An accounting procedure can be provided at no cost. — **James A. Walker, director**

Family and Child Care

Words are inadequate

Have you ever felt that words were inadequate to express a feeling of gratitude to someone? This is my dilemma as I respond to the generosity of many of you who helped make Christmas a very special time for our children living at the Children's Home, foster homes, group home for boys and our two Emergency Receiving Homes for Children in central Arkansas.

As I think of the individual children, their

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problems, their personal needs and their individual dreams, your wanting to share with them takes on special significance. You seemed to understand how meaningful it was for each child to get what he wanted for Christmas. Some of you spent endless

hours shopping to get the right color, the right model, the longed-for present. Your thoughtfulness can only be fully understood within the context of Christian love, an awareness of God's love for us and his command that we love one another.

Christmas was a beautiful time for that expression that may have taken the form of a little stuffed brown animal, pretty red mittens, a football or a bicycle. Your gifts were well received and brought happiness and joy to our children as well as planting seeds of hope, love, value and dignity in

their lives.

All of our hearts are lifted in gratitude to Arkansas Baptists for their thoughtfulness in sharing throughout the year that makes our child care ministry possible. Thank you for joining with us in this ministry of love.
— Johnny G. Biggs, executive director

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Sunday School Arkansas' fastest

The fastest growing Sunday Schools in Arkansas have been determined by the Nashville Sunday School Department.

The largest enrollment numerical increase was 888 in First Baptist Church, Ft. Smith. Dr. William Bennett is pastor and Tom Newton is Sunday School director. They increased from 5,425 to 6,313 in enrollment.

The largest percentage of enrollment increase was 378 percent growth experienced by the Immanuel Church of Danville. Anton Uth is pastor and Forrest Mondy was Sunday School director last year. Linton Mondy is present director. Their growth was from 27 to 129.

First Church of Jonesboro, was the church with the largest numerical attendance increase. Their attendance increased from 460 to 598 or an increase of 138. Emil Williams is pastor and Roy Cooper is the director of the Sunday School.

The church with the largest percentage of attendance was Spadra. They increased from five to 15 or 200 percent. The pastor is Archie Wheeler and the Sunday School director last year was Clarence Mills. The present director is Paul Curtis.

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Congratulations to these growing churches. — Lawson Hatfield, state director

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Dunn clarifies his position on Reagan's tax confusion

by Norman Jameson

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Confusion over President Reagan's apparent position reversal on the status of tax exemption for schools that discriminate has caused the issue to be debated primarily with race arguments.

Debate on that basis is too simplistic and neglects "subtle and profound" religious liberty issues says James M. Dunn, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs in Washington.

Dunn at first asked the Supreme Court to drop cases against Bob Jones University and Goldsboro (N.C.) Christian Schools that sue Service had brought

against them for discrimination. When a howl arose that the administration was racist, Reagan quickly asked Congress for legislation to deny tax exemption for schools that discriminate.

News reports then erroneously said Reagan's request was a policy reversal, when in fact the original request remained in place, unchanged. The intent of Reagan's request from Congress was to take judgments on tax exemption from the hands of the IRS and put them under the force of law.

"I have to agree if the IRS is going to evaluate tax exempt status in the light of national policy regarding race, they clearly need some direction from Congress about what the policy is," Dunn said when attending a meeting of the Southern Baptist Interagency Council in Nashville.

"But even there, Congress doesn't have the right, responding to the majority of the moment, to sweep away the freedom of religion guaranteed in the First Amendment. Its entirely possible Congress could come up with legislation that would be such a blunt instrument it would be unworkable, unfair and unconstitutional.

"Congress has passed a lot of laws the Supreme Court has later declared unconstitutional. The climate of confusion, misunderstanding and imprecision that surrounds the issue makes that possibility even more likely."

Public interpretation of the Baptist Joint Committee's position on the issue has been confused, partly because the committee's general counsel filed a friend-of-the-court brief on behalf of Bob Jones University at the request of the American Baptist Churches. While, on the surface, that appears to cast them as racists, Dunn explains such categorization neglects finely drawn religious liberty issues.

"Like it or not, however odious," said Dunn, "Bob Jones University's position that interracial marriage is wrong is a clearly held fundamentalist belief. Their fundamentalist theology at the point of intermarriage teeters on the thin little hair of the possibility that miscegenation can be supported theologically or religiously.

"We're supporting the notion that on this particular instance the IRS does not have the right to assume that their interpretation of national policy takes precedence over Bob Jones University's sincerely held theological belief on this particular point."

Dunn pointed out the Bob Jones case has been in the courts 11 years and the point of contention is very finely drawn. There were no sweeping generalities about tax exemption for schools that discriminate. He said the Baptist Joint Committee's support of Bob Jones was not for their beliefs on interracial marriage, but for their right, as a religious school, to hold those beliefs without interference from the government.

Dunn still fears Reagan's original request to the Supreme Court to ensuing legislation from Congress will damage race discrimination progress made over the past years. Since there is yet no way to tell how the legislation will look, or the effect of Reagan's request, Dunn could only say "To the degree Reagan's efforts represent a retreat from racial justice, we deplore them; if they are the forerunner of a new era of Reagan racism, we must denounce them."

At the same time, he asserted that "to the degree they represent an acknowledgement that the Internal Revenue Service cannot arbitrarily and arrogantly establish and enforce national policy at the expense of religious liberty guarantees, they are correct decisions."

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Stewardship man miffed at Reagan's tithing claim

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — President Reagan's verbal support of tithing backed by tax returns that show only 1.4 percent of his income was given to charitable causes has drawn reaction from the executive director of the Southern Baptist Stewardship Commission.

At Reagan's Jan. 19 press conference, he said though his tax returns do not show significant contributions to charitable causes, he has given money to individuals. Such gifts are not tax deductible.

"The Bible teaches we are not supposed to look at the things we'd like to do and take the money that ought to support Kingdom causes and use it to support things that appear good to us," said A. R. Fagan,

director for eight years of the Southern Baptist Convention agency that promotes giving.

Fagan, a strong believer in the Baptist tradition of "storehouse tithing," 10 percent of a person's income being contributed through the local church, illustrated his feelings about the president's giving level by comparing it to his own.

"In 1979, I gave made 21 times what I did and I gave considerably more than he did," Fagan said. "In 1980, his income was nearly 10 times as much and I gave, through my church in both instances, considerably more than he did.

"In addition to that, I supported such things as Good Will, United Way and individuals that I had personal contact with

who had needs."

Fagan favors the government's withdrawal from social welfare programs because he sees care for the unfortunate as the responsibility of the church. "The place for human compassion is not in government, but in persons caring for persons," he said.

Though it is unrealistic to think that churches can immediately pick up the slack caused by slashed government programs, he feels churches can and eventually will fill the gaps.

The 35,600 churches of the Southern Baptist Convention last year received \$2.7 billion from their members. Of that, they passed on \$444 million to mission and relief causes beyond themselves.