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September 27, 1990

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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Last Service

Arkansas Baptist

September 27, 1990



'What then shall we do?'

(Luke 3:10-11, RSV)

Cover Story



Christian Life Commission photo

'What shall we do?' 2

Hunger is a grinding reality, not only overseas but here at home. World Hunger Day, Oct. 14, is a chance for Southern Baptist churches to make a difference in the lives of hungry people.

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Next Issue: Oct. 11

'What Then Shall We Do?'

Luke 3:10-11

Physicians investigating hunger found that Pat Jones' refrigerator contained only a jug of water, a slice of cheese and three eggs. They learned that her three-year-old son had not had milk to drink in three weeks and that he had eaten his last bowl of cereal with water.

Pat Jones and her son, residents of Montgomery Ala., were at dire risk of hunger. Hundreds of miles away in Roses Creek Hollow, Tenn., Letta Casey and her two boys eked out a living in the Appalachian Mountains. She eagerly waited for school to start in September so that her sons could get decent breakfasts and lunches.

These new stories represent the ongoing reality of poverty and hunger faced by countless people at home and abroad.

Hunger is a grinding reality which causes a host of problems. Lack of adequate nutrition between conception and age three can cause permanent brain damage. Daily hunger can dull the ability of children to learn in school, diminish the productivity of adults, and weaken the immune system of aged adults.

The reality of chronic hunger compels us to ask what we can do to alleviate the problem. Our modern-day question is similar to another which has echoed down through the ages of history.

When the multitude heard John the Baptist's call for repentance and righteous living, they asked him, "What then shall we do?" They desperately wanted to know what they could do to avoid judgment and to live rightly.

John the Baptist replied, "He who has two coats, let him share with him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise" (Luke 3:11). John expected concrete actions as a sign of righteous living.

We, too, ask the question, "What shall we do in a hungry world?" We, too, hear the answer, "We must act."

Consider the following concrete actions:

- Pray that those who are hungry might have bread and that those of us who have bread might have a hunger to act.
- Study your Bible about the causes of and the cures for hunger.
- Organize the missions committee in your church to study and to act on the problem of hunger.
- Give to hunger ministries of the Foreign and Home Mission Boards.
- Volunteer at a soup kitchen or night shelter.
- Observe World Hunger Day in your church.

What will you do in a hungry world this year?

—Robert M. Farham, SBC Christian Life Commission

ABN photo / J. Everett Sneed

Fighting the Lottery

Rex Horne (right), pastor of Immanuel Church, Little Rock, presented W. H. (Buddy) Sutton (left), general chairperson for Citizens Against Legalized Lottery, a check Sept. 11 for \$4,192 to be used in opposition to the proposed legalization of a lottery in Arkansas. The check represents \$1 for each member of the Immanuel Church. Other churches of all denominations are encouraged to give a minimum of \$1 per member. Dr. Horne indicated that there would be substantial private gifts from other members of the congregation.



No Lottery!

J. EVERETT SNEED

There are no legitimate reasons why Arkansas should legalize the lottery. The lottery is morally wrong, biblical principles denounce it, it is economically harmful and it will be devastating to the poor. However, we are going to limit our comments in this editorial to the basic argument for legalizing the lottery: "If people are going to gamble, why not legalize it so that the criminal element and charlatans cannot prey on the people, and we can collect the proceeds for public schools and other good causes?"

A brief look at the history of the lottery shows how devastating it has always been in the United States. Lotteries were a popular form of fund raising in England and served the same purpose during early colonial times. Colonial preachers strongly opposed the lottery. Among those opposing it were The Society of Friends (Quakers), Baptists, and Methodists.

From 1790 to 1860, 24 of the 36 states sponsored government-run lotteries. These states attempted to minimize the impact that the lottery would have on the poor. In many instances, they would not allow an individual to wage more than \$10 on the lottery. This, of course, was a substantial amount of money in those days.

Even in this modified form, however, lottery had a corrupting impact on society. In 1830, the Philadelphia General Assembly felt compelled to speak out against legalized gambling. The same year, a grand jury in New York City returned a stinging indictment against the lottery as "an evil of almost alarming nature, both in a moral and pecuniary point of view."

Other states, such as Pennsylvania, Arkansas, New Jersey, Virginia and Louisiana began to see the tremendous devastation which the lottery produced. As a desperate maneuver to save the lottery, the Louisiana Lottery Company announced that the lottery was being moved to Honduras and that tickets and materials would be delivered by private express companies. Eventually the Louisiana Lottery, which had become the Honduras Lottery, simply went out of business. By Jan. 1, 1898, the legal lottery no longer existed in the United States. But these events did not take place until there was a history of scandal and corruption from Louisiana to the District of Columbia and eventually in every state where the lottery had existed.



During the depths of the Depression in 1931, Nevada legalized gambling. But no state had a lottery until 1964, when New Hampshire, desperate for revenue, was the first state in modern times to legalize the lottery. Obviously, we in America have a short memory.

Proponents of the lottery argue: "It's for a good cause." The states which have sponsored the lottery have designated its profits for education and the elderly, as well as other philanthropic causes. Certainly these are good causes, but good ends do not justify evil means. No thinking individual would argue that it would be proper to legalize prostitution so long as the proceeds were used to assist the elderly.

No one would argue that child pornography was acceptable if the proceeds were going to the poor and needy.

The lottery is not as bad as prostitution or child pornography, but that is not the question. The question is whether we should allow the things which are devastating to our society in order to raise revenue for good causes.

The devastating effect of the lottery on the poor is well documented. The poor are the ones who frequent the lottery and use an inordinate amount of their small incomes trying to get rich quick.

Legislators should remember that lotteries add only pennies to the state cof-

fers when one takes into account the real cost of running a government. In Arkansas, the most optimistic reports indicate that the lottery would produce only one-half of one percent of the state budget.

Others argue, "We can't tell people how to spend their money." This rationale overlooks the fact that the government does, and should, encourage people to spend their money wisely. The government regularly publishes consumer reports, constantly warns people of potential fraud and prosecutes those who engage in fraud. The government even places warnings on cigarette advertisements. Obviously, both the state and federal governments are rewarding us for spending our money on basic needs and are attempting to keep us from squandering our money. Laws against murder, cheating, and all types of immorality are designed to protect the public. On this basis the state should take a strong stand against the lottery.

Pro-lottery individuals often argue: "Do gooders shouldn't force their morals on others." This old argument is as bad as it is old. Few would use the same logic to support child abuse, wife abuse, rape, or murder. But, we have laws forbidding all of these things. The basic question is not whether we should legislate morality, but which morals should be legislated. If the lottery produces devastation to society, as does cheating and stealing, then it too should be forbidden.

We urge Christian people to reject the lottery. From a moral, social and economic standpoint, it is imperative that we keep the lottery out of Arkansas. Every committed Christian should not only vote against the lottery, but use his influence to stop it. Let's keep this moral blight out of Arkansas!

Arkansas Baptist

VOLUME 89 NUMBER 26

J. Everett Sneed, Ph.D. Editor
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MIKE HUCKABEE

The President's Corner



How should a church relate to its denomination? Are there any guiding principles that could govern the level of participation an individual church has within the broader denominational family? There may be some validity in comparing the relationship of a church member to his church and a church to its denomination.

Here are some characteristics of a "desirable" church member:

(1) He gives to be part of the body and therefore gives with a "let go" spirit. He doesn't designate his tithe to his favorite project, but is willing to give to the unified budget.

(2) He serves when asked, but doesn't beg for only those tasks which are favored or have prestige.

(3) He follows principles—not personalities. Church members should love, pray for, and support their pastor, but should follow God's Word—not just God's worker.

(4) He doesn't withhold his tithe when he's mad at the preacher. Such is the spirit of selfishness.

(5) He doesn't have the audacity to take a position of leadership if he doesn't have the integrity to participate. Our church doesn't elect deacons or finance committee members who won't tithe. While Baptist policy doesn't allow for the denomination to "demand" of its churches any particular level of support, those who serve in places of leadership should be those whose investment reflects genuine agreement with our endeavors.

(6) He accepts his brothers and sisters within the faith for who they are in Christ. He doesn't demand that everyone else possess the same spiritual gift (and therefore same spiritual interest).

A church applying similar precepts to its denominational service would likely be a valuable contributor to the greater cause of Christ.

Jesus never intended church to be a place where everyone "has his say and gets his way." It was purposely to be a people who by the grace of God bind themselves together so God can "have his say and so he can get his way."

Mike Huckabee is pastor of Beech Street Church, Texarkana.

Letters to the Editor

Understanding Hunger

Many of us think we know what hunger is. We experience hunger when dinner is a little late. Or we recognize hunger on nightly television news reports with pictures of matchstick-looking children with reddish hair, gaunt faces and bloated bellies. Too often we define hunger either as a personal experience of temporary discomfort or as mass starvation. (*Issues & Answers: Hunger*, Christian Life Commission)

If we are to understand what world hunger really is, then we need to think about it in three different forms. First, hunger is starvation or acute hunger, resulting from famine. Second, hunger is day-in day-out malnutrition. Third, hunger is food insecurity, people who face a risk of hunger on a regular basis. (*Issues &*

Answers: Hunger, CLC)

Observing World Hunger Day on the second Sunday in October is one of the most important actions Southern Baptist churches can undertake to respond to hunger. (*A Hungry World — Helping Southern Baptists Respond*, CLC)

Southern Baptists' system of distributing hunger funds is unique in that 100 percent of hunger gifts go to hunger needs. Southern Baptists do not spend one dime of hunger contributions on promotional or administrative costs at the Home Mission Board or the Foreign Mission Board. (*What Are Southern Baptists Doing About Hunger?*, CLC)

What is your church doing about world hunger? Hopefully you are going to observe World Hunger Day, Oct. 14, 1990.—Katsy McAllister, ABSO World Hunger Chairman, El Dorado

ERWIN L. McDONALD

The Golden Years

Go and Grow and Glow

For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

(2 P. 1:8)

If you are a mature Arkansas Baptist—mature at least in years, that is—this is your column. Or if you are past 50 and aspiring to be mature at least in years, feel welcome. Come on in. Be happy, be useful, be fruitful. Help all of us "older citizens" to grow and glow in and for the Lord.

Editor Sneed, my worthy successor and friend through the years, is making this space available to us, on a monthly basis, to see what we can do with it. Help me show him he's picked a winner!

The overall purpose of the column will be to encourage all of us particularly us oldtimers, to be lifted up and inspired to greater efforts in living for the Lord.

And just what can you do, as one Arkansas Baptist who has lived at least half a hundred years, to make this new department an assured success from the word go?

—You can read us on a regular basis and talk our new feature up in your church and your community, praying

that the Lord can use us for His glory.

—You can do what you can, where you are and whatever you circumstances, to grow and glow for the Lord and to encourage other to do likewise. Remember, Christians are never too old to serve and they are never retired.

—You can communicate with this columnist personally, by notes and letters, by telephone, or eyeball to eyeball, to express your views on how we can make the best use of this column to love, inspire, encourage, and involve all of us in making the most of our golden years.

—If you are still ablebodied, be sure you are a good pew-warmer at the worship services of your church and an active and participating member of a Sunday School Bible class.

Be sure to tune in next time, when we'll be sharing with you how one Arkansas Baptist couple are managing to "go and grow and glow" in their own golden years. See you!

Erwin L. McDonald, a member of Park Hill Baptist Church, North Little Rock, was editor of *Arkansas Baptist* from 1957 to 1972. He and Mrs. McDonald live at 1419 Garland Ave., North Little Rock, AR 72116; telephone 753-6328.

Harrison Centennial

by Colleen Backus
Arkansas Baptist

Harrison First Baptist Church held its "Century II" banquet on Aug. 30 in celebration of its 100th anniversary.

In preparation for the centennial, over the last six months all living former pastors were invited to come and speak during a "Centennial Minutes" time in the Sunday morning worship service. All six, Lehman Webb, Bill Cook, Roy Hilton, Bob Wright, Carroll Caldwell, and Curtis Mathis, have participated.

The banquet, held at North Arkansas Community College, was without the benefit of air-conditioning, but according to Arkansas Baptist State Convention Executive Director Don Moore, was a wonderful and heart-warming experience.

One of the high points of the evening was a "Reminiscing," delivered by Elmer Griever, son of the late E.E. Griever, who holds the church's record for longest tenure as pastor. During his two-decade pastorate, the church baptized 660 people. His son recalled the congregation sending young men off to war, public religious debates on the town square, and other personal memories.

Bill Canary, a former music minister at Harrison and now pastor of Mount Vernon Church, led in an old-time "hymnsing" and gave a mini-concert to the well attended gathering.

ABSC Executive Director Don Moore

delivered the evening's address, speaking from Genesis 13:14, on commitments.

He told those present that first they must identify where they were in relation to the Bible, the Great Commission, and the community. He stressed that in order to move the church where it needs to go, the congregation must be willing to pay the price.

He asked the church members to personally make a commitment to genuineness and sincerity; to reliance upon God; to strengthen their fellowship; to ministry and evangelism; and a commitment to pay the price.

According to the church's centennial history, the original church sat on a hillside overlooking the village. After the age of the automobile, the church needs a new location in which to expand, and in 1923 purchased property at the corner of Vine (Main) and Ridge, which was the site of a hotel that had recently burned. By 1929 a completely new structure had been built.

During the pastorate of Garrol Caldwell, the church purchased 30 acres of land, planned, built and equipped the present church facility, which was dedicated in 1979.

The church has started three missions: its first mission, started in 1944, became Eagle Heights Church; in 1953 Gordon Street Mission was formed and later became Emmanuel Church; and in 1971 the Western Grove Mission was begun.



Don Moore delivered the centennial message on commitment.

Pastor Jim Perkins, who has served the church since June 1989, has introduced the use of interns in the singles and youth departments. At present, Doug Dees leads the singles ministry and Todd Pruitt assists with the youth ministry.

The most recent addition to the church staff is Royce Sweatman, minister of evangelism.

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Photo / Jeffery S. Bleser



"Decade" groups exchanged humorous and spiritual memories.

Old Tabernacle Last Service

by J. Everett Sneed
Editor, Arkansas Baptist

On Sept. 1 a final service was held in the Old Tabernacle at Siloam Springs. This was a prelude to the construction of a new and modernized tabernacle facility. There were over 300 people in attendance.

Immediately after a fellowship luncheon, former Siloam participants convened by decades. Each group was to chose the most

comical and most meaningful thing that occurred in that particular decade.

It had been anticipated that testimonies would come from the decades of the '30s through the '80s, but three ladies were present from the decade of the '20s. Two of these were present in 1923 when the first service was held at Siloam Assembly Grounds.

Lawson Hatfield, camp director at Siloam for many years, presided over the

testimony portion of the program. These testimonies were interspersed with music. Two decades would report and then a musical presentation was made. Those providing music included Gale Dunn, now retired in Richardson, Texas, who led music for more years at Siloam Springs than anyone else in the history of the assembly; the Mill (Meaning in Life) Singers; and Leslie Tapson of Mount Carmel Church, Cabot.

The steering committee was introduced by Jimmy Shults of Pine Bluff, campaign chairman; and Mike Huckabee of Texarkana, ABSC president, made an appeal for support to the campaign to construct a new tabernacle and remodel the dormitories at Siloam.

Executive Director Don Moore had been scheduled to preach, but because the program was running overtime he simply expressed words of appreciation. Moore commented later, "The service had great variety as well as being a very meaningful worship experience. There was variety both in the kinds of music presented, as well as in the testimonies that were given."

The new tabernacle will be constructed in contemporary style. It will be built in a semi-circle with the pulpit at the opposite end from where it stood in the past. This will prevent late arrivers from disturbing the service. The facility will be air conditioned and will utilize native stone and exposed wood. There will be four entrances into the tabernacle.

Currently the fund raising campaign is moving from "lead gifts" to "advanced gifts." Near the end of the year "general gifts" will be solicited.



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Arkansas All Over

MILLIE GILL

People

Frances Usrey will join the staff of Calvary Church in Little Rock Oct. 1 as minister of childhood education, going there from the ABCS Woman's Missionary Union Department where she has served as Girls in Action-Missions Friend director.

Keith Byrd began serving Aug. 19 as pastor of Calvary Church in Batesville where he had been serving as interim pastor. Byrd attended Williams Baptist College, Ouachita Baptist University and Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Prior to coming to Batesville he was serving in full-time evangelism in Missouri and Arkansas. He and his wife, Jane, have two children, Shannon, and Marla.

Betty Atchison of Rogers has been selected as the 1990 Margaret Elizabeth Ross Moore Award recipient by Southwest Baptist University, Bolivar, Mo. The award is presented annually to the wife of a Southern Baptist director of missions who has distinguished herself in her work and witness within her home, church, association, and has demonstrated full support of the work of her husband.

Jordan Guerra, the two-year-old son of John and Terry Guerra of North Little Rock, died Sept. 8 at Arkansas Children's Hospital in Little Rock. His death was the result of having fallen into a swimming pool on Friday. His funeral services were held Sept. 10 at Baring Cross Church in North Little Rock where his father had served as minister of youth and evangelism prior to assuming the pastorate of Pleasant Hills Church, Sardis, Sept. 9. Other survivors include a sister, Janie Guerra; his grandparents, Jaime and Glenda Guerra of Benton, and Paul and Joann Jones of Benton; and his great-grandparents, Mrs. John L. Jones of Nashville, Tenn., Mr. and Mrs. Russell Croft of Pine Bluff, and Guillermo Guerra of Panama City, Panama.

Loyd C. Hamilton, pastor of First Church of Wedington Woods, was killed Sept. 4 in an automobile accident near Amarillo, Texas. His wife, Marie, was also injured in the accident and was hospitalized in Amarillo.

Wayne Grothman will join the staff of First Church in Crossett Sept. 30 as minister of music and senior adults. He is a graduate of Delta State University, Cleveland, Miss., Mississippi College, Clinton, Miss., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Kathy, have a daughter, Ashley Christine.

Bookshelf

Gambling A Bad Bet you can't win for losing... In more ways than you can imagine

by Normal L. Geisler with Thomas A. Howe

Gambling A Bad Bet is "must" reading for everyone who is interested in defeating the lottery. The initial quote in the book shows how poor the odds of winning the lottery really are. It says, "Are you more likely to win the state lottery or be hit by a falling object? According to the National Center for Health Statistics, you are 15 times more likely to be hit by a falling object than you are to win the lottery."

The book deals with many of the common arguments used by supporters of the lottery, such as: people are going to gamble anyway, it's for a good cause, we can't tell people how to spend their money, and we can't force our morals on others are dealt with factually and forth rightly.

The book deals with the economic, moral, legal, enforcement, and religious aspects of a legal lottery. Since the book was copyrighted in 1990, the materials are completely up to date.

The book is serving many of us, who are opposing the lottery, as an excellent resource. The book could serve as a basis for a Sunday morning sermon or could be taught on Wednesday evening. The materials contained in this book should be common knowledge among all Christian people.

The book is available at a reduced price from the Christian Civic Foundation, 8300 Geyer Springs Road, Suite 201, Little Rock, AR 72209; telephone 501-568-0448.

Of Local Interest

Southwestern Alumni—Alumni and friends of Southwestern Seminary will hold a noon luncheon Oct. 30 at Immanuel Church in Little Rock during the annual state convention. For more information or to order tickets, contact Hess Hester, alumni president, at 501-725-3941.

Gregory Featured—Joel C. Gregory, pastor of Travis Avenue Church of Fort Worth, Texas, will speak to the Christian Ministry Fellowship of Ouachita Baptist University on Oct. 1 at 7 p.m. in Berry Chapel. The public is invited.

HMB

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The End of Summer

by Don Moore
ABC Executive Director

"The summer is ended, and we are not saved!" (Jr. 8:20) This was the lament of the servant of God, not over unsaved sinners, but over God's people who were suffering the discipline of God over their sins.



Moore

Another summer has ended for Arkansas Baptists as we return to the fall schedules. True, most of our friends who began the summer lost are still lost. True, the pitiful condition of many of our churches is much as it was at the first of the summer. Withered fruit, aborted fruit or no fruit characterize too many churches. It seems we cannot save ourselves from the apathy, lethargy and spiritual impotence. Who said we could? It seems God has not chosen to deliver us from our own hands. Of course, he would if we chose to repent of the works of our flesh which he hates.

Our pastor has been leading us through Acts on Wednesday nights. To see the strategies of Satan carried out in the first century helps us understand what he is doing today. Discouragement, distraction, deception, and division—these all took place within a few months in the early church. They still are, today. We must recognize the origin of such and reject it in the name of Jesus and claim victory through his blood and march on to the saving of our witness and to the saving of the lost.

Good or bad, the summer is history. We will not have to face it again until the judgment seat of Christ. What of the fall? Rededication, reconsecration, reorientation—these are a few of the things needed to catch a new vision and move on out under the mighty hand of God. Pray, folks! Too much evidence is present that we are only doing what we can do, not what He can do. Plan! Unless you plan for a change in direction and effectiveness, it will never come. Prepare! Perform!

The annual Arkansas Baptist State Convention should be an occasion for great celebration, inspiration and affirmation. Our fellowship, the business sessions, the Bible studies, the theme interpretation, all should fit together to help do what the theme suggests, "Build God's Family!"

To our knowledge, this will be the earliest convention in our history. It will

be held on Oct. 30-31, 1990, at Immanuel Church, Little Rock. The church family and their new pastor will be good hosts. The Convention Program Committee recommends the date and place for our convention three years ahead. Two majors factors impact their recommendation. They always try to avoid conflicting with general election (Nov. 6), and deer season (Nov. 11-17). The early time has put pressure on the associational annual meetings. We hope this schedule will not have to be followed again. Since a later date would have had to be during Thanksgiving week, the present arrangement is no doubt the best that could be done.

It would be great if every church would bring the full number of messengers allowed. Let's work and pray for a great convention. Arkansas Baptists can stick together and have a great witness if we will.

Discipleship—No word brings more pain to a highly charged evangelistically oriented denomination than this word—discipleship. The reason is that it reminds us so readily of what may be our greatest failure, the failure to help people who have accepted the Lord to develop and grow as true disciples. If people "don't get it through my preaching, they are just out of luck." No one would actually say that. It's just that our actions say that. Little effort and little planning is done to do more than that.

We've had such good helps to equip us to disciple folk. I pray that hundreds of our churches will send people to the State Conference on Discipleship. Since it is just the week before the State Convention, it may be hard for pastors to come. Please send lay people who could catch the vision, carry the load, and help their church implement effective discipleship strategies.

Dr. T. W. Hunt, precious man of God, mighty in spirit, will be the keynote speaker. It will be Oct. 23, at Park Hill Church, North Little Rock.

Music Men/Singing Women—Your retreat, Oct. 18-19, at Ouachita Baptist University, is so important! Church staff members, music leaders and their spouses from Arkansas Baptist Convention churches make up this group, and they provide some of the most inspiring moments of our annual Convention. They also sing at the Evangelism Conference in January, and will be singing at Praising II in Nashville, Tenn. You see why this "working retreat" is so vital. Call the Church Music Department for more information.

Bivocational/Single Staff Church Pastor's Conference—D.G. McCoury,

James Hightower, L. B. Jordan and I will be prepared for a great Pastor's Conference at Olivet Church, Little Rock, Friday night and Saturday, Oct. 5-6. Special activities are planned for the wives. This is the only statewide meeting planned totally for bivocational pastors. A great fellowship of appreciation and love is growing with this group. We would reduce the number of our churches by 30 percent if it were not for them.

We would appreciate knowing of your plans to attend. Call 376-4791, ext. 5148, to get more information and let us know you are coming. We will have a great time!

Bivocational/Part-Time Music Leaders—You are not left out. October 6, First Church, Smackover, and Oct. 27, First Church, Marshall, workshops will be held to give song leaders and accompanists some tips on how to improve their ministries in their churches. Many of these are volunteers who truly delight in sharing with one another in the common problems they face. We want to help. Churches should try to help with travel costs for those to come.

Baptist Women Retreat—There are two of them. One retreat will be Oct. 18-19. The other will be Oct. 19-20. Mission personnel from Mississippi, Alabama, Texas and Guatemala will be there. A new day of aggressiveness in missionary education is needed. This retreat will inspire you to be a part of a "cutting edge" mentality toward missions.

Two Youth Emphases Events—Youth Sunday School/Evangelism Workshop—Youth ministers and spouses—Oct. 8-10, DeGray Lodge, Arkadelphia.

Tri-State Camp-O-Rce—High School Baptist Young Men and RA's—Oct. 19-20, Camp Cordova, Memphis, Tenn..

Church Recreation—Churches with recreation programs will want to send their leaders to the Recreators Retreat, Holiday Inn, Lake Hamilton, Hot Springs, Oct. 5-6. John Gardner from the Sunday School Board, Nashville, Tennessee, will be leading this conference. Call Bill Falkner for more information at 376-4791, ext. 5160.

A SMILE OR TWO

Murray's Rules of the Arena

- (1) Nothing is ever so bad it can't be made worse by firing the coach.
- (2) The wrong quarterback is the one that's in there.
- (3) A free agent is anything but.
- (4) Hockey is a game played by six good players and the home team.
- (5) Whatever can go to New York, will.

Brotherhood Men's Prayer Retreat

Are you ready for a blessing? Do you need a spiritual boost? God has provided it for you. On Nov. 2-3, Don Miller will be giving his prayer seminar at Camp Paron. I have seen Don do this seminar and it is one of the greatest experiences I have ever had. He has done this throughout the U.S. and Europe. We are very fortunate to have him in Arkansas.

This will be a retreat sponsored by Arkansas Baptist Men. It is open to both men and women, so tell your friends and make an announcement in your church. It will begin with dinner at 6 p.m. Friday and end at noon on Saturday. Meals and lodging will cost \$21 per person. Bring your linens and towels.

If you are involved in a prayer ministry in your church or association, this is a significant opportunity for you personally and your prayer tasks.

For information, contact the Brotherhood Department, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203; telephone 501-376-4791.—**Bill Bledsoe, State Lay Renewal Coordinator**

Stewardship/Annuity Encouraging Growth in Giving

Promotion is moving a cause forward, encouraging growth through communication. Stewardship needs promotion in Baptist churches.

Stewardship promotion doesn't resort to high-pitched sales talk, manipulation or distortion of facts. Churches can promote stewardship with some basic ideas. These suggestions will encourage growth in the grace of giving:

- Stewardship sermons by the pastor
 - Plan and use a budget promotion program
 - Testimonies by lay persons
 - Have a stewardship banquet or potluck
 - Invite a guest speaker
 - Display stewardship posters
 - Teach Sunday School lessons on tithing/giving
 - Distribute tracts from Stewardship Department
 - Invite discussion of budget
 - Use mailouts
 - Make stewardship a matter of prayer
- In stewardship promotion, something,

even if it seems insignificant, is better than nothing. Churches that promote stewardship will come out ahead of those that bury or ignore stewardship.

Contact your Stewardship Department for free stewardship promotional materials.—**James A. Walker, director**

Church Music Worship Planning Seminar

The biennial Worship Planning Seminar will be held at Markham Street Church, Little Rock, Nov. 13, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. and will feature Paul Duke, pastor, and Mark Lawson, minister of music, Kirkwood Church, St. Louis, Mo. Other program personalities will include Arkansas ministers of music: Tim Logan, First Church, Rogers; David Oliver, Geyer Springs First Church, Little Rock; and Alan Moore, South Highland Church, Little Rock.

Duke and Lawson participated in a panel discussion on worship at the Southern Baptist Convention Church Music Conference last year and were interviewed for the first issue of *Worship*, the new periodical from the Church Music Department, Baptist Sunday School Board. It is designed as a resource and aid for those responsible for organizing worship service.

Duke is quoted as saying, "Our purpose in worship is to bear witness to the character of God and to offer ourselves fully to him in response." Lawson also responded by saying, "Our definition of worship would be very much an offering from the people and an involvement of the whole congregation as worship leaders."

The seminar will include a time with Duke and Lawson sharing with all participants as well as Duke sharing with the pastors and Lawson the music leaders in the behind the scenes preparation as they approach the worship experience in their particular area of responsibility. The three Arkansas ministers of music will share with the group the procedure and style of worship found in their respective congregations.

Lunch will be provided. Registration is \$20 for the first staff member and \$15 for each additional staff member. Both pastor and music director should attend; other staff members are welcome. Registration deadline is Nov. 5. Contact the Church Music Department, 376-4791, ext. 5121.—**Glen Ennes, associate**

Church Music All-State Youth Band and Choir

Young people looking for a Christian centered activity to participate in should consider the All-State Youth Band and Choir. This select group has developed into an outstanding performing organization that performs at the Youth Evangelism Conference each year and the choir has been invited to sing for the second year at the State Evangelism Conference.

The choir will be directed by Richard Wade, Second Church, Monticello and the band will be led by John Caldwell, director of bands, Magnolia.

Pastors, music and youth directors should make sure that their youth are aware of this opportunity. You should have received a brochure with detailed information; if not, please contact the Church Music Department, 376-4791, ext. 5121.—**Glen Ennes, associate**

Classifieds

Evangelist—Available for revival or Bible study. Shelby Bittle, P.O. Box 255, Wynne, AR 72936; phone 501-238-4529. 927

Classified ads must be submitted in writing to the ABB office no less than 10 days prior to the date of publication desired. A check or money order in the proper amount, figured at 90 cents per word, must be included.

Baptist Men Needed

—Oct. 15-22 or Oct. 22-29; Nevada Work Crew; carpenters and helpers to work with Boyd Morgason and John C. McAlister. Highland Hills in Henderson (near Las Vegas).

—Oct./Nov.; Indiana; block layers to build bathroom for swimming pool at state camp. (50' x 28' x 8').

—Oct.; Hartsville, Ind.; paper hangers.

—Oct./Nov.; Hartsville, Ind.; finish carpenters to build cabinets, trim, etc.

—Oct./Nov.; Crawfordville, Ind.; roofing crew.

—Oct.; Guatemala; Painters needed for Arkansas House; one cabinet maker.

If you would like to help with any one of these, please contact the state Brotherhood office at 376-4791.

Woman's Missionary Union Focus on the Middle East

Every day we are confronted with news from the Middle East concerning political and military happenings. But what is happening spiritually?

The Foreign Mission Study in November will give insight as it focuses on Baptist ministries in the Middle East. Participants will learn how our Baptist representatives, cross barriers with love under very difficult circumstances in such places as Gaza, Egypt, Jordan, Yemen and Lebanon.

Books and teaching guides for all ages or the complete planning kit can be pur-

chased through the Baptist Book Store. The Oct.-Nov.-Dec. *Dimension* has plans for conducting a churchwide study.

A knowledgeable person is a more effective prayer. Following the study, Dec. 2-9 is the Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions. The theme, "Sent . . . To Serve All Nations," not only defines the task but also the boundaries of our service. Free posters and prayer guides can be ordered through the state WMU office.

The major resource for planning the churchwide week of prayer experience is *Dimension*. Suggestions are given to help set personal offering goals. Publicity and promotional ideas as well as worship suggestions are also given. Ways to involve children and youth can truly make this a "churchwide" experience. Perhaps the

most important suggestion is the 24-hour Pray-Around-the-Clock experience.

A knowledgeable heart and a prayerful spirit change a person's giving. Only as we give sacrificially will Southern Baptists reach the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal of \$86 million. Offering envelopes are also ordered through the state WMU office.

Why give extensive time and energy to these activities in the midst of the busiest holiday season? Isaiah 12:4-5 states it clearly: "Give thanks to the Lord, call on his name; make known among the nations what he has done, and proclaim that his name is exalted. Sing to the Lord, for he has done glorious things; let this be known to all the world." Would we want to do any less?—Carolyn Porterfield, BYW director

State Discipleship Training Conference

Launching

DiscipleALL

The 1991-95 Bold Mission Thrust
Equipping Believers Emphasis

Tuesday
October 23, 1990

Park Hill Baptist Church
North Little Rock

Three Sessions:
9:50 a.m.-12 Noon 1:30-4:50 p.m. 6:50-9:10 p.m.

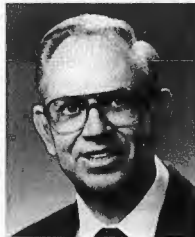
Program Features

- Worship/Inspirational Messages
 - Practical "How-To" Conferences for Pastors/Staff/Discipleship Training Leaders Associational Leaders
 - Special Conferences on
 - PrayerLife
 - Developing a Church Prayer Ministry
 - Discipleship Training Curriculum Lab
- PLUS**
- Conferences for Church Secretaries And Church Media Library Workers

A Bold New Commitment To...

DISCIPLESHIP
TRAINING

Speaker Conference Leader



Dr. T. W. Hunt
Author of PrayerLife
Nashville, TN

Church Leadership Bi-Voc/SMC Conference

Very specialized help for Bi-Voc/SMC pastors and their wives is being offered on Oct. 5-6 at Olivet Church, 6711 W. Markham in Little Rock. One of the most significant changes in our denomination in recent years is the increased recognition and importance placed on bivocational pastors and the smaller membership churches.

Shirley Moore (Mrs. Don) and Nancy Jordan (Mrs. L. B.) will be meeting with the wives, leading conferences on developing a personal walk with the Lord and the art of being a pastor's wife.

Areas of help for the pastors will include developing caring skills, enlisting and motivating volunteers and pastoral leadership in the church. Leaders will be D. G. McCoury and James Hightower from the Sunday School Board plus Jimmie Sheffield and L. B. Jordan of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

Don Moore will open the conference with a message from God's Word that will set the tone for the meeting.

For out of town participants, we will assist with lodging and travel expenses. Reservations will be made at the Baptist Plaza Hotel, 1120 Medical Center Drive (Kanis & Medical Center Drive/1-630 Exit 7). Room cost will be \$9.25 per person double occupancy or \$25.00 for a single. Room reservations must be made through church leadership support department (376-4791, ext. 5148). If rooms are not needed, no registration is needed for the event. Travel will be reimbursed at 12 cents per mile.

For more information call or write L. B. Jordan, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203; telephone 501-376-4791, ext. 5148.—L.B. Jordan, director

Interested in a Ministry of Love?

Arkansas Baptist Home is looking for dedicated Christian singles (with no children) or couples (with two or less children) to live and work with children in a home-like setting. Salary, fringe benefits, and training are provided. Call or write Royce Aston, P.O. Box 180, Monticello, AR 71655; phone 501-367-5358.

Looking Ahead

October

1-4 National CWT Seminar, *Little Rock Markham Street Church (Ev)*

5-6 Bivocational/Single Staff Pastor's Conference, *Little Rock Olivet Church (CL)*

5-6 Recreator's Retreat, *DeGray Lodge (DT)*

5-7 BSU Convention, *Little Rock Second Church (BSU)*

6 Volunteer/Part-time Music Leader and Accompanist Workshop, *Smackover First Church (M)*

6-13 Senior Adult Chautauqua, *Ridgecrest Baptist Assembly, N.C. (DT)*

8-10 Youth Sunday School/Evangelism Workshop, *DeGray Lodge (SS/Ev)*

18 State January Bible Study Clinic, *Baptist Building (SS)*

18-19 Baptist Women Retreat, *Camp Paron (WMU)*

19-20 Baptist Women Retreat, *Camp Paron (WMU)*

19-20 Tri-State Camp-O-Rec, *Camp Cordova, Memphis (Bbd)*

23 State Conference on Discipleship, *North Little Rock Park Hill Church (DT)*

18-19 Arkansas Baptist Music Men/Singing Women Retreat, *Ouachita Baptist University (M)*

27 Volunteer/Part-time Music Leader and Accompanist Workshop, *Marshall First Church (M)*

30-31 Arkansas Baptist State Convention, *Little Rock Immanuel Church*

November

2-3 Baptist Men's Prayer Retreat, *Camp Paron (Bbd)*

3 Mission Friends Leaders Super Saturday, *Little Rock Calvary Church (WMU)*

13 Worship Seminar, *Little Rock Markham Street Church (M)*

15-16 Minister/Mate Retreat, *Little Rock Markham Street Church (DT/BSSB)*

17 GA Mission Spectacular, *North Little Rock Park Hill Church (WMU)*

18-21 Foreign Mission Study, *(WMU/Bbd)*

26-30 Church Building Tour (SS)

29-30 Career Assessment, *Baptist Plaza Hotel, Little Rock, (CL)*

December

2-9 Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions/Lottie Moon Christmas Offering *(WMU/FMB)*

6-7 Evangelism Workshop, *Camp Paron (Ev)*

8 Cooperative Services International Fellowship, *Radisson Legacy Hotel, Little Rock (Bbd)*

27-28 Joy Explor '90 Youth Evangelism Conference, *Hot Springs Convention Center (Ev)*

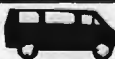
27-28 All-State Band and Choir, *Hot Springs Grand Avenue Church; Hot Springs Convention Center, (M)*

Abbreviations:

Ad - Administration; Bbd - Brotherhood; CL - Church Leadership Support; DT - Discipleship Training; Ev - Evangelism; M - Music; Mn - Missions; SS - Sunday School; SA - Stewardship/Annuity; Stu - Student; WMU - Woman's Missionary Union

Southern Baptist Church in Northwest Ark. seeks help in refinancing of existing loan. \$250,000 needed to be repaid over 15 years at 10 percent interest.

For further information write
Box 166, Ozark, AR 72949,
or call 501-667-2466.



Quality
VAN Sales

Used 12 and 15 passenger vans, special prices to churches. 501-268-4480, 1500 E. Race, Searcy 72143. Larry Carson

The Arkansas Baptist's

CHURCH SERVICES DIRECTORY

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Little Rock, AR 72207
501-664-5344

Air Conditioning

Grisham Air Conditioning
505 Sixth Street
Hot Springs, AR 71913
Dale Kemp, Owner;
501-629-1202

Book Stores

Baptist Book Store (SBC)
9101 W. Markham
Little Rock, AR 72205
501-225-6009

Glover Bible Book Store
5229 West 65th
Little Rock, AR 72209
Mon.-Sat. 9-5:30, Ph:562-1195

Glover Bible Book Store
113 Buena Vista Road
Hot Springs, AR 71913
501-525-4884

Cemeteries

Roselawn Cemetery
2801 Asher Avenue, Little Rock
Phone 501-663-0248
Ark. Largest Perpetual Care Fund

Listings in the monthly Church Services Directory are available on one-year contracts for \$4.75 per line. Listings must be submitted in writing to the ABN office, along with a check or money order in the proper amount for the first insertion. Subsequent insertions will be billed to the customer. Listings are accepted on a space-available basis, and the ABN reserves the right to reject any listing because of unsuitable subject matter. For more information, contact Nick Nichols at 376-4791.

Computer Software

C C S, Inc.
Complete Church Systems
Box 665, Benton, AR 72915
1-800-441-7786; 372-0323

Diamond Computer Company
429 Alcorn, Hot Springs,
AR 71901; 501-321-4329
Church Management Software

Construction

WBC Construction Co.
P.O. Box 21862
Little Rock, AR 72221
501-868-4838

Copiers/Fax

Ralph Croy & Associates, Inc.
Konica Copiers & Fax
Little Rock & Pine Bluff
501-378-0109

Elderly Housing

NLR Housing Authority
Leasing Office
P.O. Box 516, 2501 Willow
NLR 72115; 501-758-1512

Reach Baptist churches and families by advertising in the Arkansas Baptist!

Electrical Contractors

Concord Electric Co.
6114 Alma Highway
Van Buren, AR 72956
Hm: 501-474-9232; Of: 474-3792

Hurvill-Byrd Electric Co., Inc.
1619 Rebsamen Park Road
Little Rock, AR 72202
501-663-8345

Energy Management

Marks Air Conditioning, Inc.
Heat & Air Installation & Service
Residential & Commercial
Energy Mgmt; NLR; 753-1186

Fire & Water Damage

ServiceMaster of Hot Springs
Carpets & Draperies Cleaned
"On Location"
Hot Springs, Ark.; 501-525-3602

Flowers

Frances Flower Shop
1222 West Capitol
Little Rock, AR 72201
501-372-2203

Heating & Air Conditioning

Cox Heating & Air Conditioning
1612 Park Avenue
Stuttgart, AR 72160
673-2081

Insurance

Bob Stender - State Farm Ins.
Auto-Life-Home-Health-Boat-Aviation
800 N. James, Jacksonville, Ark.
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Insurance (cont.)

Dyson Insurance Agency
5307 JFK Blvd.; P.O. Box 6251
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Specialist in Church Property Ins.

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Arkansas Bag & Equipment Co.
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Sigler Music Co.
Fort Smith, Ark.; 501-783-1131
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Church Sound Equipment Installed

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8600 Cunningham Lake Road
Little Rock, Ark.; 501-225-3200

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American Audio, Inc.
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Specialists in Audio Systems
and Acoustics Applications

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Soos Stained Glass
3407 Pike Avenue
North Little Rock, AR 72118
501-758-8641

Convention Uniform

Wickedness Overthrown

by S. D. Hacker, Harrison

Basic passage: 2 Kings 9:1-8a, 9-12

Focal passage: 2 Kings 9:7

Central truth: Choices made without regard to divine law or human rights will be justly overthrown.

Due to the continued wickedness of Ahab's family, placing Israel in dire circumstances, an attack and complete change in kingly rule was imperative! Even today, nations possess the right to revolt when religion, liberty, morality, and national honor can be saved by no other means.

However, in this particular situation, the revolution was not left to human wisdom. The initiative was taken by a God-inspired prophet (vv. 1-3, 6-7). As noted in an earlier lesson, God retains his right to divine and providential leadership of his people. God uses human warfare, pestilence, earthquakes, and storms as patrols to work through the earth, reminding man that he must obey God. There is a vast difference between wrath and a fit of anger. Numerous times, God's Word reveals that his wrath will fall on man for abuses and disobedience. This is to be expected when wicked people flagrantly and obstinately oppose him.

In verse 7, God recalls the innocent blood that Jezebel shed, and orders that the rule of wicked Ahab's house be destroyed to avenge the death of his servants. John the Baptist urged people to repent and turn away from the rebellious ways of their forefathers (Mt. 3:7-10). Paul, focusing on the wickedness of people, called for them to repent or face the wrath of God (Ro. 1:18). The anointing of Jehu as king and the rapidity of attack show God's use of human instrumentality to close and open chapters of world events.

Jehu carried out his assignment as ordered, but his conduct in destroying the house of Ahab was not as much God-honoring as it was Jehu-honoring, and that was sin (Ho. 1:4). He did God's will, but profited by it for his own prestige and honor. He had to bear the consequences.

Preachers and teachers today must be bearers of the divine message to a needy world and must be true followers of the King. One who seeks to "feather his own nest" or to bring honor to himself, even as he follows God's directives, will not escape God's wrath.

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Life and Work

Won't Someone Help?

by Bobby Tucker, Maple Grove Church, Trumann

Basic passage: Exodus 1:8-10, 13-16; 2:23-25

Focal passage: Exodus 1:8-10, 2:23

Central truth: Even in the midst of extreme difficulty, God's promises remain steadfast.

The first two chapters of Exodus are crucial in understanding the history of Israel. Chapter one details the Egyptian hostility toward God's people. The favor given Joseph was cancelled by a "new king" (v. 8). He considered the Hebrews a threat to his own dominance, therefore began to take drastic measures to reduce their numbers (v. 16).

Yet in the sovereign pleasure of God, he used the situation to drive the people to himself. Such is the magnificent love of God. If the curtain were drawn in such a way that we could see the perfect will of God, undoubtedly we would notice that the difficult days were used by our Lord to draw us to the point of complete surrender to his lordship.

The second chapter closes with a portrait of the tremendous fidelity of God. We are told that "the sons of Israel sighed because of their bondage and they cried out" (v. 23). Is that not the case of many today crying out to the Lord because of the oppression in our land? Pleading with God to heal our land and our people? "Won't someone help?" was essentially the cry of the Israelites. God was bound by his covenant to hear his chosen people. In the same way, God not only hears, but actually desires to hear the prayers and cries of his children today. Yes, even in the turbulent times, God waits for us and is longing to have fellowship with those he has created.

Verse 25 establishes the vital concern the Lord had for his people. In this verse he "looked" or "gazed" upon the children of Israel. In essence, our God both knew and understood the plight of his people.

For those who believe in a prayer-hearing and prayer-answering God that should be of great comfort. The Lord of heaven and earth did not merely create everything and then walk away from it. Instead, Scripture indicates that God is vitally concerned about us and our day to day activity.

Even when trials confront us, the steadfastness of his love and care will give us hope.

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Bible Book

Prepared People

by Mitch Tapson, Mt. Carmel Church, Cabot

Basic passage: Luke 1:13-16, 34-36; 2:1-3, 25-32, 52

Focal passage: Luke 1:13-16, 34-36; 2:1-3

Central truth: God's purposes are detailed and designed to reveal his Son.

The birth of God's Son was no ordinary event, and thus we find men and women everywhere strategically placed and prepared for this great occasion.

God was preparing people and a world for his Son's entrance. The heavenly messenger, Gabriel, is busy carrying out God's divine purposes. Gabriel first appears to a priest named Zacharias. He and his wife, Elizabeth, had no child (1:7). Gabriel declared the news to Zacharias that he and his wife would have a child, but not just an ordinary child. No, he would be God's instrument, filled with the Holy Spirit to turn hearts in repentance toward God, and prepare the people for the Lord's coming.

The heavenly messenger Gabriel continued to prepare people by visiting the key person in God's plan. Mary received the wonderful, but troubling news that she was to bear a son, the Messiah. This virgin (note how carefully the Bible states this) engaged to the carpenter Joseph was disturbed because of her unmarried state. Gabriel assured her that God was in control of the situation and all would be well. Never underestimate the faith, trust, submission and patience of this young woman, Mary. Her preparation for God's purposes carried a high price. The risk factor for her was very great. Truly, "blessed art thou among women" (1:28).

Luke broadens the scope of God's preparation in chapter 2. God's "fullness of time," had now been widened to include the Roman Emperor, the empire, and bureaucratic operations. Luke's gospel has long been recognized as the gospel which presents Jesus as the universal Savior. His intimate knowledge of God's preparation places God's Son's birth in a universal setting. Many people, many nations are being moved into action like so many chess pieces on a board. A strategy had been given, the messenger delivered the plan, men unknowingly laid the groundwork for a baby boy, Jesus, God's Son, our Savior.

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Convention Uniform

Destiny Can Be Measured

by S. D. Hacker, Harrison

Basic passage: Amos 7:8-17

Focal passage: Amos 7:14-17

Central truth: The plumbline can reveal irregularities in a structure, and if such faults exist, tearing down and rebuilding becomes necessary.

A messenger of truth is often sent away for bringing words of God's judgment and justice upon law-breakers. Rather than repent, these dissenters gather around them a group of sympathizers and supporters to help out the condemning voice. Professional priest, Amaziah, spoke cunning half-truths and lies to find favor with the king, and to discredit Amos' message from God (v. 10).

Amaziah wanted Amos out of the country, and sought to destroy Amos' ministry and message. The tragedy is that many observers today of modern "Amaziah" and "Amos" will go along with "Amaziah" because dishonesty is covered by high position, smooth talk, and strong influence in the church and community. Amaziah didn't like the message, so he told the messenger, in no uncertain terms, to get out. He sought to stir up the king against Amos, with little concern that Amos had spoken God's words, not his own.

In some churches today, high officials hold that they do not have to respect God's chosen spokesman or his leadership. Many maintain that they have the power to control who is in the pulpit and how long he can stay there.

It is difficult for an "Amos" today to appear in a good light when under attack by such devious persons. Shrines of idolatry in our land are a stench to the nostrils of God, but these same shrines appeal to the masses who see some good in them.

The plumbline, held alongside social and moral convictions today shows that the structures our society has built are far out of line with God's standards. The wall, representing Isaac's descendants when built by God's standards, is now out of line both in purpose and in practice (vv. 8-9). The plumbline was used in building the high places of Isaac; now the same plumbline proved the need to tear down and rebuild according to God's plan.

Amos was independent; he had no ties to any political group. The message God gave him, he delivered. His allegiance was to God alone.

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Life and Work

Willing Vessels

by Bobby Tucker, Maple Grove Church, Trumann

Basic passage: Exodus 3:1-8a, 9-10

Focal passage: Exodus 3:1, 4, 8

Central truth: God desires for believers to be sensitive and obedient.

The story of the burning bush is perhaps one of the most familiar in all the Bible. On Mount Horeb, God revealed himself to Moses as the great "I Am," the redeemer of Israel. This episode in the life of Moses teaches some excellent principles about being usable and sensitive to the call of God.

First, one must recognize that God uses people where they are at the present. Verse one emphasizes this clearly. Moses was about his job tending the flock. At first glance this seems to be incidental, yet in this simplistic task, God spoke to Moses. Should it not be that way with believers today?

In spite of where we are or what we are doing, God is still determined to speak to us—and use us.

Secondly, to be usable we must be sensitive to God's call. Moses could have responded in numerous ways to the burning bush and the voice emanating from it. But instead, he chose to say, "Here am I" (v. 4).

Too many times, perhaps, we respond to God conditionally rather than unconditionally. In other words, our response is based on what the circumstances dictate as opposed to simple obedience.

Even in this strange circumstance, Moses was obedient and sensitive to the voice of God. Similarly, we must choose to listen when our Lord summons us for a particular task. How many times have we said to ourselves, "I know the Lord was telling me to do something," or "I thought I sensed the Holy Spirit prompting me to speak to my lost neighbor." You see, God places believers daily in pivotal places of service for him, yet often, we just don't listen!

The third principle in this passage teaches that God desires to work through us. In verse eight, the Lord explicitly tells Moses that "I have come down to deliver them. . . ." Moses need not worry about convincing Pharaoh; God would handle all the details—even down to the locusts, hail, and frogs.

Nor should we be concerned in our assigned task. All God needs is a willing vessel.

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Bible Book

A Voice/Crying

by Mitch Tapson, Mt. Carmel Church, Cabot

Basic passage: Luke 3:3-4, 7-17

Focal passage: Luke 3:3-4, 7-17

Central truth: A caring heart will see men as sinners in need of a Savior.

When one concludes Luke's account of Jesus' birth and early years in chapter 2, he jumps a number of years in time to the events of John's ministry in chapter 3. Luke, wanting the reader to have a "perfect understanding of all things from the very first," (1:3) places the next account within a historical time frame. Most agree that our Lord's birth can be placed at approximately the year 4 B.C. With that reference we then find that Jesus' temple appearance in 2:41-51 was 8 A.D. The 15th year (3:10) of the reign of Tiberias is dated 28-29 A.D. John and Jesus would each be 33 years old (4 B.C.-29 A.D.).

It borders on understatement to say that John's ministry was important. The heavenly messenger Gabriel delivered God's pronouncement of John's mission to his father Zacharias prior to Jesus' birth. John's prophetic ministry was a fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy (40:3); he was the forerunner of the Messiah.

John's role was more than merely prophetic. His ministry was indispensable in God's preparation of a world for the coming Kingdom. John was called at his birth to prepare the way for the Lord. This preparation was three-fold: (1) the proclamation of forgiveness, (2) the spreading of spiritual light to those in darkness, and (3) a guidance into a peaceful way.

John is often portrayed as rough-clothed, craggy-featured, strong-willed, and boisterous. All fire and little tolerance for human frailties. We do John an injustice when we only see him as a scolder and chastiser of sinful men. The true evangelist will always have a deep compassion for men (thus his concern).

Note the content of his message to others and his evaluation of himself in 3:10-17: see the needs and share with others; be honest in your business dealings; treat others justly and fairly; be content with your position and possessions. John's humility is evidenced by his response to who he is and his mission. John knew who he was, a humble messenger, given the glorious task of preparing others for the Savior.

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Executive Board Meets

Changes Personnel Bylaw, Supports CP

NASHVILLE (BP)—Members of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee began their fall meeting Sept. 17 with a three-hour solemn assembly that included public confession and repentance.

At several points in the assembly, individuals stood at microphones to confess specific sins and "turn over to God" burdens and issues of personal pride.

The solemn assembly was led by Henry Blackaby, director of prayer and spiritual awakening with the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. He was assisted by prayer leaders from three other Southern Baptist agencies: T.W. Hunt and Avery Willis of the Sunday School Board; Minette Drumwright of the Foreign Mission Board; and Doug Beggs of the Brotherhood Commission.

A bylaw change to allow the six officers of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee to fill staff vacancies on an interim basis between meetings of the full committee was approved by the 77-member committee during its Sept. 17-19 meeting.

With a two-thirds vote at one meeting, the change allows the Executive Committee to authorize its three elected officers and three committee chairmen to act on its behalf to consider personnel recommendations.

Under normal procedure, personnel selections are based upon the recommendation of the president/treasurer to the administrative and convention arrangements subcommittee, with final approval by the whole Executive Committee. That procedure will be followed, except when the committee deems it necessary to fill a vacancy between meetings by authorizing its officers to act under provisions of the bylaw amendment.

The Executive Committee voted to invoke the newly approved amendment and authorize officers to act before February 1991 on recommendations to fill any of four current vacancies.

The position of vice president for business and finance was vacated in January 1990 when Tim Hedquist left to join the staff of Bellevue Baptist Church in

suburban Memphis, Tenn. Marv Knox, feature editor of Baptist Press, became editor in June of the *Western Recorder*, newsjournal of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

On July 17, Al Shackleford, vice president for public relations and director of Baptist Press, and Dan Martin, news editor of Baptist Press, were fired by the Executive Committee.

Harold C. Bennett, president and treasurer of the Executive Committee, said he hopes to recommend persons to fill one or more of the vacancies before the next full meeting of the Executive Committee in February.

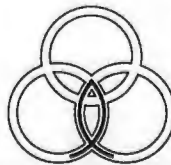
Support for the Cooperative Program became the rallying point for the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee during their fall meeting where agency heads presented requests for 1992 funding.

A resolution urging "all Southern Baptists to stand together in support of the Cooperative Program so that many more individuals might come to know Jesus Christ as personal Savior" was adopted unanimously by the 77-member committee. The Executive Committee was the fourth trustee body to adopt a statement of support for the Cooperative Program.

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Across the Country

CLC Approves Washington Budget, Elects Staff

Trustees of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission approved a new budget for 1991 allocating almost 35 percent of the agency's \$1.4 million annual resources for its greatly expanded Washington office, and the remaining 65 percent for its work in Nashville during its semi-annual meeting Sept. 10-13 in Nashville.

The allocation of \$489,284 for the CLC's Washington office includes the \$365,328 increase given the agency in June by the Southern Baptist Convention in New Orleans.

The trustees also unanimously elected Michael K. Whitehead, a Kansas City, Mo., lawyer, as general counsel and director of Christian citizenship and religious liberty concerns and Thomas H. Strode Jr., staff journalist at Bellevue Baptist Church in suburban Memphis, Tenn., as director of news information/Washington.

Strode, 38, has Arkansas ties. He was licensed to preach by First Church, Little Rock. He also worked as a sports writer and copy editor for the *Arkansas Gazette*. Strode is a graduate of the University of Missouri in Columbia and Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary in Memphis.

Associate Baptist Press Selects Board, Interim Director

Dan Martin has been named interim news director of Associated Baptist Press, according to Charles Overby, chairman of the 15-member ABP board of directors which was formed during a meeting in Nashville Sept. 11-12.

Martin, the former news director of Baptist Press, has been contracted to coordinate news gathering for ABP until the end of the year.

Overby, a Baptist lawyer in Fairfax, Va., is president of the Gannett Foundation and a former Pulitzer Prize winning newspaper editor. Arkansas Judy Strother, a Mountain Home attorney, was elected board secretary.

Associated Baptist Press is a new news service designed to report on issues of interest to Baptists at local, state, national and international levels.

McGregor to Retire; Henderson Selected

Don McGregor, 66, editor of the *Baptist Record*, newsjournal of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, has announced his retirement, effective Dec. 31.

Guy Henderson, 62, has been elected to succeed McGregor. Henderson has been director of evangelism for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board since 1981.

McGregor has been editor of the *Baptist Record* for 14 years. During his term as editor, the newsjournal's circulation has grown to 118,000 subscribers.

Henderson, a Mississippi native, is a graduate of Mississippi College and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Around the Globe

Missionaries to Jordan, Yemen

Four Southern Baptist representatives have returned to their work in Jordan and Yemen despite rising political tensions in the area, a Southern Baptist official said.

Gerry Volkart from Boonville, Mo., and Pat Frost from Parks, Ark., and Cheryl Harvey from Sudan, Texas, have returned to Jordan. Beverly Thomas from Senatobia, Miss., returned Sept. 18 to Yemen.

Laurie Graham and Sons Leave Kuwait

Southern Baptist worker Laurie Graham and her two sons have evacuated from Kuwait with a plane load of American and British citizens, but her husband, Maurice, remains behind in the U.S. Embassy where the family had taken shelter since Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion.

The Gramhams are Southern Baptists' first workers in Kuwait and had been there only about three months when the invasion occurred.

Mrs. Graham, with sons Peter, 13, and Aaron, 10, arrived in London late on the night of Sept. 14, enroute to the United States the following afternoon. They were healthy and in good spirits despite having lived through days of terror when they feared for their lives, she said in an interview.