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Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

3-23-1989

March 23, 1989

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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Sharing and Caring

Arkansas Baptist

March 23, 1989

Bedrock of Our Faith

**SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
Historical Commission, SBC
Nashville, Tennessee**



Editorial



Bedrock of Our Faith . . . 3

The central fact of the Christian life is our risen Lord. All members of God's family can join hands around the cross and proclaim, "The tomb is empty!"

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Notice

There will be no March 30 ABN. This is one of four regular skip weeks during the year. Sunday School lessons for March 25 and April 1 are included in this issue.

'Sending Them Out'

HOUSTON (BP)—An urban Hispanic congregation with an average attendance of 70 doesn't usually sponsor multiple house churches, operate an extensive ministry to street people, be designated a "Texas Baptist Key Church" and offer a wide range of social ministries.

But Templo Cristo Te Llama in Houston is not a typical congregation.

Three years ago, Templo Cristo Te Llama was begun as a mission of Manchester Baptist Church in Houston. Since constituting as a self-supporting church in June 1987, the congregation has outgrown its facilities five or six times, said Pastor Sergio Rios.

"We commission a family to go out and start new work nearly every month," said Rios. "We tried to promote a building fund to expand our facilities, but that didn't work with our people. Most of the people we minister to are unemployed, looking for work or else they're hourly bluecollar laborers."

"The only solution we could find was the New Testament solution: Send them out."

Up to nine house churches meet at various times throughout the week to accommodate different schedules. Total weekly attendance at all Bible studies sponsored by Templo Cristo Te Llama is about 300.

As a ministry and outreach into its predominantly Hispanic neighborhood, Templo Cristo Te Llama sponsors morning and evening English classes both for Spanish-speaking people and adult il-

literate. Child care is provided for working parents attending the daytime classes.

The church also has provided assistance to people applying for temporary legal residency under the 1986 Immigration Control and Reform Act.

One of the most innovative ministries of the church is its outreach program to homeless unemployed street people, which is led by a person who once lived in the streets himself.

Eferim Arvizo, a native of Mexico, now lives in modest quarters in an annex of Templo Cristo Te Llama. Arvizo spends his days walking the streets of northeast Houston, sharing Christ with the homeless and hopeless people he finds there.

"He witnesses to them in a way they can relate to," explained Rios. "He's not wearing a white shirt and tie, carrying a big Bible in his hand. He just carries the Bible in his heart."

In one month, Arvizo—who speaks only Spanish—has ministered to about 50 people and has seen 25 of them make professions of faith in Christ. His approach has been built around friendship evangelism—building relationships with the street people.

"There are people who will stand on a corner and preach to these people or hand out leaflets, but how many are willing to hug them and take them out to eat?" Rios asked.

"We're reaching out to people who wouldn't come into the church for a service, but they need Jesus, too," he said. "When you think about the street people, if anyone needs help, they do. They need a friend."

GOOD NEWS!

Abraham, the Obedient Man

A sketch of his life—Abraham was easy to get along with, conservative, dependable, and efficient. That describes the father of the Israelites, an easy-going person. Though sometimes fearful, indecisive, and selfish, he was usually practical, diplomatic, and easy to live with. He traveled from Ur to Haran to the Promised Land, to Egypt, and back to Canaan. His life is a good study in the strengths and weaknesses of humanity.

Scripture references—See Ge. 12:1-9 (strong and obedient); 12:19-20 (weak, fearful, lying); 13:1-18 (strong, worshipping, generous); 14:1-16 (strong); 18:1-31 (strong, communing with God); 20:1-18 (weak);

and 22:1-14 (strong, obedient).

What we can learn from his life—This servant of God teaches us that we need to trust God in times of testing. Abraham did not always do this. When he went down into Egypt during the famine, he lied about who Sarah was, thus endangering her and others. Perhaps, if he had trusted God and remained in the Promised Land, God would have sustained him in some way, in spite of the famine. There is no indication that Abraham's trip into Egypt was the will of God.

We seek to justify our lies, but we can never justify them on a biblical basis.

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Bedrock of Our Faith

J. EVERETT SNEED

The death and resurrection of Christ are the bedrock on which our Christian faith rests. As Paul says graphically, "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins" (1 Co. 15:17). But no fact of history can be better documented than the resurrection of Christ. As the apostle indicates, the resurrection of Christ relates directly to man's salvation.

During the Middle Ages, the established church became extremely corrupt. The teaching that man was saved through his own efforts and the works of others was quite prevalent. The Reformation was required to regain a proper biblical perspective, which declares that man's justification is totally of God through Christ.

In 1512 a young man named Martin Luther was serving as a professor in the University of Wittenberg. He was a man of deep religious conviction. One day Luther was sent to Rome to transact business with the church officials. He believed that the church was supreme and that the Pope was the incarnation of perfection and absolutely infallible.

When Luther arrived in Rome and found unbelievable corruption in the church, he was greatly upset. His faith was shaken because of what he had discovered. Feeling himself to be shameful and rebellious, he made his way to the cathedral and began to climb the *Scala Sancta* (sacred stairs). As he climbed the stairs, he kissed each step as was the custom. During the process, a Scripture verse which he had read earlier came to his mind, "The just shall live by faith." The verse echoed again and again in his mind. As a result, Martin Luther broke with the established church and began to preach the doctrine of justification.

As Luther declared, man is justified and cleansed not because of his own or another's acts, but because of the atoning death and resurrection of Christ. The question arises: What is justification? It is the act by which God declares a sinner just and righteous, as if he had never sinned. It is far more than a pardon; a pardon merely frees an individual from the penalty of sin but not from the guilt of sin nor from future sin. Justification frees an individual from all guilt past, present, and future.

Through Christ's death and resurrection, individuals can conquer their sins. Our ability to overcome our sin is only in and



through Christ, who rose from the dead. He conquered death because he has conquered sin. He rose from the dead because he had exhausted the power of sin. In Jesus' life, death and resurrection, he met sin, grappled with it and conquered it. He, therefore, rose victorious over death. Since Christ conquered sin for us, he enables us also to conquer it. This enables Christians to be free from the law of sin and death.

Sin can be overcome only as an individual is united with the living Christ. In the process of salvation, an individual receives the Holy Spirit, who is established as an integral part of the life of a believer. The presence of the Holy Spirit provides an individual with the assurance that he can have victory over sin.

The resurrection also gives assurance that death is not the end of life. Across the

ages, men have speculated as to whether we will live on after death. The resurrection of Jesus removes the question from the realm of speculation and declares factually that we will live eternally. The appearances and ascension of Jesus also give us assurance that those who die in fellowship with Christ enter into a more glorious life. Not only do we continue to live but we live more abundantly. As Jesus declared, "Whoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die" (Jn. 11:26).

The resurrection of Jesus is a guarantee for all Christians that they will triumph over death. Christ's resurrection assures that we will be like he was after his resurrection. He was the same person. He could be seen and identified. He was a tangible individual. It also means that the Christian has assurance of a fuller life. As John said, "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be anymore pain: for the former things are passed away" (Rv. 21:4).

Finally, the resurrection gives assurance of the triumph of the kingdom of God. Christ who conquered death was resurrected with power and will reign omnipotently at the right hand of God. This is the assurance of the final and complete triumph of the Kingdom of God. Christ announced his program to his followers before his ascension.

The power of the resurrected Christ is the greatest power in the universe. Because Jesus triumphed over sin, Satan has been defeated. Atonement is complete for a person when he accepts Christ. As we contemplate the resurrection, we should shout, "He lives, he lives, and because he lives we too shall live." This is the message of God's redeeming love.

Arkansas Baptist

VOLUME 88

NUMBER 11

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Copies by mail 50 cents each.

Deaths of members of Arkansas churches will be reported in brief form when information is received not later than 14 days after the date of death.

Advertising accepted in writing only. Rates on request.

Opinions expressed in signed articles are those of the writer.

Member of the Southern Baptist Press Association.

The Arkansas Baptist (ISSN 1040-6506) is published weekly, except Easter, Independence Day, the first week of October, and Christmas, by the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine, Inc., 601-A W. Capitol, Little Rock, AR 72201. Subscription rates are \$6.99 per year (individual), \$5.52 per year (Every Resident Family Plan), \$6.12 per year (Group Plan). Foreign address rates on request. Second class postage paid at Little Rock, Ark.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Arkansas Baptist, P. O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203. (376-4791)



LAST OF A THREE-PART SERIES

Child Sex Abuse

Breaking The Silence

by Greg Warner
Florida Baptist Witness

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (BP)—For victims of child sex abuse, many of whom have been forced to suffer in silence by a society that ignores their plight, a hint of hope now glimmers.

Slowly, cautiously, society and some Christians are beginning to rethink their attitudes about the abused and the abusers, abuse workers say. They cite a new openness to discuss child molestation and offer help—both intervention and prevention.

Among Southern Baptists, the "unmentionable sin" also is being discussed, at least in whispers. And evidence exists that Baptists are ready to hear about it: In a 1986 survey by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, Southern Baptists ranked child abuse as their second highest moral concern, a mere 1 percentage point behind drug abuse.

Abuse expert Marie Fortune of Seattle credits sex victims themselves with bringing about the increased openness of the last decade. "The courage of survivors to come forward, even at great risk, has been a great help," says Fortune, a minister in the United Church of Christ and founding director of the Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence in Seattle.

Fortune, who has conducted workshops on abuse for the Florida Baptist Convention, notes Southern Baptists still are behind other denominations in dealing with the issue, however.

But Baptist social workers and counselors agree the problem of child sex abuse is affecting Baptists and their churches. More people will become aware of the problem, and be more willing to help, when they feel free to speak about it among other Christians, the specialists add.

Baptists in Florida learned they are not exempt from the problem when a Jacksonville pastor went to prison last year after being arrested for soliciting sex from a boy. And a pastor in Delray Beach, Fla., has become involved in a court case after a teenager in the church told him the teen's adoptive father had molested him and his brothers.

Although these situations still are rare, abuse workers say they demonstrate that

Christians are among both the abused and the abusers.

"When as many as one in three females is molested by age 18 and one in 10 males, then it's got to be in the church," says Brenda Forlines, director of church and community ministries for the Florida Baptist Convention. Forlines conducts workshops on sex abuse and spouse abuse, but only a handful of churches and associations in the state have participated, she says.

Libby Potts, who works on abuse issues for Texas Baptists, agrees the problem is real: "There's a lot of sexual abuse going on in our churches and families that is not talked about. In most situations, we don't create an environment in our churches that gives permission to families who are hurting to deal with this."

Texas Baptists are concentrating on prevention of child abuse rather than intervention, Potts says. By developing materials to teach nurturing skills to parents, they hope to keep some abuse from happening, she explains.

At the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina, administrators are trying to sensitize staff members to potential child-abuse problems among the children, according to Robert Stump, director of social work. Still, some staff members are reluctant to discuss it, he adds. "They think a Christian doesn't have sex problems, therefore you don't have to talk about it."

Barry Jones, program administrator for the Florida Baptist Children's Homes, says he sees the effects of child sex abuse both in his private counseling of families and in working with residents of the homes.

One resident of the Florida Baptist Children's Homes recalls finding nude photographs of her older sister that had been taken by her mother and stepfather. When her mother later asked her to have similar photographs taken, she refused and left home.

She was placed in emergency foster care and later sent to the children's homes, where, she says, "I learned to trust people more than I ever had before."

Richard Ross, a youth ministry consultant at the Sunday School Board, says the effects of sexual abuse show up in Baptist youth groups. "You won't find any youth minister who will say the problem is

overstated," says Ross, also a part-time youth minister in Nashville, Tenn.

Ross developed a 12-part series of cassette tapes for teenagers called "The 24-Hour Counselor" in which professional psychologists discuss sexual abuse and other sensitive topics, such as AIDS, suicide and pregnancy. Already the tapes are among the board's most popular products, he noted, indicating Baptist youth are confronting those issues.

Most abuse victims are not lucky enough to get help from Christians, however, observers say.

Liz Mattern works with an incest-survivors' group in Fort Myers, Fla. Herself a victim of abuse, she says many of the women who have come through the group found little help in church. As children, several had been molested by pastors—one during baptism, Mattern says. As adults, some were exploited by Christian counselors, she adds.

Mattern's own tale of sexual abuse began at age 3. By the time she finished junior high, she had been abused by seven men, including family members. She says she had no conscious memory of the abuse for most of two decades until she saw a TV program about child sex abuse.

Afterwards, she felt "the only solution was clinging to the Lord," notes Mattern, 33, who had been a Christian since 17. "The thing that gave me the most courage and stamina was Scripture. I never felt condemnation from the Scripture, but always tenderness."

But pastors accused her of being unforgiving of her abusers, prideful, at fault for the abuse, demon-possessed and lesbian, she reports. She warns victims not to accept all the "advice" offered by well-intentioned Christians.

Victims and their counselors say the "second abuse" victims get from judgmental Christians is more than insensitivity and ignorance. It is willful disbelief. People shocked by the horror stories look for reason to doubt—even if it means blaming the victim.

Abuse counselor Fortune says she knows that response well: "None of us want to believe this... But we've got to force ourselves to keep our eyes open to what people are telling us. These people are coming forward at great risk."

Fortune says she also believes the frequent stories of later exploitation at the hands of Christian counselors. The researcher, who is completing a book on ministerial misconduct, says no less than 10 percent of the clergy are sexually involved with their parishioners.

Christians wrongly blame childhood sex victims who continue to be victimized as adults, Fortune says: "When a child has been manipulated, the power of that of-

fender carries over into adulthood. That is what prevents the person from doing anything about it. It's not something they can deal with alone."

Fortune recommends a three-pronged approach for Christians who want to help victims:

The pastoral response, she says, is to learn how to deal with victims and offenders, how to answer the victims' religious questions and how to find the available community resources.

The prophetic response, she adds, is to speak to the issue in the church, particularly from the pulpit, clearly indicating that sexual contact with children is inappropriate.

The preventive response, she notes, is to educate members about abuse, such as through premarital counseling for adults and Sunday school curriculum for children.

Mattern's advice for abuse victims is fivefold: "First, realize you're not alone. There are people who know what you're going through. Second, you have to get it out. You need to share it with someone that you know can be confidential. Third, get into the Bible. Look for loving Scriptures. Fourth, don't go back into denial. Allow yourself to experience your feelings and not deny them."

Finally, be patient: "It's a long process. Sometimes you wonder, 'Am I sentenced to this forever?' This happened to me when I was 3, and I still cry."

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Letters to the Editor

A Serious Problem

I am writing this letter in response to the article written by Dr. Sneed that appeared in the February 9 issue concerning the health clinics and the condemning of them. It is very sad and distresses me to think Christians have to bury their heads in the sand, all in the name of religion. As a Christian and also a Baptist, I cannot deny that premarital sex is wrong, but being wrong does not stop it from happening. We cannot stop or police the actions of others, but we can do our part to educate our young people. Contrary to what many religious leaders would have us to believe, the health clinics do not go into classrooms and distribute contraceptives at random. The young people asking for these are already sexually active, and at least they have the forethought to do something about it, if they are indeed going to engage in premarital sex. I'm not saying to give up on our teaching of good morals and standards; if we do not have our morals and high values, what do we have to offer others and ourselves?

It has been a proven fact that the clinics have significantly reduced the teenage and unwanted pregnancies. Many of the people and board members supporting the clinics are Christians just as you and I, but they are not blind to the realities of the temptations facing our youth. They are concerned citizens trying to do something about a very serious problem. If we can educate and reduce the pregnancies, then we can work or progress on to the phasing out of abortion, which so many Christians react to like a four-letter word. . . .
—Janice Chapman, Gentry

BOB PARKER

Today's Issues

The Importance of Little

I recently read about a "road crossing" chicken that caused a tremendous amount of trouble to several people in three oncoming vehicles.

The first of these swerved while braking to avoid hitting the chicken. Its action caused the second car behind to crash into its rear end. A tank truck, also coming from the rear of the first two vehicles, clipped both before climbing up an embankment. Damages to the three amounted to several thousands of dollars. Fortunately there were no serious injuries. The chicken, by the way, continued on its merry way!

Great harm can sometimes come from a very small action or a few foolish, sinful words. We must be aware that small acorns are not the only things that grow into giant oak trees; other "giants" can come from the "tiny." "Even so the tongue is a little member and boasteth

great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. . . ." (Ja. 3:5-6).

Another illustration: The late Ted Bundy's fate and that of his innocent female victims could have been set when as a young man he began drinking a "beer or two" and began looking back then at so called "soft core" pornography. In his interview with Christian psychologist James Dobson, he admitted being to blame for his actions while growing up, he said, in a "Christian home." The advice given in Colossians 3:17 needs to be seriously heeded by all: "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."

Robert A. Parker is director of the Christian Life Council.



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Sharing and Caring

by J. Everett Sneed
Editor, Arkansas Baptist

"I cannot look at a hungry child without seeing the face of my own," declared Robert Parsley, pastor of First Church, Dardanelle, which has become one of the major supporters of a "Sharing and Caring" ministry in the Dardanelle area.

The need for the ministry emerged in 1985 when a dirty, poorly clothed man accompanied by two children approached the members at the Dardanelle Baptist Church. He had just been employed but would not receive a paycheck for two weeks. He said, "I have no money; can you folks help me until I receive my first paycheck?"

The church had no provision for individuals in need, so some of the members suggested that he check with the Salvation Army. He said that he had already been to see them and that their funds were exhausted. The man and the children were sent away without help.

Soon after this, the Salvation Army approached the local Ministerial Alliance concerning a need to sponsor Christmas baskets for Yell County. What was supposed to be a community effort turned into a project that was almost totally sponsored by First Church.

During the Christmas of 1988, 151 families were given food baskets with an average value of \$60. Toys were also given to families with children school age and younger. The church members participated in this worthy project for approximately two years, but a core group within the church felt that far more should be done since the needs of many of the families persisted the year around.

Major impetus to the "Sharing and Caring" program has been given by Norman and Nita Donaldson, who had intended to serve as Home Mission Board volunteers after their retirement. But, because of the couple's five-year-old grandson, David, developing a malignancy and Mrs. Donaldson's mother's health, it became virtually impossible for them to travel. The couple feels a definite call of God to work in the ministry.

Statistics provided by the state of Arkansas indicate that over half of the population in the area live at or below the poverty line. The ministry serves a large area and takes in many families in Pope county as well as the communities of Yell county.

The "Sharing and Caring" ministry came into existence June 1, 1987, when letters were sent out by First Church to other churches, civic organizations, and government agencies in Dardanelle and the surrounding area. These letters reported the

need to begin a food pantry ministry as well as to provide clothing and assist in meeting other human needs.

The community and churches responded in a magnificent fashion. County Judge James Lee Whitt, a deacon at First Church, was able to secure the use of the old armory building to house the ministry. Other churches joined in, including the Assembly of God churches, Methodist churches, Catholic churches and Free Will Baptist churches. Numerous businesses also assist in the endeavor.

There are approximately eight individuals who keep the "Sharing and Caring" ministry open five days a week. There are an additional 15 to 20 individuals who work in the ministry to a lesser degree.

Local businesses provide eggs, chickens, plastic bags, bread, and canned goods to serve the food needs of those who come to seek help. The number of families served has grown from 24 the first month of the ministry to 90 in December. More than 1,000 families have been served, representing more than 4,000 people since the inception of the ministry.

Clients are assisted in other areas of need, such as obtaining food stamps, commodities, housing, shoes, clothing, furniture, and bedding. The ministry also provides emergency assistance for children and others.

The ministry has a spiritual dimension in that every individual who receives assistance is given a Bible and tracts. Parsley observed that many of the individuals who come for help would not feel comfortable

in the churches of the area. He said, "This is not because of those who attend our churches but because of the educational level of these individuals and the kind of clothing that they wear. The solution probably lies in starting some kind of house Bible study for these individuals where they would feel more at ease."

Tommy Goode, director of Christian social ministries and PACT Coordinator for Arkansas, observed that the Dardanelle ministry was one of the best models in our state. He said, "The kind of ministry that is needed in a given area may vary. In some instances it should be a community ministry, such as Dardanelle has. In other instances, it should be sponsored by a local church or an association."

Goode said that many fail to see the value of meeting physical needs in order to have opportunity to minister spiritually. Last year \$34,500 was given to 29 churches and four associations. Churches and associations reported there were 136 professions of faith, 17 enrolled in Bible study and eight united with churches.

The Home Mission Board has given \$1,500 through First Church, Dardanelle, to be used for food in the "Sharing and Caring" ministry. The HMB has also provided Bibles for the ministry.

Goode observed that we will never have enough resources to meet the needs of hungry people. The government doesn't have enough funds available, so local Christian people must step in to meet the needs in the name of Christ.

Norman and Nita Donaldson said, "Serving in the 'Sharing and Caring' ministry has provided us with one of the greatest blessings of our lives."

ABN photo J. Everett Sneed



Nita Donaldson checks foodstores.

Arkansas All Over

MILLIE GILL

People

Stephen Gill Hatfield will begin serving April 9 as pastor of Baring Cross Church in Little Rock, coming there from a seven-year pastorate with First Church of Grandview, Texas. Hatfield, the son of Lawson and Juanita Hatfield of Malvern, is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, where he currently is serving as an adjunct professor of New Testament. Dr. Hatfield is married to the former Marcie Steiger, daughter of Joe and Bettie Steiger of Little Rock. They have four children, Mikel Allison, nine; Haley Ann, seven; Lindsey Erin, three; and Brooke Elizabeth, eight months.



Glen Hicks began serving March 5 as pastor of Antioch Church of Flippin, going there from a nine-year pastorate with Peel Church.

Robert Stewart is serving as pastor of Peel Church.

Robert Shaw observed two years of service March 12 at Wynne Church, where he serves as minister of music and youth.

O.J. Sharp has resigned as pastor of Refuge Church of Story.

Keith Yarbrough began serving March 1 as pastor of First Church of Pencil Bluff.

Phillip Miller has joined the staff of South Fork Church of Okolona as minister of youth.

Mark Thomas Winstead has joined the staff of First Church of Marvell, serving as minister of music and youth. He and his wife, Katherine, have one son, Seth. Both are graduates of the University of North Alabama at Flourance. He also is a graduate of Mid-America Seminary. Winstead moved to Marvell from Oakland Avenue Church, Catlettsburg, Ky.

Edward T. Smith began serving March 19 as pastor of First Church of Star City. A native of DeQueen, he is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary. Smith and his wife, Charlene, served for 16 years with the Foreign Mission Board as missionaries to Botswana. They have two married children.

Tom Farris is serving as pastor of Vesta Church near Charleston.

Jimmy Allen began serving March 19 as pastor of Phoenix Village Church in Fort Smith, coming there from Corpus Christi, Texas. He and his wife, Debe, have three sons, Joshua, Jonathan, and Jerrad.

Aaron Weibel is serving as pastor of New Hope Church in Greenwood, coming there from Monette, Mo.

Curtis Styles is serving as pastor of Joiner Church. A native of North Carolina, he is a student at Mid-America Seminary. Styles and his wife, Sue, have two sons, Timothy, 13, and Christopher, 10.

Briefly

Wynne Church will televise its Easter musical drama three times, with the first performance March 24 at 7 p.m. on Jonesboro Channel 7. Saturday, March 25 at 8 p.m., on Channel 13, the production may be viewed in Wynne, Forrest City, Marianna, Helena, West Helena, and Brinkley. The final performance will be March 26 at 4 p.m. on Little Rock's ACTS Channel 27. Bobby Shaw will be director. Don Dunavant is pastor.

Lamar Church celebrated its 35th anniversary in services March 12. The program included contributions from former pastor

OBU photo



Tom Darter (right) received the 1989 "Director of Missions of the Year" award from OBU president Ben Elrod during a recent Director of Missions Banquet at Ouachita. Darter has been DOM of the 32-church Delta Association since 1975. A native of Fisher, he is a graduate of Arkansas State University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

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W.O. Vaught

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Paid for by Friends of W.O. Vaught

Milton Edmonson, former interim pastor Julian Rowten, and former music director Wayne Johnson. Members of the church youth group performed a puppet show for the children's worship, and the morning service was followed by a potluck luncheon. Les Frazer is pastor.

Brinkley First Church recently closed a revival that resulted in nine professions of faith, six baptisms, and seven additions by letter, according to Pastor James McDaniel. Johnny Jackson of Little Rock was evangelist and Mickey Rapier directed music.

Rison Church has completed a four day youth-led revival for which David McCord, pastor of Linwood Church, Pine Bluff, was evangelist and Jerry Emerson of Monticello was music director. Stella Rabb and Julie Garner were youth instrumentalists. J.T. Harvill is pastor.

Hot Springs First Church will present its fourth annual "Living Cross" at 7:30 p.m. on both March 24 and March 26. A 25-piece orchestra, directed by Larry Bradley, will accompany the 60-voice choir. Janis Perceful will direct the drama. Complimentary tickets are available through the church office.

Hebron Church in Little Rock recently held a Bible conference and revival for which Jimmy Wallace of Lawrenceburg, Tenn., and Jack Parchman of Little Rock were speakers. Pastor Nick Farley reported 18 professions of faith.

Newport First Church recently voted to call Bob Fielding to its newly created staff position of associate pastor in charge of education, administration, and outreach. Fielding is the former pastor of Alicia Church.

Hunger Hike April 16

The 12th Annual Central Arkansas Hunger Hike will be held on April 16. The event, sponsored and organized by the Arkansas Inter-Faith Task Force, will begin at the State Capitol at 1:30 p.m.

Interested persons should contact Sherry Campbell at 375-7971 or Laura Rhea at 376-2315.

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CHURCH BUS SAFETY

Improving the Odds

by Mark Kelly
Managing Editor, Arkansas Baptist

Many churches are gambling with the lives of their members. Every time children, teenagers, or senior adults load onto an improperly-maintained bus under the care of an untrained volunteer driver, the church is running the triple risks of serious injury, multiple deaths, and colossal liability in the event of a traffic accident.

But new federal regulations currently being implemented on the state level require steps to be taken which will eliminate the unreasonable risks many congregations have been taking with the lives of their bus riders.

Many churches begin their bus ministries badly by purchasing old school buses which already have been pushed to the point where they require more maintenance than they are worth, says Terry Cable, director of bus ministries for Little Rock's First Baptist Church. Then they compound the error by allowing the vehicles' condition to deteriorate because of inadequate or nonexistent maintenance.

On top of that, Cable says, the congregations then often put an inexperienced and untrained volunteer in the driver's seat. That combination can be lethal.

That point was forcefully made in the

September 1985 crash of a church bus in the Ozark Mountains north of Eureka Springs. Four passengers and the driver were killed and 20 young persons were injured when the vehicle plunged into a ravine on Highway 23.

An investigation by the National Traffic Safety Board showed that the brakes on the 20-year-old vehicle were faulty and that the inexperienced, untrained driver was aware of that when he headed into the mountainous terrain. The report also indicated no systematic efforts had been made to



maintain the vehicle in good repair.

The enormous liability which can result from such an accident was dramatically illustrated for one California congregation in 1982.

First Baptist Church of Reseda, Calif., found itself a defendant in a \$1.9 million lawsuit arising from a bus crash which

injured 28 and killed two teenaged church members returning from a weekend retreat. An out-of-court settlement left the church with an obligation of \$442,000 after their \$500,000 insurance policy had paid off.

The fact that churches in the past had no legal guidelines governing vehicle maintenance or driver training allowed them to take a haphazard approach to bus operation and opened the door to tragedy, says Bill Mullenax, a former Arkansas state trooper and owner of Safety Services of Arkansas, a business which provides certification in a range of traffic and health safety areas.

Mullenax says new Department of Transportation guidelines scheduled to take effect this summer will slam the door on careless maintenance and incompetent drivers.

Those new regulations will require anyone operating a vehicle with 16 passengers or more, including the driver, to hold a commercial drivers license. In addition to written and driving tests, a physical examination will be required every two years. In addition, a file on each driver must be maintained and will be reviewed annually to ensure compliance.

In addition, the strict guidelines set requirements regarding bus maintenance and mandate that detailed maintenance records be kept.

Churches interested in more information about the new requirements and the steps needed to comply with them may contact Cable at 227-0010 or Mullenax at 227-0224.

January Cooperative Program Report

Received \$1,010,646.77
Budget \$ 1,083,333.33
Under \$72,686.56

Year-to-date

Under \$72,686.56

Same time last year

Over \$282,205.93

1989 Cooperative Program receipts did not get off to a good start, but the shortfall was not unexpected. The unusually high December 1988, receipts indicated that some gifts normally received in January were counted in the 1988 receipts. Nevertheless, some concern is evident when the year is started this low. The projections for 1989 are good, but we must not become complacent. Let's pray that future months will take up the slack.—**Jimmie Sheffield**, associate executive director

Safety Services of Arkansas, Inc.

Church Bus Driver Safety Workshops are planned for
— First Baptist Church, West Memphis, on April 22
— First Baptist Church, Springdale, on April 29
Call us for information about a workshop in your church!

Registration is requested for the following programs:

Defensive Driving Courses: Adult Teen CPR First Aid
 Church Bus Driver Professional Truck Driver Mature Driver

Number of students per class _____ Telephone _____

Church/Company _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____



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(Subject to full refund should workshop be cancelled)

Safety Services of Arkansas, Inc.

21 Peckerwood St., Little Rock, AR 72112; Phone 501-227-0224

Photo / Pete Petty



When Arkansas Baptist directors of missions held their retreat March 1-3 at DeGray Lodge, Arkadelphia, they elected as 1989-90 officers (left to right) L. B. Jordan, Red River Association, secretary-treasurer; Glenn Hickey, Pulaski Association, president-elect; and Ray Reed of Camden, president.

Elrod Investiture April 10-14

ARKADELPHIA—Faculty, staff, students and friends of Ouachita Baptist University will observe a full week of activities surrounding the investiture of Dr. Ben Elrod April 10-14. Elrod assumed the duties of president of the university Sept. 1, 1988, following the retirement of Dr. Daniel R. Grant.

The focus of the week, the investiture, will take place Thursday, April 13, at 2 p.m. in the Stugis Physical Education Complex. A reception will follow in Grant Plaza.

For more information on inauguration week activities, contact the office of academic affairs at OBU at 246-4531, ext. 196.

This announcement is neither an offer to sell nor a solicitation of offers to buy any of these securities. The offering is made only by Prospectus.



\$10,000,000

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Interest on the bonds will be payable semi-annually. The bonds will be offered with maturity dates varying from six months to fifteen years and the interest rate will vary from 8.5% to 10.5% depending upon the maturity date as set forth in the Prospectus.

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Please send a copy of the Prospectus for the Series D issue of Home Mission Board Church Loan Collateralized Bonds.

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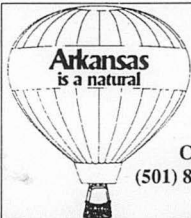
Right to Life Plans '89 Meeting

"Progress Through Perseverance" will be the theme of the 1989 Arkansas Right to Life Convention when it meets Saturday, April 8, at St. Vincent Infirmary.

Jack Wilke, president of National Right to Life, will be the featured speaker. Other program personalities include Carol Everett, former owner and director of several "abortion mills," and State Senator Lu Hardin of Russellville.

The program begin at 8 a.m. and the conclude with a banquet at 7 p.m.

For more information, contact Arkansas Right to Life at P.O. Box 1697, Little Rock, AR 72203; telephone 374-0445.



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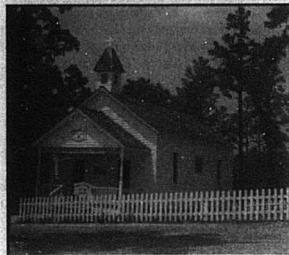
The excitement is mounting in Eureka Springs, Arkansas, especially on top of Mount Oberammergau! Preparations are underway for the opening of The Great Passion Play's twenty-second consecutive season on April 28, 1989 at 8:30 P.M. Many church groups have already made their reservations. The play serves as a wonderful intergenerational experience, speaking to the hearts and minds of all who witness this inspirational and powerful performance.

The play takes place in a 4,400 seat amphitheater set into a wooded hillside east of Eureka Springs. The city of "Old Jerusalem" is brought to life as the triumph and the glory of the life, death, resurrection and the ascension of Jesus Christ is performed by the cast of two hundred, dressed in period costumes. Many animals, common to the Holy Land during the time of Christ's life on earth, create excitement as they make their appearances; especially for children who have never seen camels, donkeys and herds of sheep running through the streets! A rule each new cast member must remember is, "Chariots and camels have the right of way!" There are so many thrilling and uplifting moments during this production by the Elna M. Smith Foundation, that it would be difficult to pick a favorite scene; but, many people are moved to tears by the crucifixion and then to applause by the victorious resurrection and ascension of Christ. The cast, set, lighting and sound system combine to present "America's #1 Outdoor Drama" to over 3,000 groups each year. Many families and individuals make an annual pilgrimage to the play to renew their faith and understanding of the life of Christ.

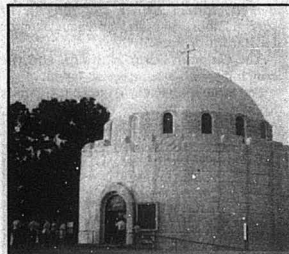
When planning a trip to The Great Passion Play, time should be allocated to enjoy the other Sacred Projects on the grounds. The seven story monument, Christ of the Ozarks, can be seen for miles and serves as a reminder of the open arms of Christ, welcoming all who will come unto Him. The Church in the Grove offers a presentation, "If the Walls Could Talk" and the playground and picnic areas are located behind the church. The Smith Memorial Chapel grants an opportunity for meditation and prayer; the sunburst with Christ adorns the front of the Chapel above the 15th Century altar. Noah's Ark Petting Zoo is a favorite place for the children to visit and feed the animals. A new Noah's Ark miniature display has been added just outside the zoo area which is located behind the Great Wall. The New Holy Land (a fifty acre on-going project) offers a guided tour that



Christ of the Ozarks Statue



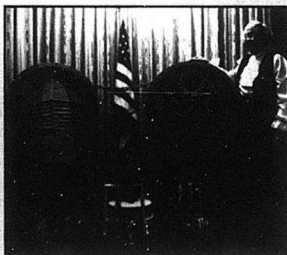
Church in the Grove



Smith Memorial Chapel



Sacred Arts Center



Woodcarving Gallery



Bible Museum

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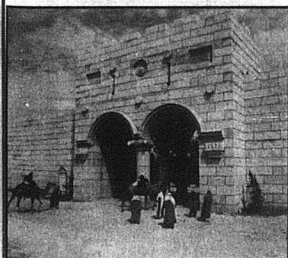
includes: the Dead Sea, the Jordan River and the Sea of Galilee - where "Peter" shares with you his experiences with Christ. Baptismal Services are held in the Jordan River by churches during the spring and summer (call 253-8559 for reservations of the facility.) The tour also includes entering a replica of Christ's tomb and viewing: Calvary, the Nativity, "Last Supper" recreation and statues in the Garden of Gethsemane and on the Mount of Beatitudes. The tour of The Great Passion Play Set is a new and informative behind the scenes guided tour given twice daily. A cast member conducts the tour through the streets of Jerusalem, to Calvary and into the costume rooms where the costumes can be viewed.

There are three galleries that have guided tours and the guides are well informed on the theology and history of the various items displayed. The Sacred Arts Center contains the largest collection of religious art in the world; over 1,000 works of art in 64 different forms. The Master's hand is seen in many of these works. The Woodcarving Gallery houses the inspirational carvings by the late Cecil Mount in addition to carvings spanning the centuries and nativities from around the world. The Bible Museum displays over 7,000 Bibles in 625 languages, manuscripts and ancient artifacts. Facimilies of the original King James and Gutenberg Bibles are of special interest to most church groups. Prints of Christ by a South Korean artist are viewed through a magnifying glass to reveal the Four Gospels and the entire New Testament.

Many guest plan to eat at the Snack Shop and then go next door to shop for their "Gift with a Message" before attending the Pre-Play Performances. "Parables from the Potter's House" is seen behind the Great Wall and a Pre-Play Gospel Concert is presented in the Smith Memorial Chapel. These performances last approximately fifteen minutes and are held three times each evening that the play is scheduled.

The staff and employees of the Smith Foundation are truly reaching out to the needs of the Christian Community and want to make each persons trip to The Great Passion Play a memorable and fulfilling experience. Make plans to attend today!

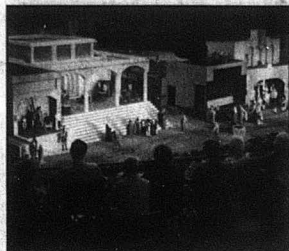
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and museum.

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ALCOHOLISM

The 'Secret' Shame

by Jim Lowry
Baptist Sunday School Board

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—Shame carried by families of alcoholics may be a "secret" many churches and communities prefer to ignore, a counselor who works with adult children of alcoholics said.

"The pain that is hidden in Southern Baptist congregations would astound most pastors," claimed Sara Hines Martin. "People feel they have to hide their pain, which hurts the church because emotional stress forces people out of active participation. They face a double jeopardy."

Martin, who herself is the child of an alcoholic father, recently led a seminar for adult children of alcoholics at Travis Avenue Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas. She also is the author of a book, "Healing for Adult Children of Alcoholics," published by the Broadman division of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

Shame is the key ingredient in the cycle of alcoholism that can dramatically affect more than 28 million adult children of alcoholics in the United States, Martin said.

"In families where one of the parents is alcoholic, the family system is shame-bound," she explained. "Characteristics include vague personal boundaries of proper roles, expectations bordering on perfectionism, alienation and the illusion that they have no shame."

"In these shame-bound families, there is heavy control of all family members and little individuality allowed. A co-dependency develops under stringent rules which interferes with the healthy growth of the family."

In a co-dependent relationship, all privilege and power must go to the dependent, or alcoholic, while the co-dependent, usually the spouse, gives up his or her own values and identity in an attempt to keep the peace, and the "secret," she said.

To deal with the burden of shame, which is the unhealthy equivalent of guilt, the shame must be "given back" so the healing process can begin, added Martin, who maintains a private counseling practice in Smyrna, Ga. She and her husband, who is a chaplain, were Southern Baptist missionaries in the Caribbean for 17 years before moving to Georgia.

"Shame is subtle in the family system, but it will be unintentionally passed along to children as long as it is carried," she continued. "As long as the pain stays inside the person, they can't heal, and the shame is perpetuated."

Because the adult children of alcoholics repress their feelings, often their children, the grandchildren of the alcoholics, get

the message of emotional pain that never has been dealt with satisfactorily. These subtle but strong dynamics of emotional abandonment often result in alcoholism appearing in the grandchildren, even if their parents were not alcoholics.

The shame must be acknowledged and then given back to the source, Martin said. Many times when the adult children of alcoholics were able to acknowledge their need for help, the alcoholic parents then sought help for themselves, she added.

"To get the shame out, good listeners are needed," Martin said. "They must be persons who will listen non-judgmentally, with support."

"One of the rules in a shame-bound family system is that you don't talk about the secret. This denies your feelings and the happenings, so nothing is ever resolved."

As a result of the denial and shame, anger is present in most of these people, who act it out in different ways. Many Christians pretend they are not angry, she said, adding that anger is not a sin but can be released in healthy ways to deal with family shame.

Some ways she suggested to deal with unresolved anger include role playing with a friend who will listen, talking to an empty chair, seeing a therapist or even yelling in the shower. A person may write a letter expressing pain and then destroy the letter if he or she cannot confront the parent.

In many ways, adult children of alcoholics are still children emotionally because of their strained family lives, she

added.

One church that actively is ministering to alcoholics and their family members is Kingsland Baptist Church in Katy, Texas. Pastor Timothy Sledge began the new ministry by presenting 12 sermons on adult children of alcoholics, followed by four sermons on codependency.

Out of the sermons and publicity in the community, six therapy groups have been started, with a waiting list for more groups. Also, 286 first-time visitors attended the church to hear the sermons. In the sermons, Sledge talked about his own experiences as the child of an alcoholic.

Many Baptist churches pretend problems related to alcoholism do not exist, Martin said: "We need to change the image that anything with the word alcoholism in it is strange. Sometimes we joke about alcoholism but don't acknowledge it exists. We keep it at arms length rather than acknowledging it."

She encouraged pastors to preach sermons giving people permission to have feelings, instead of saying anger is a sin. They also can endorse counseling to reduce the stigma for Christians who are in need of it.

Martin compared alcoholism to any addiction that people face, such as drugs, smoking, any eating disorder or workaholism. An addiction controls the person and is the primary source of self-worth for the individual, she added.

Most experts believe alcoholism has no cure, but recovery is possible, she said. For adult children of alcoholics, the chain of shame must be broken through open communication after an admission that a problem exists, she added.



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April Appointments

by Don Moore
ABSC Executive Director

Two historic meetings immediately before us in April!

6,000 Arkansas Baptists

are expected to arrive in Little Rock on April 11 to share in the SBC Foreign Mission Board Appointment Service at the Convention Center. Stirring preservice music will begin at 7 p.m. A 500-voice choir and 60-piece orchestra are expected to lift our souls to the highest heights of earthly praise and celebration. At 7:30 p.m. the appointment service will begin. The testimonies of the missionaries being appointed and the message of Keith Parks will undoubtedly move our hearts to an unforgettable degree. And, yes, God, who has been dealing with many of our people about missionary service, will find this the last step in confirming his call to them. You'll be there when those momentous decisions are made. You may be one



of the ones making the decision. What an exciting anticipation.

Only once in our history has such a service been held in Arkansas. This service was requested over six years ago, just after I took office in October 1982. The Foreign Mission Board will not likely be inclined to come to Arkansas again for 20 to 25 years. They will be going to other state conventions. For many of us, this will be our only time to enter upon the sanctified grounds of such unqualified commitment by so many to such an unimaginable task. We've arranged for an extra 1,000 seats which will be served by closed circuit TV.

This will be my last appeal to you. I can hardly wait to see you coming from far and near to give your prayerful support to the modern "heroes of the faith" who will be bearing the good news to regions beyond. Come prayed up and expectant.

Youth Issues Institute—500 are expected to receive Youth Leader Training. If all of our Baptist young people have to wait until their church gets a qualified youth minister before they get help, then most of them will struggle with sexual purity, alcohol and drug problems, pornography and even suicide, without much help. Lay leaders are reluctant to plunge into the complex problems of their young people. Fear of reaction, fear of inaccurate information, or fear of dealing with delicate and intimate matters keeps most lay people from attacking the "hot issues" our youth face.

Sure, we can teach them to "Just Say No!" But we can do more. Hundreds of hours and thousands of dollars have gone into this special Arkansas project designed to equip every youth leader in our Baptist churches to better minister to their young people. The Youth Issues Institute, Saturday, April 8, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., is your opportunity to prepare yourself to make a difference in your young people's lives. Since registration is limited to 500, with materials prepared for only that number, you are urged to call 376-4791 immediately to see if a place can be reserved for you and the other youth workers in your church.

Need building counsel? The answers may be found at the Church Building Conference, April 28-29. Churches interested in building or remodeling can find information, resources and direction at this meeting. Gerald Carter, of the Church Architecture Department of the Baptist Sunday School Board, will join Ed Hinkson in trying to give you the very best counsel available. Markham Street Church will be the location of this meeting. Their new and remodeled space will serve as a good ex-

ample of what might be done in your church.

Newcomers to Arkansas, listen up! We know we can help you in your transition time. Your adjustment to a new state convention with its programs and personnel is not easy. A New Pastor/Staff Orientation has been planned by all of us for all of you. If we can have you alone and apart from the rest of the convention on Monday afternoon, night and Tuesday morning, April 17-18, we promise you a lasting, helpful relationship can be developed that will pay rich dividends in your life and ministry.

Wives, you are invited to be a part of this special time. Arkansas serving in their first church position are also included in this invitation. If you have not received a card to register for this important event, please call (376-4791) to let us know of your intentions to be in attendance.

Summer youth minister training—These short term workers do a great work in meeting a pressing need. We want to help them to do as well as they can in a short period of time. Many of these go on to become outstanding leaders. The dates and places for the Summer Youth Minister Training are as follows: April 25, Southern Baptist College; April 26, Baptist Building, Little Rock; April 27, Ouachita Baptist University; April 28, University of Arkansas, BSU, Fayetteville. Find the one nearest you and plan to attend. Contact Bill Falkner at 376-4791 if you need more information.

Six music festivals youth music festival—April 22, Life Line Church. The combining of the Choir Festival, State Tournament/Ensemble Jubilee make this a most exciting event. The challenge of preparing and presenting outstanding musical selections, fellowshiping together and growing in the use of our God-given talents are just a few of the blessings in store.

Five Young Musicians Festivals—These choirs, made up of grades 4-6, will have outstanding leaders from Alabama, Missouri, Texas, Louisiana and one from Arkansas leading them. Times and location are listed elsewhere. These will all be held on April 15. The experiences usually bring a great deal of new life and excitement to their choir programs.

Acteans Encounter—Hundreds of girls in grades 7-12 are expected again this year for this most enjoyable activity, April 28-29. A variety of activities and varied personnel from both home and foreign mission fields will make this an interesting and inspiring occasion. The first session begins at 7:30 p.m., Friday, April 28 at Park Hill Church, North Little Rock.

RA and Baptist Young Men's Conference—OBU, April 28-29, grades 1-12. See more information in *Vision*.

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Senior Adults

Senior Adult Celebration

"In the Company of Others" is the theme of this year's Senior Adult Celebration to be held on the Ouachita campus May 22-24. This is an annual event for senior adults, staff members and other leaders of senior adult ministry. Last year's celebration set a record in attendance and we expect to set a new attendance record this year.

Dennis Swanberg, pastor of Second Church in Hot Springs, will be the inspirational speaker. Dr. Swanberg is a very effective speaker, humorist, and impersonator. He will speak at the banquet on Monday night and in other sessions on Tuesday and Wednesday.

W.L. "Bill" House III will speak and lead a leadership conference. Bill is Senior Adult Consultant in the Family Ministry Department, Nashville, Tenn. The Golden Voices Choir from First Church in Crossett will present "Reflections," a new senior adult musical, on Tuesday night in the Mabe Fine Arts Auditorium.

The program begins with a banquet on Monday night at 6 p.m. and will conclude by noon on Wednesday. The registration fee is \$25. This covers the cost of the banquet, breakfast on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings and refreshments. Rooms are available on campus for \$6 per person, per night (double occupancy) or \$8 per night for a private room. Each person must bring linens, pillow, towels, etc.

For reservations or information, call or write Robert Holley, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203 (376-4791, ext. 5160).—**Robert Holley, director**

Stewardship/Annuity

Associational Budget Seminars

Fortteen Associational Church Budget Development Seminars attracted 802 people from over 200 churches last year.

The seminars, scheduled in cooperation with directors of missions, focused on budget development, mission support and church staff salaries and benefits. The Stewardship/Annuity Department provided a meal for participants.

Thirteen seminars are scheduled for 1989 in the following associations: April 6, Calvary; April 13, Delta; April 18, Little Red River; May 18, Washington-Madison; May 23, Current Gains; June 5, North Central; June 26, Ouachita; July 25, Caroline; Aug. 7, Black River; Aug. 10, Buckner; Aug. 17, North Pulaski; Sept. 12, Liberty; Sept. 14, Arkansas River Valley.

The 1989 seminars are sponsored by Cooperative Program promotion and the Stewardship/Annuity Department in cooperation with associations.—**James A. Walker, director**

Church Music

Young Musicians Camp 1989!

Register early! Young Musicians Camp is for children who have completed grades four, five or six, and limited to the first 600 to register. For those registering by June 12, the cost is \$42 for campers and \$37 for counselors.

Our emphasis this year is Hymnology, and Kay Kincl from Central, Magnolia, is already dreaming up some creative activities for these classes. Our worship team, Rich Kincl and Phil Hardin, also from Central, Magnolia, are at work on some creative worship experiences to tie in with our Hymnology emphasis. Young Musicians will discover that hymns can be exciting!

Four choirs will number about 125 singers each, and will present an entire musical to end the week. The musicals and directors are: "Fat Fat Jehoshaphat," directed by Barry Bates, Hillside, Camden; "Destination Promised Land," directed by Elaine Short, First, Fayetteville; "Hurry On Down," directed by Rhonda Stege, Lubbock, Texas; and "Case of the Missing Christmas," directed by Elaine Bartee, Central, Jonesboro.

The dates are June 26-29, and the place is Ouachita Baptist University. The registration form for camp was mailed to every minister of music in Arkansas in his Music Ministry Handbook. Snag your director and get registered! If he has lost his form, call me and I'll send one to you. (376-4791).—**Peggy Pearson, associate/office manager**

Family Ministry

Parenting in the Minister's Home

The parent-child relationship in the minister's home calls for special attention and care. This relationship is bombarded with unique pressures and often faces unreal expectations by outsiders and from within the minister's family. The "Parenting in the Minister's Home" Conference is for both parents in the ministry family. It is best for both to attend the conference if at all possible.

Dr. J. Clark Hensley will lead a conference May 1-2 to examine the unique dynamics of parenting in the minister's family and influences on that relationship. Practical counsel will be provided to enrich the parent-child bond as parents seek to achieve a healthy basis of relating to their children.

Dr. Hensley is a family ministry consultant for the Mississippi Baptist Convention where he served many years as director of the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission. He and his wife, Margaret, are parents of two adult children. Clark and Margaret have worked extensively in marriage enrichment and parenting education.

Dr. Hensley helped pioneer family life education for ministerial families. He is author of several books and articles about the minister's marriage and family. Dr. Hensley is a popular speaker for family life events and has been the featured speaker at Ridgecrest and Glorieta events. Clark helped develop the new family enrichment courses "Parenting by Grace" and "Covenant Marriage."

A new book, *Parenting in the Minister's Home*, by Terry Peck, will be featured in the conference. Conference participants will examine the unique dynamics of the parent-child relationship in the minister's family and seek to arrive at a healthy basis of relating to one another.

Conference sessions will be held at Central Church, North Little Rock. Central is located at 5200 Fairway in the McCain Mall area. Sessions are scheduled for 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. on Monday, May 1, and at 9 a.m. on Tuesday, May 2. Motels near the interchange of I-30/I-40 and McCain Mall are convenient to Central Church.

Contact the Church Training Department, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203; telephone 501-376-4791, for additional information about the conference. A small registration fee will be charged to cover material costs. Pre-registration is encouraged by sending name, address, telephone number, church name, and staff position to the Church Training Department.—**Gerald Jackson, associate**



Swanberg



Pearson

Conference Makes A Difference

"Revival In Our Day" became more than just a theme at our State Evangelism Conference. Many of those attending the conference really experienced revival and renewal. One of our speakers wrote, "I felt the presence of the Lord in the meeting. I was inspired by being there." One of our pastors wrote, "The news is out. The Evangelism Conference we just experienced is one of the finest I have ever attended. It was truly a blessing and a challenge to my heart." Another pastor wrote, "God used each speaker to challenge me in my ministry in the area of evangelism. It is my sincere prayer that God will use my life this year as a witness to the Gospel." A pastor's wife wrote concerning her and her husband, "I want to tell you how much the Evangelism Conference meant to us. It was an excellent program." It is our deepest desire in presenting the Evangelism Conference that it will make a difference.

Many expressed the deep appreciation for the testimonies that were shared. Joe Finfrock excited the crowd as he spoke on reaching people with the good news of Christ. People were made aware of the amazing grace of God as John Belken, chaplain at Cummins, gave his personal testimony. All lay people were challenged when Joe Lingo, evangelism director, Grand Avenue Church, Hot Springs, gave his testimony on using the "Full and Meaningful Life" booklet to win many people to Christ.

All the participants were made aware that the bus ministry is alive and well in the present day as Larry Plummer, First Church, Forrest City, gave a moving testimony. A much needed emphasis in our churches came alive as Jim Fowler, pastor of East Side Church, Paragould, gave a strong testimony on training people to be effective servants. We were informed and inspired to start more churches as Floyd Tidsworth, ABCS Missions Department, gave a moving testimony on Church Arkansas.

Tuesday afternoon was a high moment in the conference. Rick Stanley, step-brother of Elvis Presley and evangelist from Florida, preached on the "Power of the Spirit" in revival. Dr. Ronnie Floyd, pastor of First Church, Springdale, and president of the Pastors' Conference, was an example of his subject as he spoke on "Preaching in the Spirit." The session came to a great climax as Ron Herrod, pastor of First Church, Fort Smith, came from the hospital room of his wife, Emily, who had just experienced surgery, and preached on "The Promise of the Spirit."

Our out-of-state speakers did an outstanding job. Dr. Jimmy Draper, pastor of First Church, Euless, Texas, and former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, began the conference with a moving message and concluded with the commitment service. Billy Baskin moved the congregation with his oratory and biblical information concerning the great revival in Nehemiah. Dr. "Ike" Reighard, pastor of New Hope Church, Fayetteville, Ga., and president of the Georgia Baptist Convention, shared two very exciting and dynamic messages. Mrs. Esther Burroughs, consultant to women in the Evangelism Section, Home Mission Board, was a real blessing to all of our people as she spoke on "Women in Witnessing." Dr. Tom Lee, Baptist Sunday School Board, shared a very relevant message on pastors using the Sunday School in evangelism. Dr. Wayne Ward, professor at Southern Seminary, related very effectively how theology and evangelism complement one another. Dr. Larry Lewis, president of the Home Mission Board, related very effectively to the needs of Arkansas Baptists. The closing message on Monday evening was a very high time. Dr. Lewis called upon pastors to make a commitment to make five witnessing visits a day, five days a week. He called upon executive board employees, directors of missions, other staff, and lay people to make a commitment to regularly share Christ. Multitudes of God's servants stood and said, "I will commit my life to witness for Christ." We believe that God will use this to make a difference in Arkansas.

Lester McCullough and Glen Ennes coordinated a Christ-exalting music program. Our session leaders did a very effective job. The special music spoke to our hearts. The choir of First Church, Little Rock, and the Music Men and Singing Women led our hearts to God in a beautiful expression of worship.

Dr. John Wright and all his staff and people did a super job in hosting the conference. We are praying when we give an accounting to God that there will be a difference because of this Evangelism Conference.—Clarence Shell, director

Brotherhood Worldwide Day Of Prayer

"Baptist Men's Worldwide Day of Prayer" began in the country of Cameroon through the efforts of Isaac Malafa. Malafa was then the vice-president of the Men's Department of the Baptist World Alliance for Africa. Once again it is time for all Baptist Men around the world to fellowship together, to worship, to learn some of the things the 4 million other Baptist Men are doing to reach this world for Jesus Christ and then to pray toward that end.

The fourth Saturday of April of each year is designated to form a world wide prayer chain among Baptist Men. That Saturday will fall on April 22nd of this year. Certainly Arkansas Baptist Men want to be a part of the prayer heard around the world.

Resource material for this day will be available in the April issue of the *World Mission Journal*. Specific requests that might be voiced by men's groups are as follows:

(1) Africa prayer needs: for more food production; for social and political harmony in Africa.

(2) Asia prayer need: Baptist Men's groups in Burma and the Philippines who are being attacked by both government and rebel troops, because when they meet or seek to become involved in ministry each military group thinks they are working for the other side.

(3) Europe prayer need: for the new opportunities now available for distributing and proclaiming the word of God throughout Europe.

(4) North America prayer need: for the North American Baptist Men's Fellowship meeting in Memphis, Tenn., May 25-28, 1989.

(5) South American prayer need: for an increase, a recognition of, and training and utilization of Baptist lay persons.

Many exciting things are happening in men's work around the world. The European Baptist Men's Fellowship will be meeting in Budapest, Hungary, July 29-31, 1989; the North American Baptist Men's Fellowship will be meeting in Memphis, Tenn., May 25-28, 1989; the Baptists in the USSR have appointed Anatoly Sokolov as the person responsible for men's work in their churches.

A group of men who will be working on a church construction in Alma will pause at 12 noon on April 22 to lift up the petitions that were stated above. I encourage you or a group of your men to join with us in a time of prayer in Arkansas for these needs that we might be a part of the Baptist Men's Worldwide Day of Prayer.—Glendon Grober, director

Church Training State Conference On Discipleship

On October 23-24, 1989, our first State Conference on Discipleship will be held at the Park Hill Church in North Little Rock. This unique event is best described as "A Convocation on Discipleship and the Equipping Ministry of the Church." Originally scheduled for last October, this conference was rescheduled due to some unavoidable calendar conflicts.

Speakers for the general sessions include Dr. Avery Willis, author of the MasterLife discipleship materials, and Dr. T. W. Hunt, Bold Mission Thrust Prayer Coordinator for Southern Baptists. Other speakers include Dr. Marion "Bud" Fray, chairman of the religion and philosophy department at Ouachita and our executive director, Dr. Don Moore.

Conferences at each of the sessions will focus on the meaning and the process of growth in discipleship. A wide variety of conferences will be offered for pastors, staff members, lay leaders, and associational leaders.

A MasterLife Alumni Dinner is planned for Monday evening for all MasterLife alumni in our state. Dr. Willis will be the speaker for this event. Special events are also planned for ministers of education and youth ministers.

Place this important event on your calendar and plan now to be a part of our state's first State Conference on Discipleship.—**Robert Holley, director**

Church Music Adult Choir Festivals

Adult choirs from Arkansas Baptist churches have an opportunity to participate in one of seven festivals this year. The festivals will be held in seven locations on three days: May 8—First, Benton; Beech Street, Texarkana; South Side, Fort Smith; May 9—First, Warren; First, Harrison; First, Cabot; May 10—East Side, Paragould.

The adult choirs may sing two selections of their own choosing in the parade of choirs. The parade of choirs is a time when choirs sing for each other and receive helpful written comments from a team of choral judges. All choirs will sing in the mass choir. The music required for mass choir singing is "Shout and Sing for Joy" by Eugene Butler, Fred Brock Music Company, B-G0525, and and "In the Quiet Hours" by Dale Peterson, Beckenhorst

Press, BP1309. This music may be purchased from the Baptist Bookstore or ordered from a music supplier.

Guest conductors for the mass choirs include: J. C. Farrand, First, McAlester, Okla.; Phil Hardin, Central, Magnolia; Craig Hodges, OBU, Arkadelphia; Lynn Madden, Immanuel, Little Rock; and Bob Magee, SBC, Walnut Ridge.

Each festival will begin at 7:30 p.m. and conclude about 9:30 p.m. The registration fee is \$2 per person or a maximum of \$30 per choir. For registration or additional information contact the Church Music Department.—**Lester McCullough, director**

Evangelism Baptist Revivals; A Sampler

The history of *Arkansas Baptist Revivals; A Sampler* has finally been completed. The pages contained in the book

cry out what God has done in years past in Arkansas. It is by no means meant to be an exhaustive revival history. Space would not allow the recording of all episodes of God's moving throughout the rich heritage of our state. The overwhelming evidence through the pages of the book is that God, in his sovereign majesty, allows his people moments of refreshment, renewal, and commitment.

Dr. Mark Coppenger deserves to be congratulated for this very fine effort of assimilating various stories. His heartbeat for evangelism and revival is evident throughout the work. We pray that God will do this again in our hearts and in your heart.

The book begins with a recording of a great movement at Three Creeks in 1864. It then moves chronologically through the years following Major Penn and Camp Pike, to Mordecai Ham, to Warren in 1933, and all the way to Mountain Pine in 1987. There are several testimonies recorded that are too numerous to mention here.

We must allow this sampler to stir our hearts once again. One would agree that our nation is in need of a great God-sent awakening. Fires of evangelism need to be rekindled among our people. Renewal of holy living must be seen once again in our people. We cannot program God's move-

ment, but we can fall on our knees and cry for God to revive us once again.

To obtain a copy of this great work, please contact the Evangelism Department at the Baptist Building or the Baptist Book Store in Little Rock.—**Jim Lagrone, associate**

Sunday School VBS Summer Explosion

VBS Summer Explosion is a new dated plan to increase Sunday School enrollment and to witness to persons discovered through the church's Vacation Bible School, through Mission Vacation Bible School and through Backyard Bible Clubs.

A VBS Summer Explosion can be done in a 4- or 5-week period, or it can be extended throughout the summer, according to the needs of each church.

If a church decides to use the VBS Summer Explosion as a major strategy to discover prospects, there is training available to help implement that strategy.

Associational VBS clinics are designed to train local church VBS faculties in the use of curriculum, how to discover prospects and how to enroll prospects in ongoing Bible study. Check with your associational office for the date(s) of your clinic.

The Sunday School Department will conduct a Backyard Bible Club/Mission Vacation Bible School Clinic on May 6 at the Levy Church, North Little Rock from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. There is no fee and pre-registration is not required. The target audience is any persons in the local church who will be conducting one of these activities and will be using the materials published by the SBC.

A free leaflet is available through the Sunday School Department with more information about the VBS Summer Explosion.—**Jackie Edwards, associate**



Lagrone



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Looking Ahead

April

- 8** Youth Issues Institute, *Geyer Springs First Church, Little Rock (CLC)*
- 11** Commission '89, *Foreign Mission Board Appointment Service, Statehouse Convention Center, Little Rock (Ad)*
- 14-15** BSU Volleyball Tournament (*Stu*)
- 15** Young Musicians Festivals, *Jonesboro First Church, North Little Rock Park Hill Church, Magnolia Central Church, Pine Bluff South Side Church, Fort Smith First Church (M)*
- 17-18** New Pastor/Staff Orientation, *Baptist Building, Little Rock (Ad)*
- 20-21** Minister of Education Retreat, *DeGray Lodge (CT)*
- 20-21** Minister of Youth Conference, *DeGray Lodge (CT)*
- 22** Youth Music Festival, *Little Rock Life Line Church (M)*
- 25** Area Summer Youth Ministry Conference, *Southern Baptist College, Walnut Ridge, (CT)*
- 26** Area Summer Youth Ministry Conference, *Baptist Building, Little Rock (CT)*
- 26-29** National Southern Baptist Secretaries Conference, *Nashville, Tenn. (CT)*
- 27** Area Summer Youth Ministry Conference, *Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia, (CT)*

- 28** Area Summer Youth Ministry Conference, *U of A BSU, Fayetteville (CT)*
- 28-29** Church Building Conference, *Little Rock Markham Street Church (SS)*
- 28-29** Royal Ambassador, High School Baptist Young Men Congress, *Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia (Bbd)*
- 28-29** Acteens Encounter, *North Little Rock Park Hill Church (WMU)*

May

- 1-2** Parenting in the Minister's Home Workshop, *North Little Rock Central (CT)*
- 1-3** Church Music Excellence Conference, *Little Rock Immanuel (M)*
- 5-6** State Pastor-Deacon Conference, *Little Rock Olivet (CT)*
- 6** Backyard Bible Club/Mission Vacation Bible School Clinic, *North Little Rock Levy Church (SS)*
- 8** Adult Choir Festivals, *Benton First Church, Cabot First Church, Fort Smith South Side Church (M)*
- 9** Adult Choir Festivals, *Warren First Church, Harrison First Church, Texarkana Beech Street First Church (M)*
- 11** Adult Choir Festival, *Paragould East Side Church (M)*
- 12** Golden Age Evangelism Conference, *Hot Springs First Church (Ev)*

- 15-16** Chaplaincy Awareness Conference, *Camp Paron (Mn)*
- 15-16** Church Planting Conference, *Camp Paron (Mn)*
- 15-18** MasterLife Workshop, *Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia (CT)*
- 18-21** Arkansas Musicians on Mission, *Dove Circle Mission, Holiday Island (M)*
- 18-21** Campers on Mission Rally, *Petit Jean State Park (Mn)*
- 19-20** GA Mother-Daughter Camp, *Camp Paron (WMU)*
- 19-20** DiscipleYouth Workshop, *Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia (CT)*
- 22-24** Senior Adult Celebration, *Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia (CT)*
- 25-28** Royal Ambassador University, *Rhodes College, Memphis, Tenn. (Bbd)*
- 30-June 2** Summer Missionary Orientation, *Mills Valley (Mn)*

June

- 1-2** Summer Missionary Supervisors' Orientation, *Mills Valley (Mn)*
- 3** Disaster Relief Training, *(Bbd)*
- 9-10** GA Mother-Daughter Camp, *Camp Paron (WMU)*
- 19-23** Arkansas Baptist Assemblies, *Siloam Springs, (SS)*
- 19-23** RA Camp, *Camp Paron (Bbd)*
- 19-23** Super Summer Arkansas, *Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia (Ev)*
- 23-24** Man and Boy Camp, *Camp Paron (Bbd)*
- 26-28** GA Mini-Camps, *Camp Paron (WMU)*
- 26-29** Young Musicians Camp, *Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia (M)*
- 26-30** Arkansas Baptist Assemblies, *Siloam Springs (SS)*
- 28-30** GA Mini-Camps, *Camp Paron (WMU)*

Abbreviations:

Ad - Administration; Bbd - Brotherhood; CLC - Christian Life Council; CT - Church Training; Ev - Evangelism; M - Music; Mn - Missions; SS - Sunday School; SA - Stewardship/Annuity; Stu - Student; WMU - Woman's Missionary Union

Interested in a Ministry of Love?

Arkansas Baptist Home is looking for dedicated Christian singles, 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.

Minister Of Christian Education And Youth

Well-trained, experienced, spiritually-motivated person to oversee aggressive CE and Youth ministries in Southern Baptist church. Seminary training must include biblical theology. Anticipated ministries will be people and ministry centered, not program centered. Send summary of personal philosophy of Christian education with resume to Dr. William L. Probasco, MeadowBrook Baptist Church, 2525 Rainbow Dr., Gadsden, Alabama 35901.

ACTS Sale Fails

by Al Shackleford & Dan Martin
Baptist Press

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—Friends of ACTS, Inc. is unable to meet the financial requirements for its proposed purchase of the ACTS television network, the San Antonio, Texas-based organization said March 14.

Center (Chip) Atkins Jr., president of Friends of ACTS, said the group was unable to raise the \$34 million to purchase American Christian Television System from the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission, which launched the cable network in June of 1984.

The announcement was made during a closed-door 37-minute called meeting of the RTVC executive committee and followed a meeting of Friends of ACTS and a five-member RTVC committee to direct final negotiations and ensure trustee involvement in each step of the process.

Following the announcement, the executive committee voted "to continue to operate ACTS at its present programming level . . . as a mission outreach ministry of

the Southern Baptist Convention."

Richard T. McCartney, executive vice president of the RTVC, said the executive committee "instructed us to continue to operate the network. I asked them specifically if the decision closes the door to any other possible sale, and the answer was that it does not, but it does reflect the commitment to run both the commission and the network in a responsible way."

Jimmy R. Allen, president of RTVC and ACTS, said trustees indicated they will consider any other possible sale, but that "any deal that walks in will be considered on its own merits."

McCartney told Baptist Press he is "disappointed;" the sale did not go through "because it was the best thing for the commission and the network. However, it is not the end of the world. The RTVC can continue to operate the network and continue to provide access to local churches to the ACTS cable channels."

Allen said he has "mixed feelings. On one hand, I am grateful for the growth and effectiveness of ACTS during this year, but

I am frustrated we have been unable to take this step which would have given us a wider opportunity for Southern Baptist witness, more money and a multi-denominational approach."

Allen, who told trustees last year he would resign from the RTVC and would manage ACTS for the new corporation if the sale went through, said he "does not know what the implications are," after the sale fell through.

"I have felt the strategy of an ACTS network is the most effective way to preach the gospel to every person in this country. I will continue to pour my energy into that. I do not know what the future configuration of ACTS will be, but I do know that I have had a sense of vision that centers on this kind of strategy and I want to help this network do what it can do."

The RTVC president has spent much of his time in the last few months meeting with potential donors to Friends of ACTS, seeking to help bring about the sale.

Baptist Press was unable to contact Atkins for comment on the failure of Friends of ACTS to raise the money and to amplify on other details.

Friends of ACTS, a Texas for-profit corporation, did not divulge how much money it raised.



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Convention Uniform

Life Complete

by Michael D. Johnson, First Church, Pine Bluff

Basic passage: Luke 24:1-7; Colossians 1:15-20; 3:1-4

Focal passage: Colossians 3:1-4

Central truth: Christ's resurrection gives meaning to daily life.

"Christ the Lord is risen today, Alleluia!" The words to this hymn will be sung in countless churches this Easter Sunday. This not only is a statement of truth, but is the bedrock on which the Christian faith rests.

In the Luke passage, we are given the eyewitness accounts of the resurrection. In Colossians 1:15-20, Paul probably gives us an early hymn that presents Christ as the Lord of the universe (vv. 15-17) and Lord of the church (vv. 18-20). Remember that the Colosse Christians were fighting against false teachings. How appropriate for them and for us to remember that in the midst of tension, praising Christ can bring about new perspectives which help us reorder and renew our lives.

The focus of this last commentary on this unit of lessons, however, is on Colossians 3:1-4. Here Paul clearly deals with the meaning of Christ's resurrection for the individual.

Most of us, no doubt, equate the resurrection as a pledge of God's power to raise us from the dead at the end of the life. This certainly is true. We can, however, appreciate other dimensions of the resurrection in our daily lives.

The resurrection also is a picture of what happens to an individual at the point of conversion. A new life has been given! The old life burdened with sin is no more! This does not mean that the individual does not sin anymore, but we do have access to a power and overcome temptation.

The resurrection also gives us a new perspective on life here and now. Our minds dictate what we think about, say and do. Consequently, we having been raised with Christ, our minds should be filled with the things which are appropriate for one dedicated to Christ (v. 2).

Experiencing the resurrection today allows us to live life with more confidence. The new life of the Christian is not only assured to be one of victory over sin; it also is absolutely secure and protected (vv. 3-4).

Christ gives life worth and fullness. Christ came to make not only this life, but the life hereafter complete. Alleluia!

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Life and Work

The Resurrection

by Don Moseley, Sylvan Hills First Church, Sherwood

Basic passage: 1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 54-58

Focal passage: 1 Corinthians 15:26

Central truth: The resurrection is the fulfillment of God's redemptive plan for those who believe in Jesus Christ.

In verses 20-26 Paul points us to the resurrection of the Redeemer, the resurrection of the redeemed, and speaks of restoration that will occur.

Paul begins by reaffirming the resurrection of Christ. He says, "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept" (v. 20). The Corinthians believed that Christ was risen from the dead but they had some difficulty believing they would also be risen one day. Therefore, Paul uses this first fruits concept familiar to them. Before Israelites could harvest their crops they were to bring a sample, referred to as the first fruits, to the priests as an offering to the Lord (Lv. 23:10). The full harvest was not to be made until these first fruits were offered. The point of Paul's figure here was that Christ's own resurrection was first fruits of the harvest of the believing dead. He was the offering made on our behalf. The first fruits were the first installment of the harvest.

In verses 21-22 Paul reveals that just as Adam was the progenitor of everyone who dies, so Christ is progenitor of everyone who is raised to new life.

Paul speaks of the resurrection of the redeemed in verse 23b. "...afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." Now, Paul is speaking of the whole harvest which will then lead to restoration (vv. 24-26). The resurrection is an absolute necessity if God's redemptive plan is to be completed.

Paul concludes his arguments in verses 54-58. He speaks of a great transformation that must take place in verse 54a. The corruptible will be changed to that which is incorruptible. He speaks of a great triumph in verse 54b-56. Paul explains that death has left its sting in Christ, as a bee leaves its sting in its victim. Jesus Christ bore death's sting so that we would not have to bear it. Man may still face physical death. The real sting of death is man's hopelessness in his sin, but the believer's sin has been fully dealt with on the cross. Our triumph is in Christ! Thus, Paul concludes with a strong exhortation (v. 58).

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Bible Book

Victorious Faith

by Timothy L. Deahl, Olivet Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: John 20

Focal passage: John 20:11,14-21,26-29

Central truth: The resurrection is proof of Christ's victory over all foes.

Easter is V-Day (Victory Day) for the Christian. It is on this day, in commemoration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, that we celebrate ultimate triumph over all enemies. The tendency is to relegate such triumph only to the realm of "spiritual struggles" and the resurrection to eternal life.

However, the first Easter morning found Christ's followers struggling not with questions of doubts concerning the eternal state, but rather with heartache and emotional turmoil. The one they had followed for so long, the one whom they had trusted to bring in the kingdom, gone.

One might notice the different emotions mentioned by John. We see Mary weeping (vv. 11,15), the disciples hiding in fear (v. 19), and Thomas doubting (vv. 25,27). How quickly their emotions changed when confronted with the reality of the promised resurrection. Mary clutched Jesus and then hurried ecstatically to announce the news to the disciples (see Mt. 28:8). The disciples, themselves victims of skepticism (see Mk. 16:11), responded with rejoicing. And Thomas, poor Thomas, who always seems to get tagged with a label befitting all pragmatists, reacted with one of the finest affirmations of Christ's deity in Scripture (v. 28).

In all of this we learn the process—and progression—of faith. First, there is the teaching. None of these followers of Jesus was without prior instruction regarding the person of Christ or his promised resurrection. But faith is more than knowledge, more even than knowledge committed to memory.

Second, there is testing. Experience is not only the best teacher; often it is the only teacher. Faith is learned through experience. Therefore, we face hardships and testing in order that what has been taught may be called into action.

Finally, with testing comes triumph. A game is not won until it is played or a battle until it is fought. Christ's followers needed confirmation, and received it. Because of that, their faith grew. Rejoicing and more faith came in response.

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Convention Uniform

Worth the Cost

by Michael D. Johnson, First Church, Pine Bluff

Basic passage: Philippians 1:12-26

Focal passage: Philippians 1:12-18

Central truth: God can use adverse circumstances to advance the gospel.

Do you have someone or a group you can count on when all else fails? Paul did. The Christians at the church in Philippi were very special to Paul. On at least four occasions the church had taken special offerings for Paul. They also had sent one of their own, Epaphroditus, to serve Paul (2.25-30). Consequently, in Philippians we find Paul's warmest personal letter.

It is believed that Paul was in prison, or at least under house arrest, during the time this letter was written. Even though Paul was writing to friends, he also used the opportunity to give some fatherly advice.

In verses 12-18 of this first chapter, Paul gives testimony to the fact the God had allowed his imprisonment to advance the gospel. Those who guarded Paul had come to hear about Christ and the claim he has on all men. Others, who were already Christians, were encouraged by Paul's example and were motivated to speak out on behalf of Christ. Unfortunately there were some Christians who sought to undermine Paul's influence by teaching that Paul's imprisonment was evidence of failures (v. 17). Paul, however, rose above this kind of maneuvering and showed how God could still use him to present the claims of the gospel even in prison.

There is a lesson for us here. Paul knew nothing of personal jealousy; he knew nothing of personal resentment. As long as Christ was preached, Paul did not concern himself about what other preachers said about him. How often have we allowed jealousy or other feelings prohibit from serving Christ?

We are reminded of the great promise in Romans 8:28, that God can take the bad things that happen to us in life and cause good things to come from them. It is so easy to be a Christian when things are going our way! How much more meaningful, however, is our testimony for others when we are thrown life's curve balls. We need to remember that our response can have a positive or negative impact on others.

Hopefully, as we are tested by life our response will show others the true meaning of our faith.

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Life and Work

Requisites for Leaders

by L.B. Jordan, DOM, Red River Association, Arkadelphia

Basic passage: Joshua 1:2,7-9, 12-13a,16-17

Focal passage: Joshua 1:2,7-9

Central truth: Definite requirements are placed upon those who would lead God's people.

Good leadership is a key to success in God's work. God's people seldom are able to rise above or go beyond the views, ideals, or spiritual life style of their leaders. Several requirements for healthy, successful, spiritual leadership are to be seen in this story. We shall consider just two.

The first requisite is that the leader have a definite call and assignment from God for his position. Baptists have historically believed in having only God-called people serving as pastors and in other ministry positions.

I find great confidence and strength in knowing that the Lord has called me into ministry and given me definite assignments. Often there are severe hardships and discouragements for those of us who lead. Certainty of our call has kept many of us anchored in the midst of the storms. Joshua's call and assignment were clearly from God.

A second requisite in spiritual leadership is that of fidelity to the Word of God. The Lord's blessings are promised to those who obey the Holy Scripture. Obedience to its tenets and its spirit are necessary. This is especially true for those who would lead God's people to lives of victory and spiritual conquest.

For the leader who will follow the Lord, the battle is the Lord's. When a leader departs from the clear commands of the Lord, he walks in the flesh, with all its impotence, and defeat follows. The setting for this lesson is that of the failure of one of God's greatest men, Moses. He died before realizing the fulfillment of entering the land of promise. His failure to walk in strict obedience to God's instruction brought an act of God's judgment on even him (Dt. 32:48-52; 34:1-5).

Our Bold Mission Thrust, seeking to fulfill the Great Commission, demands the highest and best from our leaders. The conquest is not for a piece of land, but for the souls of lost human beings. God-called people, true to God's Word, are essential to success.

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Bible Book

The Torch Is Passed

by Diane Swaim, Immanuel Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: Acts 13:1-3,38-39,42-48

Focal passage: Acts 13:1-3,38-39,42-48

Central truth: From Jew to Gentile: The torch is passed.

The passing of the torch in the Olympic run is an event celebrated by thousands of sports enthusiasts. Even those of us who are not so exuberant in the area of sports feel a tinge of excitement as we watch the new runner receive from the former.

Acts 13 is the narrative of the gospel torch being passed from the Jew to the Gentile. Sadly, the victory sound is somewhat muffled by the angry protests of the Jews. In today's passages, we will view the process by which God began the Christian missionary movement in Antioch.

It was in the church at Antioch that our first missionaries were found. And they were not discovered sitting on church pews! Rather, they were ministering unto the Lord and fasting. God only moves us to further service when we are serving him from our present status.

The "First Baptist Church" of Antioch was certainly operating and functioning in God's plan. How can we know this? They were ministering and fasting, they heard from the Holy Spirit, they prayed for understanding and they obeyed. This is a natural procession in walking with God, both for the church and for the individual. But it is so often in one of these steps that a breakdown occurs.

The result of the obedience of these believers was that the first missionaries were ordained and sent out under the auspices of the Holy Spirit and the mother church.

In the last verses of our passage we observe the reaction of the Jews to Paul's message. It is the very same reaction of our modern world to the same message. They are divided. But even in rejection God's plan is recognized. It was his intent for the gospel to be offered first to the Jew and then to the Gentile. This is the pivotal point. The Gentiles received the torch of the gospel of light and carried it to the world.

As we carry the same message to today's world we need to be prepared for the same reactions. But do not be dismayed, God's message will not stop. As we carry the torch, the light will never be extinguished.

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'Lottie' Gifts Up 11 Percent

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—Southern Baptists gave nearly 11 percent more in 1988 than in 1987 to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions, according to projections based on a survey of selected state conventions.

The news offered a ray of hope to missions officials forced last year to trim budgets.

By March 9, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board had received about \$58 million in Lottie Moon gifts. Projections indicated that by the final tally May 31, the total could amount to \$77.5 million.

"I think this demonstrates that when Southern Baptists really are aware of the need in missions, they continue to respond," said FMB President R. Keith Parks. "When they really knew the budget difficulties we were facing, they responded generously."

Because of the expected increase, the board will be able to release about \$4.6 million immediately for urgent capital needs overseas. Money for these needs

usually is freed up after Jan. 1. This year, the money was held until the year's overseas operating expenses were met.

These capital needs include such basics as housing and transportation for missionaries and loan funds for overseas church construction, board officials said.

The annual Lottie Moon offering supports almost half of the \$167.7 million budget for the Southern Baptist foreign missions enterprise, which encompasses the work of about 3,850 missionaries in 114 nations. The offering is received by most Southern Baptist churches during the Christmas season, but the board keeps its books open for receipts from Baptist state conventions until the end of May.

If projections prove true, Lottie Moon giving could exceed by \$5 million the \$72.5 million that the board anticipated when it drew up its 1989 budget. Although the total would fall short of the \$84 million offering goal, the predicted increase of 10.96 percent would be the largest percentage gain since 1984.

This year's Lottie Moon receipts will not affect the board's 12 percent across-the-board budget cuts for 1989, Parks said. But if churches this year give as freely to the Cooperative Program, which supplies nearly half of the board's total receipts, 1990 could be financially brighter for foreign missions.

"A strong offering means we can project the 1990 budget as one we shouldn't have to cut back on," Parks said. "We're hopeful the Cooperative Program will be strong enough that we can have a solid budget picture for next year."

Age Limit Removed

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—More flexibility to consider older candidates for career missionary appointment will result from a revised statement of qualifications at the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

The updated document removes all references to upper age limits for missionary service. Former guidelines said candidates for career appointment could be no older than 45.

Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board staff members presented the changes in February to trustees on the board's mission management and personnel committee, which approved the new document.

"Less emphasis will be placed on the age of the candidate and more emphasis upon the candidate's ability to meet the assignment on the field," said Harlan Spurgeon, vice president for mission management and personnel.

The board still must consider certain factors in evaluating such candidates, Spurgeon noted. These include fluency in the necessary foreign language or the ability to learn the language, and the time required for a particular candidate to become proficient in a given assignment.

Of the 3,853 missionaries now assigned to 114 countries, 3,371, or more than 87 percent, are in the career category. The average age of career appointees in 1988 was 32.

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A SMILE OR TWO

A woman who runs a nursery school in a California town was delivering a station wagon load of kids home one day when a fire truck zoomed past. Sitting on the front seat was a dalmation.

The children fell to discussing the dog's duties. "They use him to keep the crowds back," said Matt.

"No," said Andy, "he's just for good luck."

Jamie brought the argument to an end. "They use the dog to find the hydrant!"

—Bits and Pieces



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A Chosen Child

by Art Toalston
 SBC Foreign Mission Board

TUR'AN, Israel (BP)—Noor, a frolicking child, is a rarity among Arabs in Israel. She's adopted.

Adoption raises few eyebrows in the United States, but it's nearly unheard of in Tur'an, Noor's new hometown in heavily Arab northern Israel, as well as in Arab culture in general.

That doesn't bother Noor's adoptive mother, Fayrouz Abu Samra. No one, she says, can know "how much I love this child."

"Except someone else who has adopted," adds Ray Hicks, a Southern Baptist representative who once lived in the village.

Hicks and his wife, Bev, understand Fayrouz's elation. The Cincinnati couple has adopted three children. Their example stirred Fayrouz and her husband, Micah, to dare to think about adopting a child.

The Hickses worked with the Baptist center in Tur'an for several years, and Fayrouz saw a naturalness in the love expressed in the adopted family. "It's a possibility for us, too," she remembers telling her husband. "We're believers and they're believers. Why can't we do the same thing?" The couple had been childless about 10 years. Three years later, Noor was in their arms.

One Easter morning, adoption officials "told us to get a bottle ready," Fayrouz recounts. "We had two reasons to celebrate"—Christ's resurrection and a certainty "that this is what God wanted us to do... for our lives and for the life of a child."

Fayrouz and Micah wondered what reactions they would face in the community. They often had encountered puzzled looks after mentioning that they might adopt a child. "People didn't know anything about it," Fayrouz says. But the couple was pleasantly surprised when, in traditional village fashion, Christian and Muslim friends came to offer their blessings and bring gifts for the infant.

"All we want," Micah says, "is good health so we can raise Noor to be the girl God wants her to be."

The couple is thinking about adopting again, Fayrouz says. She wants another girl; Micah wants a boy.

For Ray and Bev Hicks, the frustration of childlessness has been supplanted by adoption-related joy encompassing, in Bev's words, "some of the times we have felt God's presence more than in any other experiences."

Their adoptions haven't been encumbered with paperwork and legal tie-

ups, either, in part because they were willing to accept children with interracial backgrounds. They adopted their first child, Sommer, before being appointed as Baptist representatives to Israel 10 years ago. They have since adopted two other children, Melakee and Micah. Arrangements for each child were handled by the Sellers Baptist Home and Adoption Center in New Orleans.

Hicks, meanwhile, has become administrator of the Baptist Convention in Israel, the organization of Southern Baptist representatives in the country. The family now lives in an Arab community near Jerusalem.

Many societies still have hangups about adoption, the Hickses say. Some parents tell their adopted children to keep quiet about it. Sometimes people aren't told they were adopted until they reach young adulthood, when such news can be traumatic.

To the Hickses, however, adoption is central in the teachings of the New Testament. "I think it is one of the least emphasized concepts within the church today," Hicks says. Jesus, for example, was adopted by Joseph. Christians are "the children of God. We are adopted, chosen. Jesus said, 'You did not choose me, but I chose you.'"

The Hickses are trying to explain the positive aspects of adoption to Sommer, Melakee and Micah. "They are going to hear the negative things whether they want to or not. They are going to hear things that, at times, are cruel from kids who just don't understand," Hicks acknowledges.

"But we feel God has given us the opportunity to give three kids a special foundation so they can cope with the world that will be facing them. The kids will always have a safe haven here. They will always have support and love. Those things can overcome a lot of problems." Equally important is teaching them "how they can become believers in the Lord Jesus."

"We feel so positively that God brought us all together—each of our kids and us—for a very special reason and in a very special way."

Opportunities for ministering to childless couples seem to abound whenever the Hickses return to the United States. "It is really hard to understand what somebody is going through," Hicks explains, "if you have never been through that process—all the tests, feeling like God has abandoned you because you can't have biological children."

"I can't imagine loving a biological child any differently than we love our children," he reflects. "They are special in our eyes and in God's eyes, which is no different from a biological child."

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