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March 16, 1989

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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'Launch Forward!'

Arkansas Baptist

March 16, 1989

God's
Way
to the
World

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COMMISSION '89

Southern Baptist Foreign Missionary Appointment Service
April 11, 1989
Little Rock, Arkansas

Cover Story



Arkansans Included 5

The SBC Foreign Mission Board Appointment Service, to be held at the Statehouse Convention Center in Little Rock April 11, will be a high point for those in attendance as well as those appointed.

Editor's Page 3

Speak Up

- You'll Be Glad To Know 4
- Woman's Viewpoint 4

Local & State

- Arkansas All Over 6-7
- Billing Change 8
- 'Launch Forward!' 8
- 'Keep On Pressing' 9
- Boyce Opens Term IV 9

Faith At Work

- Unraveling The Secret 10-11
- Abuse Warning Signs 10

Nation

- Trustees Blame Lolley 12
- Seminary Okayed 12
- 'Conservatives' Meet 12
- Lottery 'Unreliable' 13
- Rico Laws Upheld 13
- WCU Committee 14
- Annuity Board Search 14
- Senior Adults Meet 14
- Unusual Offering 14

Lessons For Living 15

World

- Talk Is Cheap 16

IT'S UPLIFTING

Mission Reaches Out to Arabs

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—Raouf Ghattas' calling is clear—introduce the sons of Ishmael to the Son of God.

As pastor of Arabic Mission of University Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas, Ghattas is reminded of his task whenever he enters his office. It's spelled out in two languages on a poster hanging above his desk: "We will not rest until all the Arabs of Fort Worth hear about Jesus."

To reach that ambitious goal, Arabic Mission's activities range from broadcasting Arabic radio programs to offering classes in Arabic language and culture.

As a result of the innovative approach to outreach, the mission has grown in membership from five to 35 in one year and has a baptism rate that surpasses the conversion rate among Arabs in some Middle Eastern countries.

But that growth has not been easy or painless. For Arabs to come to Christ, several obstacles must be overcome. One of the first is their strong connection to Islam.

"When a Moslem is baptized as a Christian, he is signing his death warrant," said the Egyptian-born Ghattas. "At best, he is disowned by his family and treated as if he were dead."

"Their faith is strong. They are believers, but in the wrong thing. Argument is very dangerous. You never win a Moslem to Christ through argument. You must accept them and love them, not judge them."

Moslems have difficulty breaking out of the Islamic worldview and coming to an

intellectual understanding of the gospel until they first make faith commitments to Christ, Ghattas said.

"No one can say, 'Jesus is Lord,' except by the Holy Spirit," he said. "I tell them, 'Just close your eyes and jump. Take that last step of faith. Then once you accept Christ, let him speak to your heart and bring you understanding.'"

The aspect of the Christian faith that is most attractive to Moslems is the promise of inner peace and a personal relationship with God, he said.

"The father/son relationship—the personal, intimate relationship—is very appealing to the Moslem," Ghattas said. "I ask Moslems, 'Do you have peace in your heart?' If they answer honestly, they have to say that they do not."

Another major obstacle, Ghattas added, is nationalistic pride. However, that hurdle has been overcome at the mission, where at least seven nationalities are represented and the congregation is roughly half-Arabo and half-Arab.

"I speak of Arabic as a language group, not as a race of people," he said. "I tell the people I am a Christian first. Everything else really doesn't matter. It is a gift of God that he has allowed me to be able to forget the pride of being Egyptian."

Ghattas came to be a full-time mission pastor and full-time student at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth after a successful career as a nuclear physicist. Reaching the Arabic speaking people of Fort Worth "is not a task for overnight," he said. "But even if it takes us a lifetime we will not rest until they all hear about Jesus."

GOOD NEWS!

A Man After God's Heart

A sketch of his life—David was the rugged, outdoor type. He was also a musician. He was a sinner and a saint. He was guilty of adultery and murder, yet he became a man after God's own heart. In his lifetime he knew the experiences of being both a shepherd and a king.

These characteristics describe the man who wrote many of the psalms, the longest and one of the most popular books in the Bible. His life teaches the wisdom of discovering and following God's will in becoming a useful vehicle of service for God.

Scripture references—The biblical account of David's life can be found in 1 S. 16 and continues through 2 S. Some of his

most popular Psalms are 1, 23, 37, 46, 90, 119, and 150.

What we can learn from his life—David's life is an excellent example of how a genuinely repentant sinner can be used of God. David's adultery and murder were forgiven by God, and God made him into "a man after God's own heart" (see Ps. 51 and 32).

David also knew the pains of rejection by not only his enemies but also his friends. Even his own son plotted against him. He had to flee from Jerusalem, yet he matured through this bitter experience to write several psalms related to it (Ps. 13, for instance).

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Unique Opportunity

J. EVERETT SNEED

Arkansas Baptists will have a unique opportunity on Tuesday, April 11, when the Foreign Mission Board will hold an appointment service at the Statehouse Convention Center in Little Rock. In this service, several dozen new missionaries will be appointed to service around the world. It is one of six such events sponsored each year by the Foreign Mission Board when missionaries are formally set aside for their overseas assignment. It will be only the second time a missionary appointment service has been held in Arkansas. Churches and individuals will want to plan now to attend this marvelous experience.

The service will feature the testimonies of missionaries (perhaps several with Arkansas connections), a 500-voice choir, a 60-piece band, the parade of flags representing the 113 countries in which Southern Baptists serve with more than 3,800 missionaries. More than 6,000 people from our almost 1,300 Arkansas Baptist churches are expected to attend. The planning for this event began early in 1987 and has involved 110 people serving on 11 committees.

Nothing excites Southern Baptists more than foreign missions, and this is rightful the case. Often, we forget how much work and dedication is required for an individual to serve as a foreign missionary. It should also be remembered that our world wide mission thrust is no stronger than the men and women who are serving God around the world.

This appointment service is the final stage of much work and dedication. Our Foreign Mission Board makes every effort to know that every person finally commissioned is called of God. We, as Southern Baptists, believe that nothing can replace a person's having been divinely set apart for the task of carrying the gospel. The Bible teaches that God has a special task for each of his servants.

Those who serve Southern Baptists overseas must be well trained. Unless a person is to serve in some specialized activity, such as a medical doctor or an agricultural worker, he must be both a college and seminary graduate. This means seven years above high school. Those who are entering specialized missionary service must attend seminary at least one year above their specialized training.

Obviously, education is important. Our



foreign missionaries will serve in every type of environment imaginable. A broad education in college is essential in order to provide our missionaries with an adequate background. Seminary prepares them with specialized skills in Bible, preaching, evangelism, church history and other related areas.

Finally, those who will be commissioned will have undergone a very comprehensive physical and psychological test. It is of extreme importance that those who represent our Master and Southern Baptists be sound of both body and mind.

A great deal of preparation has already been made for this endeavor. Concerted prayer has already been offered across our state in our churches. A promotional manual designed to assist congregations in publicizing and preparing for the appoint-

ment service was distributed in December of last year. Two promotional videos are available upon request to be used in our churches. Finally, a packet has been mailed out to the churches containing bulletin inserts and posters designed to assist churches in publicizing this important endeavor.

The Bible from beginning to end stresses the importance of mission outreach. The Israelites were to be missionaries to the Gentiles. The New Testament in particular emphasizes the need and obligation to carry the gospel to the world. Jesus gave us our missionary mandate. Paul and other of the apostles demonstrated how we are to share the gospel.

Jesus gave a bold mandate to all of his followers (Mt. 28:16-20). He commissioned his disciples to carry the gospel to "all nations." This was to be done "while they were in the process of going." But he promised them his power and assurance. It must have been a startling thing for the small band of followers to contemplate striking out to conquer the world for Christ. Their number was small and their resources were extremely meager. But they were committed to the task which was assigned to them. We today have many more followers of Christ and our resources are vast. It is our obligation to provide the gospel for every individual in the world.

The Foreign Mission Appointment Service on Tuesday, April 11, will provide a unique opportunity for all Arkansans to learn more about our world wide mission endeavor. It will also give us the privilege of joining in the excitement and sharing in the enthusiasm that our foreign missionaries experience as they are set apart for this important world wide task.

Arkansas Baptist

VOLUME 88 NUMBER 10

J. Everett Sneed, Ph.D. Editor

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Erwin L. McDonald, Litt. D. Editor Emeritus

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DON MOORE

You'll Be Glad To Know



Recently a ship owned by Exxon Corp., loaded with 100,000 barrels of oil, ran aground 15 miles off the coast of Hawaii. It ruptured, spilling its valuable cargo. The oil is threatening to do great damage to the beautiful beaches of Hawaii, particularly the famous Waikiki. There will likely be some birds and marine life injured from this. The grief the world manifests over matters like this is utterly amazing. I never cease to be amazed at our capacity for grief over things that matter little.

Where is the grief for the thousands of children and teenagers committing suicide each year? Where is the grief for the thousands of young people maimed and killed in alcohol-related accidents? Where is the grief for the multiplied millions of innocent children slain in abortion clinics? Where is the grief for destruction of the basic institution of a civilized society, the home?

It is a sick society that cares more for whales, fish, birds and beaches than they care for the moral, spiritual, emotional and physical welfare of its people.

The Youth Issues Institute gives youth "helpers" an opportunity to care and to have a tool to do something about crucial issues that really matter. Call 376-4791, if you have not already registered for this. The date is April 8, the time is 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.; the place is Geyer Springs, First Church in Little Rock.

Who knows what battles the people of God may have to fight next? Will it be lotteries, increased pornography, profanity, total desecration of the Lord's day? Legalized dissemination of active AIDS virus—how would you like that? With the irresponsible way in which many approach legislation, the trend would lead you to believe that we should spread AIDS if we can make money off of it, respect people's freedom, further education and get re-elected to office.

Perhaps the times are helping us to see what the Bible has said all along. "The natural man cannot discern the things of the spirit of God." May God deliver us from the threat of these evil days and also deliver us from "doing nothing about it."

Don Moore is executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

Woman's Viewpoint

Can I Be Baptized?

DEBBIE SMITH

Can I be baptized? Many young children ask about being baptized long before they are ready to make a commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Our dilemma as parents or teachers of children is to spiritually discern the understanding of the child and guide them toward making the decision without rushing or hindering them.

The first thing that we need to remember when counseling children is that God does not give us a gospel for children and a gospel for adults. All people must come to God through Jesus the same way.

First, everyone must know who Jesus is, what he did, and why he came. Jesus is the Son of God who died for our sin and rose the third day.

Second, the Bible tells us that everyone who comes to Jesus must recognize that he is a sinner, separated (lost) from God. This is the most difficult part to discern about children. It is not enough for a child to say that he lies, steals, or disobeys



parents. Naming sins is not necessarily evidence of a conviction of sin in one's life by the Holy Spirit. A child needs to express why he sins. The child needs to have an understanding and sense of separation from God. The child needs to know that he has a sin nature inside that rejects God and Jesus. The child knows that his sin nature desires to control his own life and wants his own way and not God's way.

This personal conviction is more than just head knowledge about sin, but a Holy Spirit prompted conviction. The counselor or parent must ask for wisdom from God to discern the difference.

After the child has a personal sense of sin and loss, then the counselor can talk about repentance and faith. We must not leave out repentance when we talk to children.

Repentance is a changing of our attitude inside and wanting God's way, not ours. Repentance is the desire to give God complete control of our life. Faith is simply trusting totally in Jesus and what he did for us.

If a child is not ready, please don't lead him through a prayer. Remember, salvation must be in God's time. His Holy Spirit must begin and complete the work in a life.

If a child is ready, then you can joyfully lead the child in a sinner's prayer. You can trust that God will do the miracle of giving new life to that precious young person.

Parents and church leaders, please tread carefully as you guide children to the most important decision in their life. Remember that when the child does make his commitment to Jesus, then your real work of growing that "babe in Christ" up in a healthy way has just begun.

Debbie Smith is the director of children's ministries at Geyer Springs First Church, Little Rock. She has been in full-time Christian work for 12 years.

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COMMISSION '89

Arkansans Included

As many as 7,000 Baptists will gather at the Statehouse Convention Center in Little Rock on Tuesday, April 11, for a service in which the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board will appoint several dozen new missionaries for service overseas. At least one Arkansas couple is scheduled to be among the appointees.

The appointment service will be the high point of the Foreign Mission Board's two-day meeting in Little Rock April 10-11. Arkansas members of the Foreign Mission Board are Jack Bledsoe of Fordyce, director of missions for Carey Association, and Paul Sanders of Little Rock, pastor of Geyer Springs First Church.

The 7:30 p.m. service will feature music from a 500-voice choir and a 60-piece orchestra. There will be a parade of young people with flags representing the 113 countries in which more than 3,800 Southern Baptist foreign missionaries work.

Arkansas Baptist leaders have been planning since early 1987 for the event, which is only the second of its kind ever to be held in Arkansas. The planning process has involved 110 persons serving on 11 committees.

The two-hour service has been dubbed "Commission '89" and will feature the theme "God's Way to the World."

The Foreign Mission Board has been scheduling appointment services and trustee meetings throughout the country since 1969 to help Southern Baptists experience firsthand the excitement which fills those services. Testimonies from the newly-appointed missionaries and a mission message by Foreign Mission Board President R. Keith Parks set the stage for a commitment service which allows members of the audience to acknowledge a call to missions in their own lives.

Through the Cooperative Program and the Lottie Moon Offering for Foreign Missions, Southern Baptists support the world's largest career missionary force based in the United States. The denomination's Bold Mission Thrust goal calls for 5,600 missionaries and 10,000 volunteers to be placed in 125 countries by the year 2000.

Although statistics show that baptisms related to Southern Baptist work overseas dropped by almost 3 percent in 1988, the number of churches grew by 8 percent.

Overseas baptisms for 1988 totaled 197,863. The number of churches reached 19,199. Missionaries and overseas Baptists started about four churches per day during the year.

Although baptisms were down slightly, the 2 million overseas Baptists still baptized almost half as many people as more than

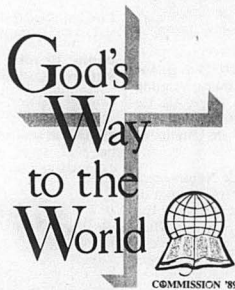
14 million Southern Baptists managed to baptize in the United States. Whereas Southern Baptists baptized only one convert for each 43 church members in 1988, overseas Baptists baptized one convert for each 10.6 members.

The Foreign Mission Board appointed 358 new missionaries last year, bringing the total force to 3,867.

To help congregations publicize the meeting and encourage attendance, a promotion manual was distributed to state leaders in December. In addition, two videotaped presentations featuring the service have been mailed to associational offices and are available for church use.

Churches interested in hearing a Foreign Mission Board speaker may contact Glenn Hickey, director of missions for Palaski Association, at 1522 W. 10th, Little Rock, AR 72203.

For more information, contact Jimmie Sheffield at P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203; telephone 376-4791.



Southern Baptist Foreign Missionary Appointment Service
April 11, 1989
Little Rock, Arkansas

Herschel H. Hobbs
teaching

The Gospel of John

March 19-22, 1989

7:00 p.m.

First Baptist Church
Pea Ridge, Arkansas

**First Baptist Church
Glenwood, Arkansas**

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April 2, 1989

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LOCAL & STATE

Arkansas All Over

MILLIE GILL

People

Philip Fields is serving First Church of Hatfield as minister of music and youth. He is a senior at Ouachita Baptist University.

Raymond Reed of Camden is serving as interim pastor of Second Church in Monticello. He recently retired as director of missions for Bartholomew Association.

Tommy Medley began serving Feb. 19 as director of music for Pleasant Grove Church in Little Rock. He and his wife, Tracy, last served at First Church of Newburn, Tenn.

William P. Oakley and Delton Cooper have returned from a mission trip to Rapid City, S.D. Oakley serves as pastor of Gosnell Church and Cooper is pastor of First Church, Wilson.

Lee Clark began serving Feb. 19 as pastor of First Church of Lockesburg, coming there from a pastorate in Mt. Hope, Ala. He is a graduate of Mid-America Seminary. Clark and his wife, Linda, are parents of two daughters and a son.

Jean Hearnberger, Bertie Nelms, and Earl Ripley, members of First Church of Fordyce, were recently recognized by the Department of Human Services, the Office of Volunteerism, and the Office of the Governor for their community volunteers efforts this past year.

Kent Womack of Conway is serving as interim music director at Friendship Church in Clinton.

Polly Fisher recently was recognized by Wynne Church for 19 years of service as church secretary.

Larry Owens has resigned as pastor of New Hope Church of Black Oak.

Hubert Lee is serving as pastor of New Hope Church of Black Oak. He and his wife, Evelyn, moved there from Bald Knob where he had served as pastor of Temple Church for more than eight years.

Billy Davis is serving Philadelphia Church of Jonesboro as minister of music.

Tom Doty is serving Buffalo Chapel of Caraway as interim pastor.

Jay Rowton is serving as pastor of Rocky Mound Church of Fouke. He and his wife, Lorri Ann, live in Texarkana, Texas.

Jay Wells has resigned as pastor of Silverino Church of Fouke.

Mark Short recently observed 12 years of service as minister of music for First Church of Fayetteville.

Ephraim Brown of Bigelow is serving Wye Mountain Mission, west of Little Rock, as minister of music.

Bessie and Floyd Burnette were selected Valentine king and queen by senior adults of Mount Olive Church in North Crossett.

Bruce and Betty Morris were honored with a fellowship March 12 by Trinity Church of Fort Smith in recognition of his 11 years of service as pastor.

Junior Holland of Greenwood is serving as pastor of Abbott Church, Mansfield. He and his wife, Vickie, have two children, Ashley, 10, and Dustin, seven.

Russell Shuffield is serving as pastor of New Mount Taber Church of Blakely.

Benny Brooks is serving as pastor of McCormick Church of Trumann.

Robert Tucker, recently retired director of missions for Tri-County Association, has joined the staff of Wynne Church, where he will serve part-time, working in evangelism and visitation.

Roger Wagner recently observed his first anniversary of service as minister of music and youth at First Church of Kensett when the church held a reception and old-fashioned pounding.

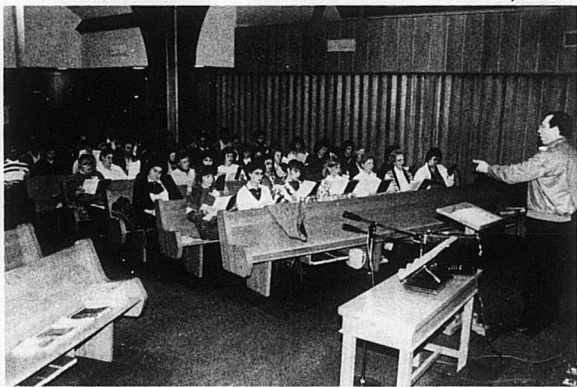
Jim Lagrone has accepted the pastorate of First Southern Church in Bryant. The church voted unanimously in business session March 1 to call Lagrone, who has been an associate in the Evangelism Department of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

Gerald C. Rowe of Sherwood died March 6 at age 68. He was a retired Southern Baptist minister. Survivors include his wife, Zora B. Cole Rowe; four sons, Wesley C. Rowe of Little Rock, Ernest Lee Rowe of New Castle, Ind., John D. Rowe of North Little Rock, and Joe A. Rowe of Sherwood; a daughter, Dorcas A. Adams of Cadillac, Mich.; his mother, Eula S. Rowe of El Dorado; two brothers; a sister; and seven grandchildren.

Randel Everett has resigned as pastor of First Church of Benton, effective March 19, to serve as pastor of University Church in Fort Worth, Texas.

Tim Johnson has joined the staff of Emmanuel Church in Conway as youth director.

Photo by / Glen Ennes



The annual Volunteer/Part-Time Music Leader Retreat was held at Camp Paron in February with 68 in attendance. Pastors, pianists, and organists met for 10 hours of leadership training, including Bible study and practical studies designed to assist in providing better worship experiences in churches. Lester McCullough, director of the ABCS Church Music Department, led the group through new music selections.

Arnold Teal is serving as pastor of New Bethel Church, Conway.

Martha Ann Gardner of Blytheville died March 1 in a Memphis hospital at age 59. Her funeral services were held March 5 at First Church of Blytheville where she had been a member for 51 years. Survivors include her husband, James Gardner; a son, Jeff Gardner; a daughter, Gail Green; and three grandchildren, all of Blytheville.

J.D. Patterson, Jim Wiley, and Sue Ann Williams, members of Temple Church in Searcy left March 10 for a special missions project on the Amazon River in Equatorial Brazil.

Ben Elrod, president of Ouachita Baptist University, has been selected by Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary as an outstanding alumnus. He will receive special recognition during the seminary's annual luncheon June 14 in the Las Vegas, Nev., Hilton Hotel.

Patricia Wilson and Charre Symms are currently involved in Vision 89 at Schuylkill Valley Church in Pennsylvania. Natives of Arkansas, Wilson is from Hot Springs and Symms is the daughter of Harry and Eula Stevens of Wooster.

Briefly

Wynne Church observed Youth Sunday March 5. Marty Jordan, youth communicator from Birmingham, Ala., was speaker.

Mount Olive Church in North Crossett ordained Laron Burke, James Wright, and John Pennington to the deacon ministry Feb. 26.

Claud Road Church at Pine Bluff ordained Neal Little and Mike Armstrong to the deacon ministry Feb. 26. Bill H. Lewis, director of missions for Harmony Association, preached the ordination message. Bill Passmore is pastor.

Texarkana Trinity Church will present "That Day at Calvary" Friday, March 24 at 8 p.m., Saturday, March 25 at 7 p.m., and Sunday, March 26 at 7 p.m. This Easter presentation, composed and directed by Gary Lanier, minister of music, will feature a drama cast of 100 and a 75-voice choir.

Hamburg First Church has voted to construct a drive-through that will provide access to the church in inclement weather and serve as an entrance for the handicapped. Plans also are being made for the

church to observe homecoming May 7 with former pastor Tommy Cunningham as speaker.

Gravel Ridge First Church has planned special single adult activities which included Single Adult Night March 5. Other plans include a single adult outreach night March 13 and a single adult roundup.

Valley Church of Searcy recently sponsored an Estate Planning Conference led by Larry Page, vice-president of the Arkansas Baptist Foundation. The church also observed Baptist Seminary Day when Jeff Thomas, a student at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, was guest speaker.

Star City First Church recently ordained Gary Thompson, Robert Smith Floyd, and Bob Crain to the deacon ministry.

England First Church adult choir will present the Easter cantata "In His Presence," March 19 at 11 a. m. under the direction of Chris Pauley.

Pea Ridge First Church will hold a Bible Study Conference March 19-22. Herschel H. Hobbs, pastor emeritus of First Church in Oklahoma City, Okla., will be guest lecturer, teaching *The Gospel of John: Invitation to Life*.

Atkins First Church is launching a single adult ministry under the leadership of Angie Durmire and Stephany Dollar.

Hiwassee Chapel, a mission of First Church of Bentonville, recently observed its first anniversary with a service moderated by Don Rone.

DeQueen First Church observed Bud Fray Appreciation Day March 12 in recognition of his service as interim pastor.

Independence Association women held a missions retreat March 11 at which Jane Fray, a former missionary to Africa, taught the *Biblical Basis of Missions*.

Hughes First Church youth have planned a mission trip to Clarendon Hills, Ill., July 29-Aug. 5 where they will work with First Church and its pastor, Bobby Pearle, a former staff member at Hughes.

Cross Road Church and Nalls Memorial Church in Little Rock youth will hold a joint pizza supper and program March 18 at which David Bazzell will be speaker.

Russellville First Church held a Life Action Pre-Crusade Day March 12 with Byron Paulus as speaker.

Pleasant Grove Church at Harrisburg is remodeling its auditorium, adding new lighting, installing new carpet, and reupholstering the pews.

Lebanon Church at Harrisburg has purchased a van for use in outreach ministries.

Conway First Church recently ordained Mike Dunaway, Curt Floyd, Tracy Moore, and Jeff Stuart to the deacon ministry.

Harlan Park Church in Conway has selected Bill Holiman and Mike Evans to serve as active deacons.

Augusta First Church held a commissioning service March 5 for David and Janet Frierson, recently appointed missionaries to Senegal.

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WS-100

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Notice to ABN Annual & Quarterly Subscribers

Billing Change Announced

The *Arkansas Baptist* is changing the billing procedure for all subscriptions on the Club and Every Resident Family plans.

Effective March 31, all subscription plans currently being billed on a quarterly basis will be changed to monthly billing status. Those churches will be billed March 31 for one month's service, rather than for three months' service. The March billing will be for April service.

Beginning April 1, all churches currently being billed on an annual basis will be converted to monthly billing as their accounts come due. The churches will be billed at the end of the month for the next month's service.

By March 31, 1990, all subscription accounts other than individual will be billed on a monthly basis.

ABN Editor J. Everett Sneed explained that two benefits are sought in changing the billing procedure. First, the change to monthly billing will relieve the financial stress large annual payments bring to bear on economically-distressed congregations. Second, by equalizing cash flow for the ABN, monthly billing will assist with the financial difficulties brought on by postage increases during the past year.

For more information, contact Editor Sneed at 376-4791.

WMU ANNUAL MEETING

'Launch Forward!'

Arkansas Woman's Missionary Union will open its second century under the banner, "Launch Forward!" when Baptist women convene in Rogers March 21-22 for the Arkansas WMU Annual Meeting.

Wana Ann Fort, Southern Baptist missionary to Zimbabwe; Marjorie McCullough, president of Woman's Missionary Union, SBC; and Beverly Hammack of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board will headline the two-day meeting.

Judi Bishop, a student at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, will deliver four theme interpretations, and Charles Carroll, Southern Baptist missionary to Singapore, will address the convention on the final day.

Each of the annual meeting's four sessions will focus on a quality of the church's response to the world's physical, emotional, and spiritual needs: imagination, risk, renewal, and commitment. The "Century 2" emphasis complements last year's annual meeting, which was a celebration of 100 years of missions education and missions action through Woman's Missionary

Union.

One feature of the program will be the Tuesday afternoon focus on volunteers in missions. Speaking to their experiences as missions volunteers will be Barbara Blue of Rogers First Church, Agnes Coppenger of Arkadelphia First Church, and Patsy Hossler of Little Rock Immanuel Church. John Ragsdale, Arkansas coordinator for Mission Service Corps, will also address the meeting.

Another highlight of the Tuesday afternoon session will be the report of the state WMU nominating committee and the election of the 1989-90 WMU executive board and the 1990 nominating committee.

The annual meeting will convene Tuesday, March 21, at 10 a.m. at First Church, Rogers. The remaining sessions will convene at 2 and 7 p.m. Tuesday and 9:30 a.m. Wednesday. The annual meeting will close Wednesday noon.

Nursery care will be provided for preschool children. For more information, contact Arkansas WMU at P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203; telephone 376-4791.

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'Keep On Pressing'

Valentine Delivers Annual Brooks Hays Lectures

Foy Valentine, former executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, delivered the 1989 Brooks Hays Lectures at Pulaski Heights Church in Little Rock March 3-5.

Speaking to a dinner crowd on Friday evening, Valentine reminisced about Hays, an Arkansan who served in the U.S. Congress for a period of 16 years prior to his death in 1981.

Valentine lauded Hays as an example of the traditional values which made America great: wisdom, courage, temperance, justice, peace, and righteousness, among

others. "If you want to get ethics into government," he said, "you do it by getting men like Brooks Hays into public office, human beings who are committed to those values, able to name them, and willing to live by them."

Cautioning Christians against alliances with worldly political forces, Valentine said: "God did not intend for us to worship the status quo, but to keep on pressing intently for justice, righteousness, and mercy... the things that make for peace."

American Christians are confronted with an "immense challenge" to demonstrate to

the world that revealed religion is "relevant and practical" concerning family issues, human relations, economic concerns, and moral issues such as gambling and pornography, Valentine said. He challenged the audience to "keep evangelism and ethics together," urging them to "make it clear that worship issues in work, that belief results in behavior and doctrine in doing."

Valentine retired in 1987 after 28 years at the helm of the Southern Baptist moral concerns agency.

Boyce Opens Term IV

Five courses will be offered when Boyce Bible School opens its Term IV on March 31 in Little Rock.

World Religions (06750), taught by Freddie Pike, will be offered on Friday evenings from 6 to 7:55 p.m. Pete Petty will teach Pastor's Personal Growth (07390) from 8:20 to 10:15 p.m.

Saturday's schedule will begin with Interpreting Ephesians and Colossians (05810), taught by Charles Allen from 7:45 to 9:40 a.m. Church Family Enrichment (07500) will be offered from 10:15 a.m. to 12:10 p.m. under the leadership of Ed Simpson. W.T. Holland will teach Contemporary Evangelism (06590) from 12:50 to 2:45 p.m.

The term will conclude May 20.

For more information, contact Lehman Webb at P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203; telephone 376-4791.

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SECOND OF A THREE-PART SERIES

Child Sex Abuse

Unraveling The Secret

by **Barbara Denman**
Florida Baptist Witness

DELRAY BEACH, Fla. (BP)—For two days, David Lindsey Jr. slept on the beach with no place to go. After being thrown out of his house, he considered two choices—begging his father to let him return or committing suicide. Instead, made a call that would explode the guarded secrets of his bizarre childhood.

He called his pastor.

When Neil Hickem, pastor of First Baptist Church of Delray Beach, Fla., picked David up on that spring day in 1987, the 18-year-old told his pastor he could not return home. His father had become incensed that he had gone to a high-school prom with his girlfriend and demanded that the boy leave home, David said.

"All of a sudden, it occurred to me that something wasn't right here," Hickem recalls. He asked if David and his brothers were being abused sexually.

The young man's affirmative answer came with details that have shocked south Florida. For years, David said, he had been manipulated and molested by his adoptive father. His father's jealousy over David's girlfriend finally had brought the boy's seven-year odyssey of abuse to a head.

At that point, Hickem knew he had to report the abuse to the authorities. "Legally, ethically, morally, there was no choice," he said. Hickem didn't realize the effect the decision would have on not only David but also his own ministry, church and family.

Hickem knew well the father, David Lindsey Sr., and his family of adopted boys, although the family attended church only on Sunday mornings. But then, many people in south Florida had heard of the senior Lindsey, one of the first single men in Florida permitted to adopt children. In all, he adopted 11 boys, troubled kids no one else wanted.

In 1981, a newspaper story on Father's Day proclaimed Lindsey "No. 1 Dad." Apparently no one suspected the secret the young boys were guarding.

In later sworn statements made to police, David alleged that soon after each adoption, Lindsey made sexual advances toward the newly adopted son and led him through a progression of sexual acts. By the

time each boy turned 16, Lindsey seemed to lose interest in one and began the process with a younger one, police said.

As Hickem drove David from the beach to the church, he heard this story for the first time. Only then could he piece together other parts of the puzzle—why the Lindsey boys never attended Sunday school; why the family never mingled with other people; why David Lindsey Sr. appeared "scared to death" when another son ran away from home earlier. "It never occurred to me that he was scared to death because he was afraid the boy would go to police," Hickem says.

Once at the church, Hickem's wife, Cathy, a clinical social worker, stopped by the office. The couple encouraged David to seek help from the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services. Mrs. Hickem called the HRS child-abuse hotline.

From her experience as a social worker, she knew some ministers would not see the choices as clear-cut as the Hickem's. They consider this an "in-house problem" that they should handle, she says.

This surprises Mrs. Hickem, she explains: "The fact is, it is against the law. And each

of us as citizens of this state and country have a legal responsibility, in addition to what I would consider a spiritual, moral and ethical responsibility, to be involved as an advocate for a child who's being victimized."

That night, the couple arranged for David to spend the night with a deacon in the church. The next morning, Mrs. Hickem drove him to the Boynton Beach police station.

Detectives began what was to become a long and extensive investigation. They began by expressing appreciation for the Hickem's involvement in the case.

Now, 20 months later, the case still has not come to trial. David Lindsey Sr. has been charged with 13 felony counts that include sexual activity with a child and sexual battery of a child. After several postponements, the case is expected to go to trial soon.

The other brothers refused to testify against their father, although at one time they verified David's allegations. Now the older boys are living on their own, and the younger boys have been sent to foster homes.

Although the circumstances of abuse within the Lindsey family are shocking even to child-abuse professionals, many of the typical patterns of abusive families were played out in the Lindsey household as well. Abuse workers say they hope such bizarre examples don't obscure the more "ordinary" cases of child sexual abuse that happen all too frequently.

While covering up the abuse in the Lindsey household was not an option for the Hickem's, their involvement has come with

Abuse Warning Signs

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (BP)—Because sexual abuse is harder to detect than other kinds of child abuse, victims often are dependent on concerned adults to spot and report the problem, said Barry Jones, program administrator for the Florida Baptist Children's Homes.

In most cases, physical and behavioral evidences of the abuse are visible to perceptive adults—teachers, Sunday school teachers, parents or relatives, he said.

If a child demonstrates several of the following symptoms frequently during a relatively brief period of time, Jones said, the concerned adult should consider consulting a physician, pastor or other helping professional:

- Difficulty in urinating.
- Spots on underclothing.
- Sexually transmitted infections or diseases.

- Irritation of genital areas.
- Regressive behavior, such as wetting the bed or thumb sucking beyond normal age.
- Discomfort or fear of being left alone with a particular adult or teenager.
- Child acts uncontrollably or is overly compliant.
- Child is unable to express feelings or is dramatically affectionate.
- Inappropriate sex play and knowledge of adult sexual acts.
- Nightmares or sleep disturbances.
- Disturbances in eating patterns.
- Disturbances in use of the toilet.
- Dramatic behavioral shifts of child, such as a quiet child becoming hyperactive.
- Onset of school problems.
- References to self indicating poor self-esteem.
- Withdrawal from peers.

a price. They both will be called to testify at the trial, and they anticipate being on the witness stand for over an hour.

For two weeks after David went public with his story, the Hickem family received annoying phone calls, saw prowlers in their yard and noticed an increased flow of cars driving by their home. In response, men in their church stationed an all-night watch in their yard.

"At times, we really felt our lives were in danger. We did not know what we were dealing with," Hickem says. He admits this may be why fewer pastors are willing to become involved in such a situation.

"When these crises happen, they are so time-consuming," he adds. "You have to almost drop everything."

Hickem estimates his involvement in David's crisis has taken more than 100 hours, including time spent with David and prosecutors. Mrs. Hickem has spent even more time on the case. They have refused almost all requests for media interviews about their involvement for fear of distortions.

After counseling David during the initial crisis, Mrs. Hickem referred him to other professionals. Both she and her husband believe David will need years to reverse the effects of the emotional abuse and manipulation.

But David, who declined to be interviewed on the advice of his lawyers, is trying to put his life together, Hickem said.

"Let's face it, though. Any young person, who has been through that is going to have to deal with emotional issues surrounding that. He was living in a very abnormal situation. When you live in an abnormal situation for any length of time, it's a struggle to carry on a normal life," Hickem says.

David has been working and living in West Palm Beach, so he has not been active in the church. But, according to Hickem, David misses the church and wants to become more involved.

The Delray Beach congregation has responded to David's needs. They have helped find him jobs, which he has kept for only a short time. They have housed, fed and clothed him. One family invited him for Thanksgiving dinner.

The Hickems say they also have a responsibility to people like David's father, who still is a member of the church. "We as ministers need to be aware that there are times that we will be called on to minister to both sides of the issue," Hickem says.

While many church members would like to think they are immune to such aspects of life, Hickem admits: "Things that used to happen just with unchurched people are now more common in the families of church members. Any problem in the world also can be found in Christian homes."

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Trustees Blame Lolley

by Marv Knox
Baptist Press

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)—A former president's failed leadership and the faculty's "public opinion campaign" precipitated the accreditation crisis at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, a trustee report says.

The 60-page report was drafted by the trustees' instruction committee in response to an investigation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. It cites SACS' own study as part of the problem, saying SACS has been unfair to the Wake Forest, N.C., school.

The SACS report says Southeastern does not conform to some accreditation standards in matters of faculty selection, academic freedom, and organization and administration. It also raises "serious questions" about the school's effectiveness.

Trustees acted in accordance with SBC mandate and Southeastern's own bylaws in October 1987, when they made the

Alliance OK's New Seminary

GREENVILLE, S.C. (BP)—The Southern Baptist Alliance has voted to start its own seminary.

Alliance members ratified the proposal 462-42 during their annual convocation March 1-3 in Greenville, S.C.

The Alliance is an organization of Southern Baptist "moderates," claiming almost 44,000 members from 40 states. They have vowed to remain in the Southern Baptist Convention but have charged current SBC leaders with rejecting principles and causes they hold dear.

Most notably, they have cited "loss of academic freedom" at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., as a cause for concern.

The Alliance did not set a date for the start of the new school. Before the convocation, task force members talked of opening this fall, but their recommendation left the opening contingent on receipt of "necessary funds."

The seminary "would be a cooperative venture" with the three schools that comprise the Richmond Theological Center consortium—the School of Theology of Virginia Union University, a predominantly black American Baptist school; the Presbyterian School of Christian Education; and Union Theological Seminary, a Presbyterian school—and the three American Baptist seminaries, "if they are so disposed," the task force report said.

changes that precipitated the seminary's turmoil, the report says.

"Southeastern... had never been representative of the more 'conservative' element within the SBC," it says and notes a 10-year "emphasis on making (SBC) seminars representative of the constituency they were created to serve."

The report faults former Southeastern president W. Randall Lolley for failing to provide the proper leadership in the "impasse that existed between the seminary and the Southern Baptist Convention...."

The report adds: "The board agrees with the SACS committee to the extent that the changes adopted by the board have had an adverse impact upon institutional effectiveness. The board submits that this adverse impact would have been negligible had Dr. Lolley and other previous administrators assumed and provided leadership guiding the institution through this difficult time."

Focusing on faculty, the report says: "The primary reason for the breakdown in collegiality has been the inability of the faculty and other constituencies to adapt to changes allowing for the inclusion of alternative viewpoints at the school."

"Some faculty actions have not been conceived or conducted in the best interests of the seminary.... The public opi-

'Conservatives' Meet

ATLANTA (BP)—About 100 Southern Baptist "conservatives" discussed evangelism and politics during a five-hour invitation-only gathering in Atlanta March 3.

The meeting, called by four former presidents of the Southern Baptist Convention and held in First Baptist Church of Atlanta, also dealt with revival, missions giving and featured an hour-long prayer meeting.

One of the participants, James C. Hefley of Hannibal, Mo., said that while "there was a lot of talk about evangelism in Las Vegas," Nev., site of the 1989 annual meeting of the SBC, the meeting was "more like a rally... to get people hepped up to go to Las Vegas."

Although organizers said the meeting had been planned for some time, participants discussed a recent news conference by Baptists Committed to the Southern Baptist Convention in which the group announced it likely will organize for Las Vegas and support a presidential candidate to oppose incumbent Jerry Vines, pastor of First Baptist Church of Jacksonville, Fla.

Hefley said "conservatives" are concern-

nion campaign initiated by the faculty was an attempt to intimidate the trustees from offering changes at the institution in accordance with the direction of the Southern Baptist Convention."

The report charges SACS has treated the seminary unfairly in at least two areas.

First, it says the SACS study committee was over-broad in its assumption that trustees have made belief in biblical inerrancy "a requirement for faculty eligibility."

The report counters, "The trustees do not believe it is fair for the committee to ascribe to the board a position which has not been endorsed by official action."

Second, the report says: "The trustees note their concern that the SACS report, by and large, seems to review the events at Southeastern 'in a light most favorable' to the faculty, former administrators and certain of the more vocal students and student groups. As a result, we do not believe that the seminary as a whole, or the board of trustees, or the Southern Baptist Convention has been treated fairly in the association's review of circumstances existing at Southeastern as relating to accreditation."

"The trustees submit that a fair evaluation reveals that no reasonable threat to academic freedom exists at the school. The seminary's physical and financial condition (is) strong. The same faculty teach the same classes in the same classrooms. The board of trustees remains committed to academic due process...."

ed Baptists Committed to the Southern Baptist Convention "will come up with some (presidential) candidate" who could defeat Vines, who announced in late February he is willing to be nominated for a second one-year term as president.

"Those fellows (Baptists Committed) sort of laid down the gauntlet and said they were going to make a battle in Las Vegas," Hefley said.

"In Atlanta, the people were concerned that the conservative resurgence could be reversed and it could start in Las Vegas. Many people thought Las Vegas was going to be a routine convention, but it is going to boil down to who can get out the votes."

Baptist Press asked to be allowed to attend the meeting, but was refused permission. Another reporter, Everett Hullum of Atlanta, representing the *Florida Baptist Witness*, newjournal of the Florida Baptist Convention, was turned away at the door because his name was not on the invitation list. In addition to Hefley, only one other journalist, Robert M. Tenery, editor of the "conservative"-oriented *Southern Baptist Advocate*, was invited to attend the meeting.

Lottery 'Unreliable'

Unstable As Revenue Source, CLC Spokesman Says

by Ken Camp
Texas Baptist Standard

AUSTIN, Texas (BP)—The lottery is an unstable revenue that cannot provide a reliable source of public school funding. Weston Ware, citizenship associate with the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission, told Texas lawmakers Feb. 15.

Ware testified at a hearing before the Texas Senate Affairs Committee in opposition to bills calling for the establishment of a state operated lottery. Also speaking against the lottery were Sue Cox of Dallas, director of the Texans Who Care anti-gambling organization, and Philip Wahlberg of Texas IMPACT, an interfaith advocacy group.

Testimony by the lottery opponents followed appearances by representatives of the Texas Public Employees Association and the Texas State Teachers Association, who spoke in favor of the state-run numbers game and urged that revenue raised be earmarked for pay raises for their members.

Ware noted the legislation as proposed would direct funds into the state's general revenue coffers and that people testifying in favor of the lottery obviously did so because they felt it could be designated to benefit their own constituencies.

He disputed the notion that public education or public employees would benefit from a state-operated lottery, pointing to the experience of California.

Although a lottery was passed in that state allegedly to benefit education, the California superintendent of schools recently stated that his state's schools would be better off without the lottery.

"The schools' share of the state budget actually has dropped since 1986 by approximately \$600 million—roughly equal to the amount raised by the lottery," said Ware.

Instead of improving funding for education, the state's schools have exchanged stable tax dollars for uncertain lottery-generated dollars, he said. "Also, because people believe that educational funding is well cared for through the lottery, they become unwilling to support bond issues and tax increases for education," he added. "The lottery is a weak reed for state employees and teachers to lean upon for support."

The lottery is a regressive tax that puts the state in the indefensible position of preying upon the poor, Cox testified. "We feel that the state should not raise money on the backs of its poorest citizens."

Promoting a lottery is not an appropriate function of government, Wahlberg added, noting the state must become a "pusher" of gambling in order for the numbers game to succeed.

The lottery measure sponsored in the Texas Senate by Hector Uribe of Brownsville, was referred to a subcommittee for further consideration.

OBSCENITY

Court Upholds Rico Laws

by Kathy Palen
Christian Life Commission

WASHINGTON (BP)—The U.S. Supreme Court has upheld the use of state racketeering laws in fighting the sale of obscene materials, but ruled that states may not violate the First Amendment by seizing such materials before trial.

The high court ruled 6-3 that the Indiana Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations law is neither unconstitutional vague nor insensitive to First Amendment rights.

Writing for the majority, Justice Byron R. White said since Indiana's RICO statute encompasses the state's obscenity law, it is not too vague.

Since deterring the sale of obscene materials is a legitimate end of state anti-obscenity law, White continued, the possibility that some self-censorship may result from such a law does not render it unconstitutional.

Although divided over such use of racketeering laws, the high court was unanimous in overturning an Indiana court order that allowed prosecutors to seize all the property of three adult bookstores before any of the materials were found to be obscene by a trial court. The Fort Wayne, Ind., bookstores were emptied and padlocked after their owners were charged with racketeering for selling obscene books and films.

"This court has repeatedly held that rigorous procedural safeguards must be employed before expressive materials can be seized as obscene," White wrote, adding that "mere probable cause to believe a legal violation has transpired is not adequate to remove books or films from circulation."

Indiana is one of 27 states with RICO statutes similar to a 1970 federal racketeering law. In 1984, Congress added obscenity to the list of racketeering offenses, and 20 states, including Indiana, followed suit.

RICO laws impose severe penalties, including pre-trial seizure and post-conviction forfeiture of assets, for a "pattern of racketeering activity," which usually is defined as committing two offenses from a specified list over a period of years.



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WMU Search Committee

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)—Marjorie J. McCullough, national president of the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union, has appointed Christine Gregory of Danville, Va., to chair the search committee seeking a successor to Carolyn Weatherford, national WMU executive director.

Weatherford has announced she is retiring and will marry a Cincinnati, pastor Aug. 19. She has held WMU's top post for 15 years.

Gregory was a member of the national WMU executive board 1971-1975 and national WMU president 1975-1981. She was first vice president of the SBC in 1981-82.

The other search committee members are Roena Day, Arizona WMU president; Donna Brewer, Illinois WMU president; Ellen Teague, District of Columbia WMU president; and Dorothy Pryor, Georgia WMU executive director. McCullough will be an ex officio member of the committee.

Suggestions and resumes may be sent to Christine Gregory at the national WMU headquarters: P.O. Box 830010, Birmingham, AL 35283-0010.

Annuity Board Search Named

DALLAS (BP)—Southern Baptist Annuity Board Chairman B.J. Martin has named a presidential search committee, describing it as balanced and "representative of the Southern Baptist Convention today."

The committee is composed of four laymen and three ministers.

George H. Balentine Jr. will be chairman. Balen-

tine is president of Precision Research and Development Inc. of Greenville, S.C.

Other members are Robert Bass, president of Bass Construction Company, Richmond, Va.; Jack C. Carroll, retired pastor, Littleton, Colo.; Bobby L. Eklund, an associate evangelism director for the Baptist General Convention of Texas, Dallas; Bob R. Howard, general agent, State Mutual Companies, Independence, Mo.; Gerald H. Lord, pastor, First Baptist Church, Florence, Ala.; and William (Lonnie) A. Willis, general manager, Prudential Insurance Company, Little Rock, Ark.

Senior Adult Conferences

NASHVILLE—The second national discipleship conferences for senior adults will be held May 8-11 at Ridgecrest (N.C.) and Gloriaeta (N.M.) Conference Centers.

Sponsored by the adult section of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's Church Training Department, the conferences are designed to "help senior adults grow in their own discipleship and help them lead others in discipleship," according to Rich Murrell, design editor in the adult section.

"Discipleship: Living and Serving in the Better Years" is the theme of the conference which begins at both conference centers with registration Monday afternoon, May 8, and concludes Thursday morning, May 11, with breakfast.

During the week, senior adults may attend Bible study sessions, worship services, and group seminars. "Legal Issues for Senior Adults" and "Children and Senior Adults" are among the seminar topics to be of-

fered at the conferences.

At Ridgecrest, Wayne Dehoney, senior professor of Christian preaching at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., will be the keynote speaker. Jim Williams, executive vice-president at the Sunday School Board, will be the Bible study leader.

At Gloriaeta, Tal Bonham, executive director of the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio, will be the keynote speaker, and Stuart Arnold, pastor of Citadel Square Baptist Church of Charleston, S.C., will be the Bible study leader.

Senior adults may obtain registration information by writing the Church Training Department, adult section, Sunday School Board, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, TN 37234.

Baptist Heritage

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—To help Southern Baptists know the heritage of their convictions, the Southern Baptist Historical Commission has just released *Foundations of Baptist Heritage*, a new pamphlet series treating 10 basic convictions.

The 10 convictions include the Lordship of Christ, biblical authority, salvation by grace, priesthood of all believers, religious freedom, believer's baptism by immersion, responsible church membership, autonomy and cooperation, evangelism and missions, and congregational worship.

"The Historical Commission is releasing this series to help Southern Baptists take a fresh look at some principles that are essential to the Baptist identity—in the past, present, and future," said Lynn E. May Jr., the agency's executive director.

Unusual Offering Combats Hunger

Bread for the World, an interdenominational hunger organization, is conducting its annual Offering of Letters to combat hunger in the United States.

In an Offering of Letters, congregations collect letters from members to their Congressmen, encouraging them to support increased funding for Women, Infants, and Children food program, which helps low-income mothers and their infants by providing carefully-designed food packages tailored to their nutritional needs. According to Bread for the World, the 1987 Offering of Letters helped prompt a \$73 million funding increase for WIC.

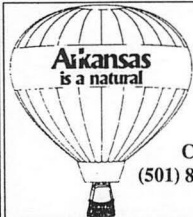
Studies indicate that each WIC dollar of assistance provided saves another \$3 in taxpayer-subsidized hospital costs for low birth weight and malnourished infants.

An Offering of Letters Kit may be ordered for \$5.50, plus \$2 for postage and handling, from Bread for the World, 802 Rhode Island Ave. NE, Washington, D.C. 20018.



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Convention Uniform

The Fullness of Life

by Michael D. Johnson, First Church, Pine Bluff

Basic passage: Colossians 2:6-19

Focal passage: Colossians 2:9-10

Central truth: The real meaning of life is found only in Christ.

The story is told of the young boy who was rescued from drowning. The man who saved him administered artificial respiration until the boy was revived. After coming to, the young boy thanked the man for saving his life. "That's all right son," the man replied, "but see to it that you're worth saving!"

Jesus Christ came into the world to save us from our sin. Obviously God thought we were worth saving. At times, however, we fail to act like it. Following up on last week's lesson where Paul showed the distinctives of living a Christ-filled life, this week our focus deals with how life in Christ can give a fullness to life not found anywhere else.

Remember from last week's lesson that Paul is writing to dispute the teachings of the gnostics. The false teachers in Colossae were proud of their doctrines (v. 18), but Paul had examined their ideas and found them to be "philosophy and empty deceit" (v. 18).

Only in Christ, Paul reminds all of us, have we "come to fullness of life" (v. 10). A real experience with Christ demonstrates the adequacy of Christ more powerfully than any words. Trusting Christ remains the only way to understand his power. The commitment to Christ must remain as the only foundation of all other loyalties for the Christian. Christ must be at the head of the body (v. 19).

Once this has been done, then the individual's life experiences in all other areas—family, friends, work—will be enriched. Christ also will meet all of our spiritual needs when we allow him to fully direct our lives.

The Colossians were getting plenty of advice about how to find fullness in life, but it was bad advice. Christians do not need to look towards astrology (v. 8); rules and rituals (v. 16); or a "stamp of approval" from others (v. 18) to discover meaning in this life. Christ is the only adequate basis for life itself. Our responsibility is to give him absolute loyalty in our life. When we have done this, then we will be living a life that was truly worth saving.

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Life and Work

Spiritual Gifts Tested

by Don Moseley, Sylvan Hills First Church, Sherwood

Basic passage: 1 Corinthians 14:1-4, 12, 18-19, 23-25

Focal passage: 1 Corinthians 14:12

Central truth: The Apostle Paul seeks to put spiritual gifts in their proper perspective with the greatest need of the church.

Paul devotes the entire of chapter 14 to dealing with the abuse and misuse of the gift of tongues. The difficulty arose when they began practicing the use of a counterfeit ecstatic utterance or unintelligible gibberish which was being dragged over into the church from the paganistic mystery religions. This pagan practice was being substituted for the true gift of tongues whereby the Holy Spirit gave the supernatural ability to speak in a language one did not know so that lost men might hear the gospel in their own language (Ac. 2:4-6).

Paul gives the gifts proper perspective in verse 1. The plural form is used here indicating that the whole church should desire the use of the gift of prophecy or proclamation when they came together rather than the idea that every Christian should personally desire that gift.

Note the contrast of singular and plural in reference to tongue or tongues. In verses 2, 4, 13, 14, 19, 27 the word "tongue" is singular and in verses 5, 6, 18, 22, 23, 39 we find the plural "tongues." Paul must have used the singular form in reference to the counterfeit and the plural form in reference to the true.

In verse 4 Paul uses sarcasm when he says, "He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself. . . ." because real edification is not taking place. Paul's point is that this emotional experience produces not fruitful understanding. The need is to edify the church (vv. 4-5).

Let the Corinthians think Paul no longer recognized the true gift of tongues he comes back with "I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all" (v. 18). But he hastens to give the proper perspective in verse 19. In verses 23-25, Paul makes clear that when the Word is preached the Holy Spirit will bring conviction to hearts and repentance. When tongues are abused, even when they were valid, there was confusion (everyone speaking at once), but prophecy both edifies and evangelizes.

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Bible Book

The Mystery of Prayer

by Timothy L. Deahl, Olivet Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: Acts 12

Focal passage: Acts 12:1-7, 12-17, 24

Central truth: Prayer is a powerful resource for God's people.

Prayer is an amazing thing, but the manner in which God answers prayer can prove to be even more amazing. Acts 12 offers an intriguing opportunity to study the privilege, power, and perplexity of prayer.

The immediate occasion for prayer in this passage is the imprisonment of Peter. The martyrdom of James was injustice enough. Herod demonstrated his willingness to sacrifice the life of Peter solely for the sake of his own popularity. Nevertheless, difficulties are not a sign that God has abandoned his people.

Historically, God has used problems as avenues for blessing to those who trust him. Prayer is a privilege, and the early church discovered that even when circumstances look bleak, prayer provides an occasion for God to reveal his power and glory. Problems are God's stepping stones, not obstacles. Use difficulties as doors to growth, not as walls of dismay.

Secondly, Acts 12 demonstrates the power of prayer. What government, people, or agency on earth wields such power as praying Christians? Herod, who took the life of James, had no power to hold Peter. Miraculously, God's angel appeared in order to escort Christ's disciple to safety. If God can do so easily and successfully intervene in circumstances such as this, certainly he can meet our day-to-day needs. Prayer has great power because it relies on the power of a loving and omnipotent heavenly Father. He delights to hear our prayers and answers them according to his ability, not ours.

Finally, prayer can be a perplexing thing. It surpasses human explanation. Notice that Peter was rescued in glorious fashion, but James was killed. Prayer is depending on God to answer as he deems best and trusting him for the results. And consider also that God answered the prayer of the church even though they had serious difficulty accepting tangible evidence (v. 15). One might suppose that their prayer was not genuine, that it lacked true faith. It is ironic that we speak so much about prayer and its power and yet fail to recognize God's answers.

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WORLD

SOUTH AFRICA

Talk Is Cheap

by Bill Bingham
SBC Brotherhood Commission

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)—When a black man collapsed from a heart attack in a Pretoria, South Africa, shopping mall, Ivor Jenkins attempted to resuscitate him.

It seemed forever before someone else knelt to push against the man's chest while Jenkins continued to breath air into his lungs. Paramedics finally arrived, but the man died and Jenkins returned to the insurance office where he worked.

It had been an emotional experience, and became more so. One-by-one, colleagues stopped to congratulate him and say, "I couldn't have done that; I couldn't have put my mouth on the mouth of a black man," said Jenkins.

"I thought, 'O God, what have we done that we cannot break through this barrier of sin?'"

For Jenkins—a white Afrikaner and American-trained Baptist pastor—breaking the barrier of sin is more than a rhetorical question. It's a consciously-considered choice—and not one easily made—in white-dominated, apartheid-partitioned South Africa.

That choice became an issue for Jenkins while studying at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. And he likens it to a conversion experience.

"My wife and I experienced our conversion with respect to the South African situation knowing we would have to stick to our decision," he said. "And that it would be difficult. We decided we will not be liberals, not people theorizing about the situation. We will be people involved in changing the situation."

Today, Jenkins is on the staff of Koinonia, an interracial Christian ministry confronting apartheid.

In September 1986—after returning to South Africa and after a brief stint in the insurance office—Jenkins joined Koinonia. He was the only employee and the organization operated on a budget of \$30,000 a year. Today, it has 13 employees and a budget of \$500,000. There are 12 Koinonia centers across South Africa, each with 30-500 people in them, and centers have opened in Germany and California.

"We challenge white and black people to say, 'I am going to do more than pray. I am going to the other world to see what the situation is there,'" said Jenkins. "We ask them to leave color and culture behind. We ask the white to go to the black world and the black to go to the white world."

Jenkins likens their efforts to an old say-

ing South Africans had in Sunday school years ago: "Tell me and I can remember; show me and I can believe; let me experience, and only then can I understand."

"It's only when white people experience what it's like to be black that they can understand a 10-year-old throwing rocks at an army vehicle with 15-20 armed guards, or burning down a school."

And for the Christian, there's a cruel irony in that understanding, says Jenkins. "South Africa, with probably one of the most brutal systems in the world, has one of the highest church attendances," he said. "Seventy-nine percent claim Christianity."

What Koinonia asks of black and white Christians is to sit down to a meal with each other. Jenkins says they ask this for four reasons. First, it's something everyone can do, rich or poor. Second, it's intimate. Third, sharing a meal is cultural. And fourth, it's something Christ did.

"Throughout the New Testament there are references to him sharing meals with people—even publicans and sinners," said Jenkins. And, "It is a way of beginning to share our culture with each other."

Koinonia pairs two black couples with two white couples and asks them to meet together for six months. Each couple hosts a meal in their home. They also attend movies and other public events together. At the end of six months, the group splits. Pairings of white and black couples seek other couples to join them and begin the process again.

Mark Morris, a Southern Baptist missionary to South Africa on furlough in Memphis, Tenn., sees Koinonia as a redemptive way of addressing apartheid.

"The most obvious value to Koinonia is it helps people of contrasting social backgrounds relate to each other," he said. "It enables them to relate to each other as people, to see each other as fellow Christians. It bridges the ignorance they have of each other."

And in a country where more confrontational efforts would not be tolerated, "we find symbolic ways of expressing our faith redemptively," said Morris. "For example... our hands at prayer over a meal."

One contemporary theologian has called South Africa the conscience of the world, says Jenkins. "If you want to talk about reconciliation in South Africa, you can talk about it and keep it cheap," he continued. "But God didn't talk reconciliation in heaven. He came. He acted. He died."

"That's still the test of Christianity today."

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