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Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

4-27-1989

April 27, 1989

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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Facing AIDS

Arkansas Baptist

April 27, 1989

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COMMISSION '89

Hearing God's Call

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FMB Photo / Stanley Leary

Hearing God's Call 6

More than 2500 people heard God calling them to missions commitments ranging from giving to going during Commission '89, the Foreign Mission Board appointment service held in Little Rock April 11.

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IT'S UPLIFTING

From Satan To Christ

ATLANTA (BP)—God's miracles triumphed over the power of Satan as 45 people came to Christ during a spring break mission trip to Atlanta, according to Baptist Student Union volunteers from Lamar University in Beaumont, Texas.

Lamar was one of many Baptist Student Union groups whose members spent their spring breaks sharing Jesus in cities from Atlanta to Chicago to Syracuse, N.Y.

Lamar BSUs recently had experienced God's power, as 23 students accepted Christ through their "Share Jesus Now" ministry in February and March, said Director Cliff Mouser.

The goal of Share Jesus Now was to have 89,000 trained witnesses in more than 3,000 Texas Baptist churches sharing their faith with 1 million unchurched Texans in February and March.

Since school started last fall, 43 professions of faith in Christ had been recorded through Lamar BSU ministries.

But Lamar BSU members said that when they arrived on the campus of an Atlanta high school, they began to feel the oppressive power of Satan. Many of the high school youth appeared to be involved in the occult or Satan worship, they said.

Kerry Menefee, who led three people to faith in Christ in a grocery store during

Share Jesus Now, was spit on and kicked by two young men involved in the occult.

"Our group went back to the hotel that night feeling that for the first time they had seen spiritual warfare," said Mouser. "At first they felt defeated, but we began praying and confessing our own sins and lack of preparation."

The next day, 12 high school students believed in Christ. That night Menefee and another BSU volunteer, Jay Givens, were praying for the students who had kicked and spit on her. At the same time the BSUs were praying for them, both young men awakened and were unable to go back to sleep.

One of them decided to go for a walk. On his porch he discovered a Bible. "No one knows how it got there," said Mouser, "but it was opened to John 3:16."

The next day both students who had harassed Menefee went to her and asked her how to become Christians. They and 22 others at the school believed in Christ.

Lamar BSUs also led 21 other people to faith in Jesus as they served on college campuses and with mission churches in the Atlanta area, doing repairs, backyard Bible clubs and surveys.

"It opened our students' hearts and eyes to thinking more about home missions . . ." said Laurin Collard, Baylor BSU missions coordinator.

GOOD NEWS!

The Fire That Burned

Leviticus 6:12-13

On a ship the least favored watch is the midwatch. It is that time from midnight to 4 a.m. when it is usually dark and often bitterly cold. There is always the realization that other men are warm and comfortable in their bunks. Those who work the midnight shift at various industrial plants experience similar sensations. Most of us have no desire to spend our days in darkness.

The tabernacle was never clothed in darkness. God told the priests that the fire on the altar was to burn continually: "It must never go out" (Lv. 6:13, TLB). The light from the altar was always present. What was God's message from this eternal flame?

The fire burned continually on the altar reminding the people that God is approachable—The Lord wanted the people to seek his face. He wanted to com-

mune with them. The fire on the altar was God's invitation for a meaningful relationship.

The fire burned continually on the altar reminding the people that sacrifice is necessary—The people were to approach God through the sacrifice of a spotless animal. As they laid their hands on the head of the animal prior to the sacrifice, they were saying in essence that they were offering themselves to God in sincere repentance and complete obedience.

The fire burned continually on the altar reminding the people that forgiveness of sin is a gift of God—The fire on the altar was a light of hope. It was a symbol of God's forgiving power.

The fire of God is still burning at the cross. When we come to the cross of Christ in a spirit of repentance and faith, his blood becomes a covering for our sins.

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The Call to Serve

J. EVERETT SNEED

Some Christians have preconceived notions of how a preacher is to look and sound. Others believe that one should consider entering the ministry only if he can't do anything else. Yet, the Bible clearly declares that God calls all kinds of people into his service. God's call is by grace alone and may not conform to the expectations of people. The one who appears to offer little or no promise for success may become one of God's most effective servants. The keys for usability in the Master's vineyard are surrender, commitment, and dedication.

The response of those who are called varies greatly. The Bible tells us of many who responded reluctantly. Moses offered an array of excuses for not serving in Egypt as the human agent in the deliverance of Israel from bondage and even stubbornly asked God to send someone else (Ex. 4:13). Others who were reluctant to accept God's call included Jeremiah, Saul, and Gideon.

Others whose call is described in the Scripture responded with enthusiasm. Isaiah apparently volunteered for his divine mission even before he understood what it involved. He said, "... here am I; send me" (Is. 6:8). Ezekiel responded positively and found the word he proclaimed as sweet as honey (Ez. 3:3).

The backgrounds of those who are called into God's service are as varied as their responses. The Bible describes the backgrounds of many who became servants of the Lord. Moses was uniquely qualified for his task by having lived in the Pharaoh's court and in the region of Sinai for periods of 40 years each. Amos, on the other hand, had no apparent preparation for his task. He said, "I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was an herdsman and a gatherer of sycamore fruit" (Am. 7:14). God's call was extended to people of many and varied experiences of which the following are a few examples: David, the shepherd; Peter, James and John, the fishermen; Matthew, the tax collector; and Paul, the philosopher.

When one studies the biblical examples of those whom God called, many of our contemporary myths are exploded. First, it is obvious that God calls people who are or could be quite successful in secular occupations. Although, God can and does take the weak and confound the mighty, it is simply not true that God only calls



those who are inadequate and incapable in to his service.

God calls people with a variety of gifts into full-time Christian service. These gifts include herald, teacher, shepherd and evangelist. Ideally, a pastor will possess all of these to some extent. The work of pastor is wide and varied and calls for many gifts, as well as total commitment.

It is certain that God does call men to specific ministries. The opportunities for ministry today are wide and varied. Traditionally, a call to ministry included pastor, missionary and perhaps a few other areas of service. Today full time Christian vocational ministry includes literally dozens of opportunities. Among these are work with music, education, youth, administration, teaching, etc. The areas are as vast as the work of local churches and the deno-

mination.

In addition to those who are called into full time vocational service, it is noteworthy that all Christians are called to minister or to serve. In the very act of salvation, every Christian is given a gift which he is to use in the furtherance of the gospel. After listing some of the specific callings of full time vocational ministers, Paul states the purpose of these individuals, as he said, "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Ep. 4:12). Hence the full-time vocational worker is to provide training which will enable other Christians to exercise their gifts or callings.

It is obvious that one does not have to resist God's call for a period of time in order to authenticate a divine call. Such a false concept can lead young people to question God's direction in their lives and may result in much heartache. It is the responsibility of our churches and leaders to nurture and encourage those whom God is calling.

Encouragement should include counsel and direction for preparation. God expects those whom he has called to prepare themselves to the best of their ability. Southern Baptists are fortunate to have many fine colleges and six seminaries which assist in proper preparation for vocational ministry.

Finally, God does not provide a road map with the call. Each step is a step of faith to be taken one at a time. Moses didn't know all that was ahead of him when God called him. But God was with him all the way. People of all types called by God can have this same assurance of God's guidance, if they are committed and surrendered to him.

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NUMBER 14

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BOB PARKER

Today's Issues



Child or Criminal?

It would be extremely interesting to know how many dollars are spent today on education compared to those spent on crime. I read recently that a 1960 study revealed that back then crime cost \$1.11 each year for every \$1 spent on education in America. It would likely be much more now!

Disregard for authority in every area of our society, issuing from lack of respect for the moral law of God, is the root cause of crime.

The increasing flood of pornography and obscenity certainly has not diminished the number of criminals in our society who are jailed or imprisoned for sex-related offenses. Right here in Arkansas you may be assured that the recent opening up by legislative action of additional opportunities for consumption of alcohol and engaging in parimutuel gambling will not lessen, but increase, the cost of crime.

We are thrilled at the prospects of religious awakening this fall as Billy Graham and his team come to Arkansas, but we must now sincerely pray for greater respect for the Lord. Doing such will help tremendously in putting education and other priorities in proper perspective.

Remedies have never been easy, but with God's help we can more positively say "no" to the powers of darkness and "yes" to civic righteousness. Righteousness still exalts a nation, and sin is still a reproach to any people. (Pr. 14:34). If such is restored in Arkansas and our nation, then our concern for children will outweigh concern for the criminal. We must pray and work for greater respect for moral authority. "Immoral" authority absolutely must have considerably less credibility and defeat in the minds of the young.

Serious setbacks and lack of serious interest in education of our young contributes to having fewer students excel in scientific pursuits. In a technological age such contributes to the weakening of our national security. For the sake of coming generations, should the Lord tarry, we must let the King of Kings and Lord of Lords take precedence when it comes down to who's in charge!

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

MICKIE PAGE

Woman's Viewpoint

Great Gift, Great Responsibility

It seems my most trying times involve my children. Also, the happiest, proudest, most joyful, and thankful times center around the raising of the family God has given me.

The Psalmist says, "children are a gift of the Lord" and I wholeheartedly agree. I also realize that I've not yet found a guide on how to make my blessings always act like blessings. Most of the time they are diligent, hard working, sharing, obedient, thoughtful, and giving. On the other hand, they sometimes get tired, lazy, frustrated, annoyed, selfish, sad, angered, and hurt. The work of enjoying our blessings seems to grow with the number of children in the family.

Godly character is not a natural inclination nor is it easily developed. Thankfully, the Bible gives us some guidelines on raising Godly children.

First, we must acknowledge the fact that our children are truly God's gift to us. As we view them as God's reward and blessing we begin to realize how special they are to God.

With this great gift comes a great responsibility. We are commanded to "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." This responsibility

belongs to parents. It wasn't given to the school teacher, the Sunday School teacher, youth director, or even the pastor. A few hours of religious instruction a week can not be relied upon to create a love and thirst for God in our children.

Secondly, we should daily and diligently pray for each child. We need God's Spirit and power to work with each unique personality.

Third, we must bring direction and wisdom to our family by reading and teaching God's word on a regular basis. Man's wisdom is not sufficient to accomplish the mighty task before us.

Lastly, it is imperative that we become involved in a church that believes in the absolute necessity of teaching, training, and disciplining of children. We also must seek fellowship with Christian families that have the same desire. The friendship and support you receive from such relationships will be a source of encouragement for you and your children.

Mickie Page is an active member of South Highland Church in Little Rock and is home schooling her three daughters.

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(adults and youth as leaders)

State Clinic

May 6, 1989

9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Levy Baptist Church

3501 Pike Ave.
North Little Rock

Family Faces AIDS

by Celeste Pennington
MissionsUSA

BRYAN, Texas (BP)—At age 5, Jerry Arterburn became a Christian. During college, he worked at Glorieta Baptist Conference Center, sold Bibles door-to-door, taught Sunday school, dated the daughter of Southern Baptist missionaries and preached at youth revivals.

Even after becoming involved in a homosexual lifestyle, Arterburn never felt comfortable. He eventually left that lifestyle.

But it was too late. "The pneumonia came," he recalled. "Then came AIDS."

For more than a year, Arterburn withheld the doctor's diagnosis from his parents. "I didn't want them to bear the burden that their son had AIDS," he reasoned.

As his health deteriorated, Arterburn resolved to commit suicide by carbon monoxide poisoning, "but something wouldn't let me do that," he said. Instead, he drove himself to the hospital.

"I just prayed at that point: 'I've made a mess of my life, God. You take over. I'm getting out of the driver's seat.'"

Clara Arterburn remembers the first time she ventured to Houston where her son was receiving treatment. While she wanted to be with him, she admitted, "I didn't want to go in that AIDS hospital."

Neither could she tell friends her son had AIDS. "My pride was such that it wouldn't allow me to say anything but that he had leukemia," she said.

Richard Maples, pastor of First Baptist Church in Bryan, Texas, remembers clearly the day Walter Arterburn called and said, "Clara and I need to visit with you." They explained that their son had AIDS.

After that, during Wednesday night prayer meetings, members were informed of the younger Arterburn's condition. "During that time I deliberately did not preach a sermon related to AIDS," Maples said. "The Arterburns were living a better sermon than I could ever preach."

In their pain, the Arterburns gradually turned for comfort and support to neighbors, including some who attend their church. Neighbors responded with concern and love.

"We feel our Christianity is more practical than just sitting in a Sunday school classroom listening," said neighbor Bill McCune. "We couldn't condemn Jerry. This could have happened to anybody's son."

During the months before the young man died in June 1988, neighbors often brought flowers and fresh-baked goodies to the Arterburn home. A Sunday school

class donated blood. His brothers, Terry and Steve, phoned daily from their homes in Tennessee and California.

The tight network of love that formed around him became as vital to his survival as AZT, the medication he took to fight the debilitating effects of AIDS.

Pushing fear and pride aside, the Arterburn family grew closer during his three-year illness, they said.

Formerly a successful architect, he began reordering his life. He sold his \$500,000 home and his BMW and began a kind of itinerant ministry, speaking at churches and visiting AIDS patients in hospitals.

He rode up and down the hospital elevator four or five times before he could summon the courage to begin helping others with AIDS, he said.

The first man he visited "had arms and legs about this big around," he recalled, making a circle with his thumb and fingers. "His legs were drawn up. There wasn't a hair on his head. It probably shocked him that anyone came in."

"He said, 'Who are you?'"

"I said, 'I'm Jerry. I'm an AIDS outpatient. I'm here to visit you.'" The man broke into tears. He hadn't had a visitor in five weeks.

"The people of the church need to unite and take this disease on, head to head, and help these people who think they have no hope."

In his final months, with the help of his brother Steve, Jerry Arterburn struggled to complete his book, *How Will I Tell My Mother? A Christian's Struggle with Homosexuality and AIDS*. He included happy memories and painful ones.

Although he died at age 37 after a three-year bout with AIDS, he lived longer than most people diagnosed with AIDS.

He lived long enough to see his book published. He lived long enough to see a former girlfriend begin ministering to people with AIDS in Dallas. He lived long enough to answer letters of parents and sons dealing with homosexuality.

How Will I Tell My Mother? is now in its second U.S. printing. A United Kingdom edition was printed this past summer. Tynedale House included a condensed version in its October 1988 "Christian Reader." A German contract has been signed. The book is being reviewed in China, most European countries and Latin America. And a Dutch film of his testimony has been distributed in 31 countries.

"There's no sorrow like losing a child," Clara Arterburn said. "We believe the Lord is turning something bad into something good."

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FBC's Most Wanted List

Former staff and members of First Baptist Church, North Little Rock, needed for 100 Year Homecoming Celebration, April 30, 1989. Any information on their whereabouts, call 753-1121.

Peggy Beason, Craig Bell, Jim Boyd, C.E. Carroll, Roy Hilton, Leland Hurt, Terry Jackson, Larry & Linds Parker, Charles Sewell, Simmons, Mrs. T.A. Spencer, Clarence White, Dr. Ron White.

Hearing God's Call

251 Respond, 50 Commissioned at Statehouse Convention Center

by Mark Kelly

Managing Editor, Arkansas Baptist

Although its impact cannot yet be fully measured, Commission '89 will be remembered as a decisive event in Arkansas Baptist history.

Almost 7,000 Arkansas Baptists overflowed the Statehouse Convention Center in Little Rock on Tuesday evening, April 11, for the commissioning of 50 new foreign missionaries. And when Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board President R. Keith Parks extended an invitation for the congregation to make commitments to foreign missions, more than 250 individuals responded.

Parks later said that the response, which included 110 persons interested in exploring career missions, was perhaps the largest recorded since the Foreign Mission Board began holding appointment services away from Richmond, Va., in 1969.

Since the commitments made during the service included praying for and increasing financial support of missions, as well as investigating a call to career missions, the two-hour service can be expected to dramatically shape the future of Arkansas Baptists for many years to come.

Many of the decisions registered during the service could result in people moving into the missionary force very soon, explained Don Moore, executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. He

noted that the 23 couples and 28 singles responding for career missions could be on the field in two or three years if they are successful in pursuing appointment.

In addition, mission support also will be affected by the commitments made during the service, Moore said. "With 7,000 people more knowledgeable and more concerned about missions, it is very likely their churches will be convinced to increase their Cooperative Program and Lottie Moon offerings," he explained.

And other commitments to career missions will be registered later by the 81 individuals who requested more information without making a public decision, he added.

Led by Charles Wright and Craig Hamilton of Ouachita Baptist University, a 500-voice choir and a 60-piece orchestra set the mood for the service with a 30-minute prelude of inspirational music. An air of quiet expectation prevailed as the convention floor filled to capacity and a remote overflow room had to be opened.

The appointment ceremony began with a parade of flags representing the 114 countries in which Southern Baptist missionaries serve. The flag-bearers were followed by an honor guard which escorted the 50 missionary candidates into the hall. Both the flag corps and the honor guard were composed of teenage members of youth mission organizations.

The candidates took the stage as the congregation sang "We've A Story to Tell to the Nations," and eyes moistened all across the auditorium as the crowd took up the familiar refrain: "To God be the glory, great things he hath done. . . ."

"Arkansas Baptists have had some high hours before, but perhaps none as high as this," said Executive Director Don Moore as he welcomed the candidates and members of the Foreign Mission Board to

FMB photo / Stanley Leary



A 500-voice choir added inspiration.

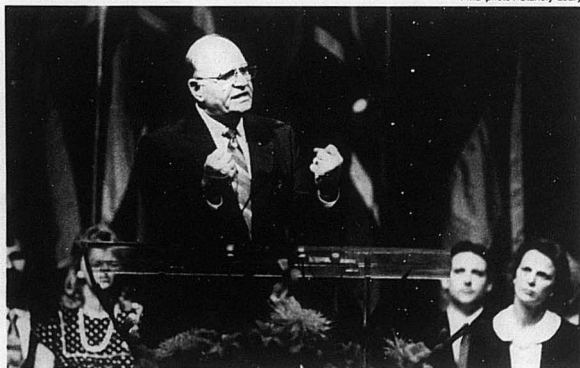
the meeting. Moore noted that the capacity attendance was a record for Arkansas Baptists, eclipsed only by the 25,000 persons who assembled at War Memorial Stadium in Little Rock for a 1976 Life and Liberty Rally.

Jack Bledsoe, director of missions in Carey Association and one of Arkansas' two representatives on the Foreign Mission Board, read Scripture and offered an invocation, and Paul Sanders, pastor of Little Rock's Geyer Springs First Church and the other Arkansas board member, introduced the candidates.

The bulk of the two-hour service was then occupied with testimonies from the candidates about how God had called them to missions. Among those sharing were four Arkansas couples: Fred and Gayla Parker, Stephen and Kathy Dewbre, Dr. David and Faith Posey, and Robert and Cheryl Headrick.

During her brief testimony, Kathy Dewbre tearfully expressed her gratitude for her parents, who took her faithfully to church as a youngster. She recalled a childhood promise she made to God that

FMB photo / Stanley Leary



Board President Keith Parks delivered a dramatic charge to the crowd.

she would serve as a missionary if he would just help her father, who had suffered a heart attack. Years later, she said she came to understand the difference between keeping that obligation and being called to mission service. She explained that in that realization she found the freedom to give herself without reserve to foreign missions.

After the testimonies, members of the Foreign Mission Board took a standing vote to approve the candidates, and FMB Chairman Mark Cortis asked the congregation to also indicate by standing their intention of "holding the ropes" for the new missionaries as they departed for their fields of service.

FMB President Parks then presented certificates of appointment to each new missionary and delivered a charge based on Matthew chapter 10.

Parks told the new missionaries that, although missionary appointment represented an important step in their

ABN photo / Millie Gill



FMB photo / Stanley Leary

Fred and Gayla Parker were among the Arkansas couples sharing testimonies.

"If Jesus had been incarnated today as he was 20 centuries ago and that person was you, would your life be as it is now?"

Yet just such an incarnation in each Christian's life is precisely what God wants, he explained. "The Lord Jesus intends to dwell in us and reach the entire world for which he died," Parks said.

The American culture wants a religion which gives to believers, rather than calling them to sacrifice, Parks observed. But Christ clearly called his followers to give themselves generously to God.

"The Lord comes to us tonight, not asking us to take more, but to give more," Parks concluded. "We stand before Christ as beggars, asking that more be given us, and the nail-scarred hands extend back toward us, saying 'What wouldst thou give me?'"

As the invitation opened, people streamed down the aisles. Older adults, teenagers,

singles, and couples with children, they all came forward, holding in their hands the commitment cards which would register their decisions. Many of the new missionaries dabbed tears from their eyes as they watched wave upon wave flow into the counseling area.

The next day, Parks told an assembly of the meeting's organizers that the "remarkably fine response" was evidence that people had "come praying and with great expectations" for a movement of God in the meeting. He noted that the Arkansas response was certainly unusual for a meeting of its size. Many other states, which have more congregations and larger convention centers, regularly draw 12,000 to 14,000 persons when they host such appointment services.

Don Moore said Arkansas Baptist leaders had requested six years ago that an appointment service be held in the state and had

been planning for the event since early 1987. The only other time such a service had been held in Arkansas was in 1974.

"We do not want it to be so long before we have another appointment service in Arkansas," said Moore. "So we are going to ask the Foreign Mission Board to consider coming again in 1995 or 1996."



FMB photo / Stanley Leary



A 60-piece orchestra set the mood for the service.

Many lives were deeply affected.

Christian lives, they should not believe they had reached the pinnacle of growth and maturity.

He warned the appointees that many would want to put them on a pedestal and praise them for their commitment. But he cautioned them that servanthood—indeed slavery to Jesus Christ—is the only path to Christian greatness.

Turning to the congregation, Parks said that God is able to bless his people only to the extent that they are willing to be used by him to bring the world to Jesus Christ.

He asked members of the congregation:

Youth Issues Institute

Helping youth win out over the tremendous pressures which face them was the focus of an all-day training session in Little Rock April 8.

The Youth Issues Institute drew 450 youth leaders and workers from 155 Arkansas Baptist churches to Little Rock's Geyer Springs First Church for an introduction to new material designed to help them strengthen and encourage teenagers struggling with moral issues.

The material was developed by the Executive Board of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention as a resource specially designed for congregations which have no youth minister on staff.

About 90 percent of Arkansas' almost 1,300 Southern Baptist churches have no staff member which ministers to teenagers, said Don Moore, executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, during the opening session of the workshop.

Believing these congregations had a special need for resources to help them minister to youth, Moore and ABCS Christian Life Council Director Bob Parker recruited five Arkansas Baptist leaders to write material dealing with five "hot issues" facing today's teens: premarital sex-

ual choices, drug abuse, suicide, pornography, and alcohol. The material was compiled, along with teaching suggestions, in a notebook which was introduced for the first time in the April 8 workshop.

The pressures facing teens today are more serious than ever, with alcohol-related traffic accidents and suicide leading as causes of deaths among teenagers nationwide, Moore said. He told the audience it is imperative that churches understand the gravity of the situation and take steps to help youth in their communities.

The Youth Issues Institute material was developed in the hope that every youth worker in Arkansas could be equipped to deal with these issues, he said.

The material is divided into five 45-minute sessions, each one dealing with a different topic. While it can be used in youth Church Training or Vacation Bible School, suggestions also have been prepared for implementing it during an overnight retreat.

The material was edited by Luke Flesher, minister of youth at Park Hill Church in

North Little Rock, who also wrote the chapter on alcohol. Arliiss Dickerson, director of the Baptist Student Union at Arkansas State University in Jonesboro, wrote the material on premarital sexual choices. The chapter on drug abuse was authored by Stan Coleman, youth minister at Springdale First Church. Randy Brantley, youth minister at Central Church in Jonesboro, wrote the material on suicide. David Steele of North Little Rock developed the chapter on pornography.

Youth communicator Rick Caldwell of Little Rock delivered the opening and closing messages for the April 8 meeting. Vicki Harrell, a model and former Miss South Carolina, shared her testimony and sang.

Caldwell told the assembled youth workers that teen life was not like "Happy Days with Ralph and Potsy" anymore. Instead of living on a playground, today's youth are on a battleground where they are fighting for their very survival, he said.

A follow-up seminar has been planned for April 20-21, 1990. Ministering with youth in crisis will be the subject of the workshop, which will be led by Richard Ross, a youth ministry consultant with the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville.

March Cooperative Program Report

Received \$1,093,215.89
Budget \$1,083,333.33
Over \$9,882.56

Year-to-date
Under \$91,224.55

Same time last year
Over \$68,239.48

That's more like it. Our churches gave more than the budget requirements for March. But, before you get too excited, please note that we have reach only 97.19 percent of budget requirements for the year. Also, you can see that we are almost 11 percent under gifts for the same period of 1988.

Let me encourage you to promote the Cooperative Program throughout the year. Cooperative Program Month is October, but you don't have to wait until then. Write to your state office if you need materials.—Jimmie Sheffield, associate executive director



Church destroyed—Beech Street Church in Gurdon, constructed in 1986 at an estimated cost of \$800,000, was destroyed by fire Wednesday morning, April 12. The fire apparently started in a utility room and spread quickly throughout the attic of the 21,000 square foot building. Church secretary Wendy Plyler, who was working in the building, was notified of the fire by a neighbor and reported it before escaping uninjured. The Gurdon Fire Department was assisted in fighting the blaze by units from Nevada County, Arkadelphia, Curtis, and DeGray. Church members and onlookers were able to get some equipment and records out of the office, in addition to two pianos. Gurdon Methodist Church offered its building for prayer services. Larry Nix, chairman of deacons said, "We're going to build back, I imagine. We're not going to let something like this stop us."

Ramsey Elected to Post

Jack Ramsey of Russellville has been elected director of the church extension program of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention's Missions Department. He began serving April 1.

Ramsey was serving under Southern Baptist Home Mission Board appointment as a church extension field consultant prior to his election by the ABSC Operating Committee. He fills a vacancy left by the election of Floyd Tidsworth Jr. as associate vice-president of the church extension section of the Home Mission Board.

A native of Swain in Newton County, Ramsey is a graduate of Arkansas Tech University in Russellville and attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. In addition to a pastorate in Tulsa, Okla., Ramsey has pastored Arkansas congregations in Lamar, Pine Bluff, Harrison, and White Hall. He



was director of missions for North Arkansas Association from 1982 to 1984. He was appointed to his consultant's position in February 1987.

In addition to serving on the ABSC Executive Board, Ramsey has been a regular on the staff of Arkansas Baptist Assembly in Siloam Springs. He has served as a vice-president of the Pastor's Conference and twice has been a member of the state convention's Tellers Committee.

He is married to the former Modena Martin. They have three grown children.

Ramsey told the *Arkansas Baptist* he hopes to see Arkansas Baptists reach their goal of starting 45 new congregations in 1989 and establish another 30 new congregations each year from 1990 through the end of the century. Those goals are part of the Church Arkansas emphasis which seeks to start 370 new churches by the year 2000.

Discovering "underchurched" communities and developing resources to start new congregations in those areas will be another priority Ramsey will focus on in his new responsibility.

ABN photo / Millie Gill



(Left to right) Inman, Bruce, Rhynes

BSU Officers Elected

Three Arkansas college students have been elected to leadership posts in the state Baptist Student Union.

Wendell Bruce of West Memphis, a student at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, was elected state BSU president. Kevin Inman of Blytheville, a student at Arkansas State University in Jonesboro, was elected vice-president. Dana Rhynes of Russellville, a student at Arkansas Technical University in Russellville, was elected secretary.

The officers were elected during the annual Leadership Training Conference, which was held at Camp Paron March 30-April 2. The event provides training for officers of campus Baptist Student Unions. Students headed for summer missions assignments also were commissioned.

This year's LTC program featured Carolyn Teague, a consultant with the student ministries department of the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville, Tenn., and The Company, a drama group from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

Ad Was Wrong

An advertisement in the April 13 *Arkansas Baptist* for a Parenting in the Minister's Home conference should have said that the workshop will be held May 1-2 at Central Church in North Little Rock.



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People

Hershael York has been called as pastor of Marion First Church where he has served for three months as interim pastor. He is a graduate of the University of Kentucky in Lexington and Mid-America Seminary where currently he is pursuing a doctor of theology degree in New Testament. He has served as associate pastor in churches in Michigan and Kentucky.

William R. Brown began serving April 9 as pastor of First Church in Morrilton, going there from Bayou Meto Church in Jacksonville where he had served for more than 18 years.

Harold and Audrey Gately of Fayetteville will return May 1 from a mission trip to Korea where they served as missionaries for 17 years. Gately is director of missions for Washington-Madison Association.

Doug Huskey is serving as pastor of Rea Valley Church at Flippin.

Jim Glover has resigned as pastor of Life Line Church at Pleasant Plains.

Bobby Biggers, a member of First Church in Crossett, recently committed his life to the preaching ministry. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Bob Biggers.

Tommy Monk has resigned as pastor of Shepherd Hill Church at Pine Bluff.

Bobby Keen, a member of First Church of Patterson, made a commitment to the preaching ministry.

Mark Henkle has joined the staff of Trinity Church in Searcy as minister of music and youth, coming there from Casa Grande, Ariz. He and his wife, Becky, have a daughter.

Harold C. Seefeldt of Shreveport, La., died April 10 at age 91. A former Brinkley resident, he was a retired director of the Arkansas Baptist Home for Children, and a former member of the ABSC Executive Board, Arkansas Baptist Hospital Board of Trustees, the Arkansas State Social Workers Association, and the America Public Welfare Association. He was an honorary life member of the Childcare Executives Association of the Southern Baptist Convention and the Southwestern Association of Executives of Homes for Children. Survivors are a son, Harold C. Seefeldt Jr. of



York



Brown

San Angelo, Texas; a daughter, Vernelle S. Rose of Shreveport; eight grandchildren; and 16 great-grandchildren.

Lawson Hatfield of Malvern has closed an eight-month interim pastorate at First Church of Star City.

Scott Duke, a member of South Highland Church in Little Rock, recently was licensed by the church to the gospel ministry prior to his enrollment this fall in Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Thomas O. Howell, a certified public accountant in Pine Bluff and a member of Pine Bluff First Church, has been elected as president of the Arkansas Society of CPAs.



The Lancaster Road Church, Little Rock, held a noteburning for \$62,000 bonded indebtedness April 9. The message for the noteburning service was delivered by Glenn Hickey, director of missions for the Pulaski Association. Others participating in the service included ABN Editor J. Everett Sneed and Pastor John Ascraft. Pictured (left to right) are Ascraft, Alma Lewis, Roberta Underhagen, Lolean Liner and Ruby Knight.

Roy Nix of North Little Rock is serving as a Mission Service Corps volunteer in Corpus Christi, Texas. He has joined the staff of the Corpus Christi Association as an associational consultant to assist churches in reaching goals for starting new works, implementing the New Missions Development Program as approved by the association in 1986.

Louis Woods is serving Bay First Church as interim pastor.

Jerry Holcomb is serving as pastor of Mount Zion Church, Paragould.

Mike Nichols has joined the staff of Spradling Church in Fort Smith as minister of youth. He is a student a Westark Community College.

Doris Mitchell Lisemby and Eric Reddish of Arkadelphia have been assigned by the Home Mission Board to serve through Mission Service Corps as area consultants for Arkansas' District Seven which includes Caddo River, Little River, Red River, and Southwest Associations. They were commissioned for their services March 12 at Second Church in Arkadelphia.

Eugene Ledell Bailey has accepted a call to serve as pastor of First Church in Augusta, going there from Woodlawn

ABN photo / J. Everett Sneed

Church in Little Rock where he has served as pastor for more than eight years.

Larry Barnes has resigned as pastor of Cole Ridge Church near Blytheville to serve as pastor of First Church in Imboden.

R.H. Dorris recently was honored by Baring Cross Church in North Little Rock in appreciation of the many services he has performed for the church. Dorris is the retired Missions Department director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

Russell Caldwell will join the staff of Markham Street Church in Little Rock May 1 as minister of education and single adults. He is a graduate of East Central University in Ada, Okla., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Sardis Bever has announced his retirement from Kelso Church, Rohwer. His retirement comes after 39 years in the pastorate, having pastored churches in Louisiana, New Mexico, Michigan, Missouri, and Arkansas. Bever and his wife, Jessie, are moving to their home in El Dorado.

Briefly

Dermott Church will celebrate its 85th anniversary May 7 with a special service and church-wide potluck dinner.

Warren First Church has voted to sponsor "First Family Focus" in May and June with special emphases for each age group that will include a crusade for which Pastor Greg Stanley will serve as evangelist. In addition, Stanley will lead the study, "Caring in Times of Family Crisis," on Wednesday evenings.

Washington-Madison Association Executive Committee has voted to establish a shelter for battered women and children and unwed mothers.

Victory Church in Conway held a revival April 21-23 with Bill Yokum of Grand Avenue Church in Fort Smith serving as evangelist. Pastor Paul Parker directed music.

Baring Cross Church in North Little Rock 10-member mission team spent spring break in Rocky Ford, Colo., doing door-to-door survey/witnessing and nightly youth meetings. They served Olney Springs and Cheraw communities in preparation for starting Bible studies there for home missionary Mark Hensley. Their efforts resulted in 10 professions of faith, according to John Guerra, minister of youth.

Mena First Church ordained John McCurdy to the deacon ministry April 23.

South Highland Church in Little Rock Baptist Men were in West Helena April 14-15 to assist West Acres Mission with carpentry, painting, and clean-up work. Elmer Nichols served as coordinator.

Grand Avenue Church in Hot Springs will celebrate its 40th anniversary July 23.

Fair Park Church in Russellville recently honored Pastor Rick Balentine with a potluck dinner in recognition of his second anniversary of service.

Judsonia First Church will hold a Bible conference May 14-17 for which Bryan Webb, Mark Rutherford, Keith Tomlinson, and Charles Browning will be speakers.

Beech Street First Church in Texarkana voted unanimously April 2 to enter into the Arkansas-Guatemala Partnership for the next three years.

Benton County Association has launched a single adult ministry for Bible study and fellowship. Rose Johnson and Vic Luttrell, members of First Church in Bentonville, are serving as coordinators.

Pulaski Heights Church in Little Rock ordained Gilbert Dean to the deacon ministry April 16.

Hartman First Church recently closed a revival that resulted in 10 professions of faith, eight baptisms, and 12 rededications. William Blackburn of Fort Smith was evangelist. Phillip Harris is pastor.

Cabot First Church was in a revival March 5-8 with Kelly Green of Mobile, Ala., serving as evangelist and Bryan Faus, church minister of music, serving as leaders. Pastor Del Medlin reported 95 professions of faith with seven of these joining the church, five baptisms, one addition by letter, five assurances of salvation, and 42 rededications.

Cherokee Village First Church will host the North Central Arkansas Evangelism Conference Memorial Day Weekend, May 26-28. Speakers will be E.K. Bailey of Dallas, B. Gray Allison of Memphis, and David Miller of Heber Springs. Pastor Robin Allen may be contacted for further information.

Runyan First Church in North Little Rock held a spring revival April 9-14. Gary Wise of Smithville was evangelist and Rick Smith of North Little Rock directed music. Pastor William Philliber reported 20 baptisms and eight additions by letter.

Highland Heights Church in Benton ordained Tim Hinkson, Ryan Kurosaki, Dwight Everett, Russell Winchel, and Tim Howard to the deacon ministry April 23.

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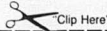
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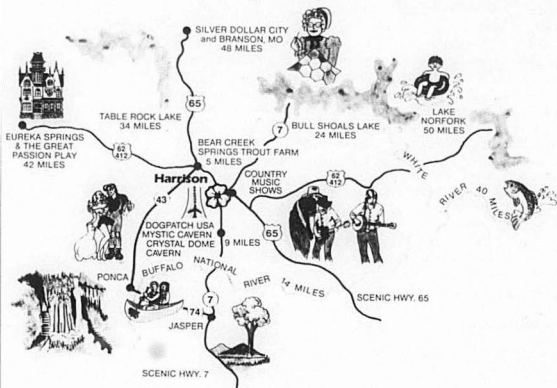


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May Ministries

by Don Moore
ARBC Executive Director

Are you serious about missionary education for boys? Could we be raising a generation of young men who are illiterate about Southern Baptists approach to fulfilling the Great Commission? These are not comfortable questions. I deeply regret that financial resources will not allow for us to have a staff person in our convention to just work at the promotion and development of Royal Ambassador programs in our churches. Still, there are some churches with dedicated workers who are doing some outstanding work.



A giant step in your concern for this matter could be taken if your church could send some workers to Memphis on May 25-28, to what is being called Royal Ambassador University. This is the greatest effort ever made by the Brotherhood Commission to equip leaders for Royal Ambassadors. Let us help you make reservations. Call 376-4791 and ask for the Brotherhood Department.

Parenting in the Minister's Home—This workshop, scheduled May 1-2, Central Church, North Little Rock, is overdue. The painful price paid by parents and children as a result of an unusually stressful

home situation has been great. Parents and parents-to-be who are pastors or staff should jump at a chance to improve their understanding and skills of this vocational hazard.

Training for summer mission projects—This answers a big question many of you have. How can we train our youth, our youth choir, our BSU summer missions teams so they can do good backyard Bible clubs and mission vacation Bible schools? In fact, some churches will need to do backyard Bible clubs in their own community. Jackie Edwards will put together for you the best package of training possible in one day. It will be at Levy Church, North Little Rock, May 6.

Do larger churches have unique challenges? Of course they do. The uniqueness is probably more pronounced in the music programs than anywhere else. For that reason, a special Church Music Excellence Conference has been planned for full-time ministers of music in larger churches, May 1-3, at Immanuel Church, Little Rock. This new event, I predict, will meet a great need.

Musicians on Mission will not be going out of state this year. Our Music Men of Arkansas will be assisting Dove Circle Mission at Holiday Island during the week of May 18-21. A great idea! You will do this small, new mission church good, I know!

Discipling! Discipling! We concentrate much more on "winning" than we do discipling. Jesus great emphasis was on discipling. Do you have an intentional program for discipling those you win to Jesus Christ? The fastest growing membership fact about our churches is the "inactive" list. What is your plan for recapturing the dream of "making disciples," as Jesus commanded? I want to recommend MasterLife and DiscipleYouth. God has given these unusually good programs to Southern Baptists at a most crucial time. Workshops for those who would like to lead in these areas is scheduled for May 15-18 (adult), and May 19-20 (youth), at Ouachita Baptist University.

New Work Methods—It is not only right to start new mission churches, but we also need to start them right. We are not born with an instinct to start and develop churches right. It has to be learned. Not even the strongest desire nor the best motivation will equip us to do well in starting missions. It has to be learned. May 15-16 will provide you an opportunity to learn new work methods for church planting. The conference will be at Camp Paron. To highlight this need, let me give you a bit of information. From 1980-88, we

have had a net increase of only 36 churches in the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. We have not started enough churches. We have not started them well enough. Two great speakers have been enlisted to help us. Dr. Ralph Smith, Austin, Texas and Dr. Ron Lewis, a national growth consultant.

Could pastor-deacon relationships be improved? If anyone really set out to do it, they probably could improve them. Well, we have set out to do it. A two day, Pastor-Deacon Conference has been scheduled for those who will dare to try. It will be held at the Olivet Church, Little Rock, May 5-6. Since their wives are very much a part of the scene, we have a gifted lady from Kerrville, Texas, who will be meeting with the wives. If you feel a little discomfort at the thought of sharing such a time with your deacons or pastor, that is a "dead giveaway" that you need this conference. Improvement at this point must come if we are to ever turn the tide of escalating church strife and pastor-staff firings. Give it a shot, guys! We can have better teams and a better testimony if we will.

Adult Choir Festivals—For many people the most enjoyable part of their church life is the choir. We have found singing in the choir to be a very specific ministry. For that reason, a time of celebration and renewal is scheduled in the Adult Choir Festivals, May 8, 9, 11. Blessed fellowship will be experienced and real growth will be experienced by the choirs who participate. Registration needs to take place before April 24.

Senior Adults—One of both of the following activities could greatly bless you and your senior adult friends.

The Senior Adult Celebration at Ouachita, May 22-24 will be a fantastic time of fellowship and inspiration. The scheduled entertainment will "roll you in the aisles." Dr. W. L. Howe will be a tremendous blessing as he leads you in inspirational worship. Training will be available for those who work with senior adults.

The Golden Age Evangelism Conference, May 12, at First, Hot Springs, is the other opportunity for you. Bill Thorne, Texas, will be your delightful leader. You should try to get your circle of friends to make one of these this spring.

Camping—Two camps will be held in May. The GA Mother-Daughter Camp at Paron will be for girls in grades 1-3 and their mothers. The dates are May 19-20.

The Spring Campers on Missions Rally will be at Petit Jean State Park, May 18-21. Our Baptist campers are invited to become a part of this organization if they would like to make their leisure time a time of witness for Christ.

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Two MasterLife Workshops are offered in our state this year. The first will be May 15-19 in Arka-



Holley

delphia on Ouachita campus. The second will be Aug. 7-11 on the Southern Baptist College campus. Now is the time to register for the workshop of your choice. The registration fee is \$82.50 (\$72.50 for an accompanying spouse).

The co-leader of the workshop May 15-19 will be Val Prince of Fresno, Calif., and Ken McMillan, pastor of First Church, Byhalia, Miss. The co-leaders of the workshop Aug. 7-11 will be Val Prince and Dr. Charles Sharp, Executive Director of the Colorado Baptist Convention. Val Prince is retired state Church Training Director for the California Convention.

The MasterLife Workshop is a very meaningful spiritual experience and equips the participants to lead MasterLife groups in their churches. For information about housing and meals, contact Robert Holley, Church Training Department, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203; telephone 376-4791.—Robert Holley, director

Annuity Adequate Retirement

A minister or church employee may build adequate retirement benefits with five simple steps.

First, start as early as possible. Delays are very costly. One should start a retirement program with the first paycheck. Churches should make it a policy to participate in a retirement program for their ministers and other employees.

Adequate contributions are necessary. The Annuity Board suggests that ministers contribute 5 percent of salary and the church contribute 10 percent. Flexibility permits the church and minister to agree

to other contribution arrangements.

A monthly contribution builds the retirement account. It triggers a state convention contribution which can reach up to \$35 a month. The state's contribution also provides protection benefits.

Your money earns money. Compounding is described as the eighth wonder of the world. The Annuity Board gives participants a choice of four different funds for their contributions.

Last, tax shelter your contributions. A tax deferred plan has its advantages. Contributions to the Church Annuity Plan are tax deferred.

Contact your state Annuity representative for a conference or additional information.—James A. Walker, Annuity representative

Church Extension Underchurched Communities

Each year your Church Extension Program identifies a different group of people in Arkansas who need to be reached for the Lord. In 1989 the emphasis is on Underchurched Communities. This would be a place where we have one or more Southern Baptist churches. But the number of unchurched population would indicate a need for one or more new churches.

A Task Force made up of five pastors and one DOM has been working for several weeks. They have surfaced several reasons why an additional new church may be needed in a community. One reason is that a language or ethnic group of people may not be involved in church. A new church could put the gospel in their language and cultural background.

Another reason may be that a socioeconomic (low or high income) pocket of people may not be involved in existing churches. A new congregation where these people would feel comfortable may reach many more for Christ than existing churches can ever reach. Still another reason for considering a new church may be that the existing church is filled up and locked in. A new church in a new location could provide space for reaching many more people.

The Task Force observed from past experience that a new church started in the right spirit and place stimulates the growth of existing churches.

The Task Force is studying growth areas in Arkansas. It is also looking at towns and cities of more than 1,000 in population. Such factors as the number of churches, whether churches are growing or declin-

ing and the number of unchurched people are being considered.

Task Force members and staff will make contact with DOMs and pastors about local conditions after the demographics have been considered. The "bottom line" question is can more people be reached for the Lord by starting a new church?

First Church of Marshall considered that question for their town. They observed that a group of people in Marshall would attend special events in the church. But they would not come for the regular worship services.

After prayerful consideration, First Church secured a vacant building, enlisted workers and started worship and Bible study. The location was only one-half mile from First Church.

In seven months the missions is averaging in the 60's on Sunday morning. First Church has increased its Sunday School attendance by about 50 percent in one year by having a Sunday School that meets in another building. Already 18 people in the mission have made professions of faith.—Floyd Tidsworth, director

Religious Educators SBREA to Meet In Las Vegas

The annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Religious Education Association will meet June 10-12 in Las Vegas prior to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting. This will be the 34th annual session of the SBREA.

The program will begin on Saturday afternoon June 10 with three pre-session seminars. The main body of the program will begin with registration on Saturday at 1:30 p.m. Dr. Jerry Stubblefield, professor of Religious Education at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, is the current president of the SBREA. According to Stubblefield, the benefits of belonging to SBREA are "professionalism, inspiration, encouragement, fellowship and networking".

"Bold Excellence—Joy In Service" will be the theme of the SBREA Conference. Speakers include Bradley Courtenay, professor of adult education at the University of Georgia, and Larry McSwain, dean of the School of Theology, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Reservations may be made by mail or by calling 1-800-634-3424. We look forward to seeing Arkansas well represented in this year's SBREA meeting.—Robert Holley, SBREA membership committee

HELPLINE

Brotherhood

Royal Ambassador University A Must

Royal Ambassador University, set for May 25-28, will be the most important training event ever held for RA leaders.

To be held on the campus of Rhodes College in Memphis, Tenn., RA University is an in-depth training, sharing, and exploring time that will sharpen the skills of the nation's RA counselors, directors, and committeemen.

The university will offer training by leading professionals in such areas as missions activities, parental involvement, leadership enlistment, interest activities, adult campcraft, and RAs in the small church.

There's still time to register, but please hurry. Write: RA University, Brotherhood Commission, SBC, 1548 Poplar Avenue, Memphis, TN 38104. Telephone: 901-272-2461.

If your church's Brotherhood leaders have never tried the annual Planbooks essential for leaders of any Royal Ambassador or Baptist Men's group—here's a way to do it and get almost 40 percent off the regular price! You can order the 1988-1989 Planbook from the Brotherhood Commission for just \$2 each—they're regularly \$3.50. There are 1988-1989 Planbooks for every age group. To order your 1988-1989 Planbooks write: Brotherhood Commission, 1548 Poplar Avenue, Memphis, TN 38104.—Glendon Grober, director

Church Administration Pastor-Deacon Conference

Pastors, deacons and their wives will gather for the annual Pastor Deacon Conference at the Olivet Church in Little Rock on Friday night and Saturday, May 5-6. Dr. James E. Hightower, Jr., will lead the conferences for pastors and deacons. Hightower is a pastoral ministries consultant in the Church Administration Department of the Sunday School Board in Nashville, Tenn. He is the author of *Caring for Folks from Birth to Death and Equipping Deacons in Caring Skills*.



Hightower

Hightower is the author of *Caring for Folks from Birth to Death and Equipping Deacons in Caring Skills*.

He is a former editor of *Proclaim* magazine. Dr. Hightower will speak to the combined conferences at the opening session on Friday night.

A special conference for wives of pastors and deacons will be led by Deana Blackburn of Kerrville, Texas. Mrs. Blackburn is the wife of Dr. Bill Blackburn, pastor of the Trinity Baptist Church in Kerrville. She and her husband co-authored *You Two Are Important, Stress Points in Marriage and Caring in Times of Family Crisis*. Topics for the Wives' Conference include "Your Place in Ministry," "The Ministering Couple" and "The Ministering Family."

The topics for the Pastors and Deacons' Conference will be "Making Deacon Ministry Effective," "Developing Caring Skills" and "Developing Skills in Conflict Management."

The sessions will be 7-9 p.m. on Friday night and 8:30 until noon on Saturday. A complimentary continental breakfast will be served on Saturday morning at 8 a.m. No pre-registration and no registration fee is required.—Robert Holley, director

Sunday School WEE Workshop In August

The 1988 Weekday Early Education Workshop will be held in Geyer Springs First Church, Little Rock, on Aug. 3-4. It will begin with registration Thursday morning at 9:30, and it will end at noon on Friday.

The workshop is designed for directors and teachers of day care, kindergarten, nursery school, and mother's day out programs. These special interest conferences are planned: cooking with preschoolers; math readiness; physical movement/outdoor activities; spiritual development of the preschooler; storytelling; music; discipline; and how to help the teacher manage her stress. Conferences for teachers of these age groups are planned: infants, toddlers, two, three, four, and five-year-olds, and school age children. Separate conferences are planned for directors of day care and mother's day out programs.

A new feature of the workshop will be a Resource Room, displaying ideas for developing units of study on fall, winter, spring, summer, self, animals, and transportation. A packet of unit outlines and suggestions will be provided for each participant. A \$5 fee will be charged for access to the Resource Room.

The workshop is designed to help WEE personnel improve their teaching and ad-

ministrative skills and understand their roles and relationships.

A registration-program fee of \$12 per person is due by Friday, July 28. Pre-registration is necessary. A registration form and additional program information will be sent by July 1 to WEE directors.

The workshop is sponsored by the Sunday School and Missions Departments.—Pat Ratton, associate

Church Music Senior Adults Summer Sing

Successful Agers are people who develop new relationships and have new experiences, according to Lyndel Vaught, a recognized authority on the aging voice.

SummerSing, July 24-28, a music camp for adults 55 and over, provides those opportunities.

The second year of SummerSing promises to be even more exciting than the first. Dick Ham, Richmond, Ky., will direct the choir, and worship will be led by Buddy Griffin, Houston, Texas, and Rusty Hart, First Church, Gravel Ridge. Classes and interest sessions also are planned for the non-musical spouse.

Tuesday afternoon will feature a "Festival of Opsimathy Choirs", Wednesday will be a picnic at DeGray Lake, and Thursday a tour of a peanut brittle factory.

Music classes, Bible study, crafts, special interest sessions, fellowship, and worship all add up to helping adults develop new relationships and have new experiences, thus becoming Successful Agers.

Contact the Church Music Department for more information, 376-4791.—Glen E. Ennes, associate



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Looking Ahead

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)*

July

3-6 Arkansas Baptist Assemblies, *Siloam Springs (SS)*

10-11 Enrichment Leadership Conference, *Parkway Place Church, Little Rock (CT)*

10-14 Arkansas Baptist Assemblies, *Siloam Springs (SS)*

10-14 Church Building Tour, *(CT)*

13-14 Revival Preparation Seminar, *Camp Paron (Ev)*

20-22 High School Baptist Young Men's Primitive Camp, *Cotter Camp (Bbd)*

21-22 State BSU Advisory Committee meeting/BSU directors' conference, *Days Inn, Little Rock (Stu)*

24-28 Music Arkansas for Youth, *Ouachita Baptist University (M)*

24-28 SummerSing, *Ouachita Baptist University (M)*

29 Associational Brotherhood directors meeting, *Piney Church, Hot Springs (Bbd)*

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

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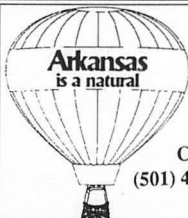
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Allen Resigns Post

by Dan Martin
Baptist Press

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—Jimmy R. Allen has resigned as president of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission and will join a new group seeking to purchase the ACTS network, but the effort is successful.

Allen, who has headed the agency since January 1980, tendered his resignation during the April 10-11 commission meeting in Fort Worth, Texas. The effective date is May 1, with a termination date of June 30.

Trustees elected Executive Vice President Richard T. McCartney as interim chief executive officer.

Board Chairman Harold Brundige, an attorney from Martin, Tenn., named a five-member search committee to seek Allen's successor. Members are Brundige; incoming Chairman Mike Hamlett, pastor of First Baptist Church of North Spartanburg, S.C.; Jewel Morris, a shopping center owner from Fort Smith, Ark.; T.W. Terral, director of Baptist associational missions in Baton Rouge, La.; and Ernie Helton, an engineer from Columbus, Ohio.

Trustees also received three new bids for the purchase of the American Christian Television System, the network launched

by the commission in 1984.

One of the bids was from a group calling itself Investors and Friends of Acts, which has offered Allen the position of president and chief executive officer if its bid is successful.

Brundige declined to identify the other groups, but did say none of the bids was accepted because none offered enough money for the network, which now is accessible to more than 9 million homes across the nation.

The commission has been involved in negotiations for the sale of ACTS—which has been a financial drain on the agency since it was launched—for more than a year with a group based in San Antonio, Texas.

The group, headed by advertising executive Center (Chip) Atkins, offered the commission \$34 million for the network and guaranteed five hours per day for RTVC programming on the network for 30 years.

After three extensions and unsuccessful fund-raising efforts, the offer expired March 14.

All three of the new offers "came in in the last week," Brundige said. "We only expect to negotiate with two (of the groups) because the other offered considerably less" money than the others.

The two more-serious offers were "not acceptable," Brundige said. "We have communicated that to them. Now, we will have to go and negotiate." The negotiating committee that dealt with the Atkins group still is intact, he added.

Members are Brundige; Terral; Morris; Leroy Stevens, general manager of an ACTS affiliate station and a retired professor from Phoenix, Ariz.; and Russell Lawson, a bank president from Oklahoma City. No committee meetings are scheduled, but the committee is "on call," he said.

The commission is "in accord... together," Brundige said. "Our accord is to seal ACTS if we get the price we want, and if not, to keep it and operate it."

He declined to say how much the commission wants for ACTS, noting the price "depends on how badly someone out there wants it. What I can say is that whenever we get the best offer we can get we are going to report to the board and they can take it (the offer) or keep it." (the network).

Allen, who appeared in the meeting only to resign and to make the new offer to the trustee executive committee, later told reporters his new group had offered \$10 million for the network and would guarantee four hours of programming per day for 12 years.

Allen declined to name the nine investors forming Investors and Friends of Acts, other than Ralph Tacker, a Dallas businessman and president of D/FW Uplink, through which the network beams its signal to the Spacenet II satellite.

Tacker, who spent a year with the commission as a volunteer in 1983, "helped put the deal together," Allen said. He added Atkins, who owns the transponder lease on the Spacenet II satellite currently being used by ACTS, is "not an equity player" in the new group, although "he supports the effort."

Trustees spent most of the April 10-11 meeting in executive session. First, they met for nearly five hours discussing commission matters with its seven vice presidents.

"The trustees had all of the vice presidents come in one by one and sit down and tell us their problems, their views, their desires and what they need. We heard all of them," Brundige said.

In the morning session April 11, trustees accepted Allen's resignation and, for two more hours, called a meeting of the negotiating committee, with the other trustee committees invited to participate.

Classifieds

For Sale—Padded oak pews, good condition, \$10 per foot. Osaque Baptist Church, 437-5159 or 437-5136. 4/27

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Youth Baptisms Up Slightly

by Joe Westbury
SBC Home Mission Board

ATLANTA (BP)—For the first time in six years, Southern Baptists have posted a slight gain in baptisms among youth.

A total of 80,506 young people ages 12-17 were baptized by the denomination in 1988, according to Southern Baptists' annual statistical report. That figure is up .06, or 0.8 percent, from the 79,900 posted the previous year.

Southern Baptists reported a record 137,667 youth baptisms in 1972, and the second-highest number, 102,259, in 1982.

"What is significant about this increase is that we have registered a gain in a year in which there was a decline in births for this age group," explained Dean Finley, national youth evangelism consultant for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

That gain is the exception in a period of repeated decreases in population for the age group and alarming drops in baptisms, he added.

From 1972 to 1987, the nation's youth population declined 13.2 percent, while baptisms for the age group plunged 41.9 percent.

Last year's increase remains a mystery because it cannot be explained by any particular program or evangelistic emphasis, Finley said. "It's basically an act of God that cannot be attributed to any particular program or methodology. We have found no common thread among any of the (Baptist) state conventions that explains the increase."

However, this age group, whose members were not reached as children, now provides a greater challenge for the denomination, as the young adults enter their college and career days.

"Many youth are now entering their adult years as unsaved individuals because we didn't do a good job in reaching them earlier. Churches and campus workers need to be aware of the challenge that is before them," Finley said.

Bobby Sunderland, the board's direct-evangelism director, expressed optimism over the increase in baptisms for youth: "It's real encouraging to see the new emphasis on evangelism in the youth programs in Baptist churches. If we're not careful, youth activities can become 'Coke and cookie' parties just for our own youth."

Young people are being encouraged more to reach out to their unchurched friends and are finding them "very receptive to the gospel witness," he said.

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Adjourns at 10:30 a.m. Wednesday

Theme:

In The Company of Others

Program Personalities



Dennis Swanberg
Pastor
Second Baptist Church
Hot Springs, Arkansas



W. L. "Bill" Howse, III
Senior Adult Consultant
Sunday School Board
Nashville, Tennessee

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Vestal Declares

by Mark Baggett & Toby Druin

Texas Baptist Standard

NASHVILLE (BP)—Offering himself as a "responsible reconciler, a bridge to call our people back together," Daniel Vestal announced April 16 that he will permit his nomination as president of the Southern Baptist Convention in Las Vegas June 13.

Vestal made the announcement to Dunwoody (Ga.) Baptist Church in suburban Atlanta, where he has been pastor since October 1988, following a 12-year pastorate at First Baptist Church of Midland, Texas.

"After going through a great deal of searching and prayer, I've come to a conviction that this is God's will for me," Vestal said.

He described his decision as a personal conviction and said he is "not anybody's candidate." However, he said he is a "centrist" in the SBC theological/political controversy.

"I am theologically and biblically conservative and have proven that I am committed to the cooperative approach to missions," Vestal said.

He hopes to return to the "time-honored principles of Southern Baptists: the authority of Scripture, the priesthood of believers, the autonomy of the local church, the separation of church and state, and the cooperative approach to missions rather than the independent approach," he said. "Because of our allegiance to those principles, we have thrived. But we are no longer thriving, because we are drifting away from those principles."

Interviewed April 18 in Corsicana, Texas, where he was conducting a revival meeting, Vestal said his decision to allow his nomination is born out of conviction that the SBC is "in danger of losing its viability as a denomination."

"We are languishing," he said. "Cooperative Program (unified budget) giving is down; mission budgets are being cut; seminary budgets have been cut. It's not because of economy. It's because we have forsaken (the convention's) basic principles."

Southern Baptists also have thrived because of their commitment to freedom,

which has eroded during the years of the SBC controversy, he said: "For 10 years, there has been a deliberate intentional campaign to discredit people's convictions which has intimidated them. It has created fear and threatened free expression. The intimidation has been like this: If you don't vote a certain way, you are portrayed as not believing the Bible. . . ."

Vestal, 44, noted his Southern Baptist roots. He is the son of the late Southern Baptist evangelist Dan Vestal and was an evangelist as a boy and young man himself, preaching more than 300 revivals.

He earned two degrees each from Baylor University in Waco, Texas, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He was pastor of two churches before moving to First Baptist Church of Midland in 1976. The Midland church has led the SBC in Cooperative Program giving over the past decade and gave more than \$1 million in 1988.

The 3,500-member Dunwoody church gave \$295,036 to the Cooperative Program in 1988 and will give 12 percent of undesignated receipts this year, Vestal said. He has baptized more than 100 people since moving there last year.

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'Invest in Prevention'

by Ken Camp
Texas Baptist Standard

DALLAS (BP)—Federal challenge grants to state children's trust funds offer a tremendous return on the original investment, both economically and in prevention of suffering by children, Phil Strickland, director of the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission, recently testified before a congressional subcommittee.

Stickland submitted testimony before the U.S. House Subcommittee on Select Education April 6 in support of reauthorizing challenge grants for children's trust funds. The Child Abuse Prevention Federal Challenge Grants Act should be reauthorized and funding should be increased to about \$15 million to provide a 50-50 match to eligible state expenditures for trust funds, he said.

"These funds deal with one of the most fundamental problems that we face in our society," said Strickland, first chair of the Children's Trust Fund of Texas. More than 1.5 million child-abuse/neglect cases were confirmed in the nation in 1986, and the rate of confirmed abuse increased 66 percent from 1980 to 1986, he noted.

The damage of child abuse is high both in human suffering to victims and in societal costs, Stickland said. Sixty-five percent of the inmates in the Texas Department of Corrections were abused as children, he pointed out.

"The cost of treating our failures is undating us," he said. "Our prisons are overflowing, drug crimes engulf us, our mental hospitals are under-equipped to handle the need, our public health services are taxed beyond their capacities, child abuse outraces our ability to respond and social services programs reel from overload.

"We are investing huge amounts of money to treat our problems. We are investing little to prevent them."

The federal challenge funds have had a significant impact on child-abuse prevention in Texas, Stickland noted. Two years of matching funds have enabled children's advocates to develop a public awareness program, launch an adolescent parenting instructional pilot project, conduct professional forums and a poll on child discipline, and provide technical assistance to communities developing local child-abuse prevention programs.

"In light of the impact that child abuse has on our society, I suggest that \$15 million is a minimum investment the federal government should be making in trying to prevent this massive problem," Strickland said, noting that the proposal is about equal to the amount budgeted for Senate stationery.

"This is at least as important as one SH-60 helicopter for the Navy or one 'Super Stallion' helicopter for the Marines," he said.

"Few investments are ultimately more important in this country than investing in the lives of our children. Few investments in the lives of our children are paying higher ultimate dividends than investments in child abuse-related programs through the children's trust funds across this nation."

Alcohol Warning Labels Criticized

WASHINGTON (BP)—The U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms has issued a temporary rule on warning labels for alcoholic beverages as required by legislation enacted by Congress in 1988.

But the temporary rule has drawn criticism from groups such as the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, which supported the new law.

The complaint arises from the way the bureau would allow alcoholic beverage companies to place the labels on the bottles.

Larry Braidfoot, the commission's general counsel, said the bureau's ruling would allow the companies to place the warning labels on the back or side of the bottles and to print those labels in hard-to-read print.

"That ruling is inconsistent with the intention of the law, he added.

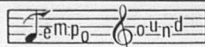
Sen. Strom Thurmond, R-S.C., principal sponsor of the legislation in the last session of Congress, has said the bureau's ruling "would circumvent my intention in pursuing passage of this vital legislation."

The warning label required by law would convey the information that beverage alcohol may cause birth defects and affect one's ability to drive an automobile. The legislation was supported by a coalition of more than 100 consumer, health, parent, and religious organizations.

Coalition leaders have called for letters of protest of the temporary rule and of support for requirements that the warning labels be on the front of the container in a type that is not difficult to read and is highlighted by a box. They also urge support for a requirement that the warning label be larger on bigger containers.

"Passage of this legislation required 20 years of hard work," said Braidfoot.

Letters of concern can be addressed to Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20226, Braidfoot said.



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Called to Praise

by Michael D. Johnson, First Church, Pine Bluff

Basic passage: Ephesians 1:3-14

Focal passage: Ephesians 1:3-14

Central truth: When we reflect on our relationship with God our first response should be one of praise.

This Sunday we begin a five-week examination of Paul's letter to the believers in Asia Minor. This letter is concerned with the purpose of the church, especially as that purpose is expressed through a local congregation.

Whenever the Christian begins to reflect on his or her relationship to God, one cannot help be drawn to praise. This is what happened to Paul as he began his letter. In the original Greek, verses 3-14 are one single sentence containing a great statement of praise.

As Paul's mind reflected on his understanding of God and the life of Christ, we discover at least four reasons for praising God.

First, we praise God because of his wisdom. Even before creation, God had developed a plan for redemption. A plan of salvation was not a hasty response to man's expected fall. The plan was thought out before man was created in the event man chose to follow a life of sin.

Secondly, we praise God because of our relationship to him through Christ. Paul claims we have been adopted by God. Hence our status before God is totally dependent on his grace. By God's grace, Christ was sent into the world. We praise God because of the sacrificial gift of his Son, our brother, Christ. It was through Christ's obedience to God, that we are enabled to be adopted by God.

Third, we praise God for taking the initiative in choosing us first. We are not "predestined" as though we had no say in the matter. Rather, God's desire is for all persons to come to him in such a way that he would be known as Father to all. Our election is therefore not coercive, for we may freely respond; but if God did not choose us we could not choose him.

Finally, we praise God because as his sons and daughters we have the privilege to be partners with God. In God's wisdom there is not only the plan of salvation, there is a plan of reconciliation. The church is the bride of Christ and one day the groom will come to claim the bride.

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Life and Work

Faithful to His Word

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

Basic passage: Joshua 23:1,6-7; 14:5; 19:49-50; 21:43-45

Focal passage: Joshua 21:43-45

Central truth: We serve a faithful God.

One of the most profitable lessons I ever learned is that the Bible is a book about God. I must ever be aware of what any given portion is teaching about God. His character, nature, purpose, and being must always intrigue and excite the heart and mind of those of us who would approach him and know him.

Joshua 19:45 speaks volumes to us about the nature of our Lord. "Not one of all the Lord's good promises to the house of Israel failed; every one was fulfilled" (NIV).

The great principle of God's faithfulness is seen nationally as the people invaded and conquered the Promised Land. Israel settled in the cities they did not build, drank from wells they did not dig, ate grapes from vines they did not plant. All this was just as God had promised.

The great principle of God's faithfulness is seen in the lives of individuals such as Caleb. Through Moses, God had promised Caleb that he and his offspring would one day inherit Hebron. At the grand old age of 85 years Caleb realized the fulfillment of a promise from God.

Some truths about our promise—keeping God seem to almost leap from the pages of the book of Joshua. Some of these are as follows: (1) God has definite plans for his creation. (2) He chose Israel to be an instrument in fulfilling his plans. (3) The Lord uses and blesses individuals who trust and obey him. (4) Those who would know and walk with God must honor and obey the written Word (23:6). (5) God makes no promises that are inconsistent with his nature or plans.

Concerning everyday living, let us stand on his promises. Concerning our plans for the future, let us stand on his promises. Concerning our efforts in ministry, let us stand on his promises. Concerning our times of grief, let us stand on his promises. Concerning our hope for heaven, let us stand on his promises. He is a promise-keeping God. We are to be a promise-keeping people if the whole plan is to operate. We are used in Hebrews 4:16a (NKJ) "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace. . . ."

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Bible Book

Always A Witness

by Dianne Swaim, Immanuel Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: Acts 17:22-23,29-34a; 18:5-10

Focal passage: Acts 17:22-23,33

Central truth: Location and circumstances never still the tongue of a Christian witness.

There is an old proverb that says, "A rose by any other name is still a rose." You can take it out of the rose garden, throw it in a garbage heap, pull the petals off, leave it to wilt—but it is still a rose. The same could be said for a Christian witness. "A witness by any other name is still a witness."

Paul is on his second missionary journey now and background scripture will tell us that he was simply waiting in Athens for Silas and Timothy to join him. But Paul is filled with the Holy Spirit and he simply cannot sit still and observe the idolatry around him. Before we know it, we find Paul standing right in the center of the Athenian philosophers on Mars Hill and proclaiming Jesus Christ.

Boldness is only one of the characteristics of a witness that Paul exhibits for us in this event. He is not afraid of the philosophers with their various and sundry philosophies concerning the meaning of life. The scripture tells us they would listen to anything if it was a new idea. And Paul certainly had some new ideas for them! Do you know someone like that?

Paul also exemplified confronting people where they are. He used their idol to the unknown god as a point of reference and showed them the real God. What is your point of reference with a lost friend or family member you have? We can train ourselves to be observant and discover an area in a lost person's life on which we can build a strong stand for the kingdom of God.

A point we cannot miss as we study Paul's witnessing techniques is that he knew when to stop. Over and over again in his missionary journeys we read "So Paul departed from among them" (Ac. 17:33). But Paul never stopped preaching the message, he only relocated to new fields. Paul was a seed-planter and often the planter does not see the harvest. Through the leading of the Spirit, we can know when we have successfully planted the seed and when God has another "mission field" ready for us.

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FOREIGN MISSION BOARD REPORT

Discussion Postponed

by Everett Sneed & Bob Stanley
Arkansas Baptist & Foreign Mission Board

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (BP)—Fifty new foreign missionaries were appointed April 11 before an overflow crowd of 7,000 in Little Rock as Arkansas Baptists played host to a meeting of Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board trustees.

More than 6,400 people packed the main Little Rock Convention Center exhibition hall, while others watched on closed-circuit television screens in an overflow area. At the close of the service, 251 people made spiritual decisions, including 110 who committed themselves to explore career mission service.

The only cloud over the otherwise tranquil three-day trustee meeting was the possibility of confrontation between Foreign Mission Board President R. Keith Parks and Criswell College President Paige Patterson, an FMB trustee. Parks expressed concern in March over the college's option to purchase a seminary in Belgium.

The confrontation did not materialize in this meeting, but Parks and Patterson huddled for 25 minutes with trustee Chairman C. Mark Cortis and other board officers during a break in the board's business session April 12.

After the break, Cortis announced that a report will be given in the May 22-24 trustee meeting. The report will include what Patterson is doing in regard to the purchase of the Belgian property as well as Parks' concerns about its impact on Baptist work in Europe.

"It is premature for us to discuss this today," Cortis said. "We will know more about the disposition of the property in May." In the meantime, he said, board officers will discuss the matter with Patterson and Parks.

Criswell College of Dallas is a ministry of First Baptist Church of Dallas. It is negotiating for purchase of a financially troubled evangelical school near Brussels, Belgium. During a visit to Belgium in mid-March, Patterson said the Belgian school's leaders first approached Criswell College about buying the institution more than three years ago.

Knud Wumpelmann, general secretary of the European Baptist Federation, said the Belgian school's possible affiliation with Criswell College "could create divisions" among European Baptists by emphasizing their differences. He criticized Patterson for not discussing the purchase with European Baptist leaders before pursuing negotiations, a concern Parks also voiced.

During a follow-up visit, Patterson

scheduled meetings with Wumpelmann and President John David Hopper of the Southern Baptist-related international Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland.

Parks indicated he believes that any church has the right to be involved in any kind of mission or evangelistic work it desires. But he said he considers Criswell College's possible purchase of the Belgian school a return to a societal approach to missions, whereas the FMB is committed to the cooperative method in which churches work together through Southern Baptist established channels. In this, Parks sees a possible conflict of interest with Patterson's role as an FMB trustee, he said.

In other actions, the board approved a resolution reaffirming the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program unified budget, elected three new officers, approved a new category of service and heard reports on FMB finances and a possible change in the board's bylaws.

The resolution said: "The trustees... go on record as being in strong support of the Cooperative Program as the lifeline of our missions effort. We urge caution at any decision that would fragment, weaken or erode the Cooperative Program principle." The Cooperative Program is Southern Baptists' conventionwide plan for funding missions and other denominational programs.

A discussion regarding designated giving to the Cooperative Program had emerged in the board's Feb. 13-15 meeting, when Cortis indicated he "had heard of 15 or more churches" in North Carolina that have decided against full participation in the budget.

FMB officers all were elected by acclamation. Cortis, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Winston-Salem, N.C., was re-elected chairman. The new officers are Morris H. Mills, a member of Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, Tenn., first vice chairman; Wayne W. Poplin, pastor of First Baptist Church, Charlottesville, Va., second vice chairman; and Betty (Mrs. Paul) Swadley, a pastor's wife and author from South Haven Baptist Church, Springfield, Mo., recording secretary.

The trustees approved a new personnel category called "tentmakers" for people who work in secular professions overseas. The program is designed to help the board reach into limited-access or "closed" countries where traditional missionaries are unable to work, as well as countries where a more traditional approach is possible.

Tentmakers could be teamed up with the board's new nonresidential missionaries,

who explore ways of evangelizing populations inside limited-access countries. In other areas not yet targeted by nonresidential missionaries, they might take the lead in beginning Christian work.

Tentmakers will enter into a formal agreement to cooperate with the board. Unlike Southern Baptists who happen to live outside the United States because of their work, tentmakers identify themselves as Christians whose commitment to missions and evangelism lead them overseas.

Executive Vice President William R. O'Brien drew trustees' applause during a report emphasizing that Southern Baptists' future depends on providing proper missions education for young people today. He said other denominational groups "wish they had what we have."

O'Brien noted the Baptist Men organization is committed to involving men and boys in meaningful missions experience and that Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union is committed to remaining a mission organization for women, not a women's organization concerned about missions.

"We must work to produce a people who biblically embrace the whole counsel of God, who hold to a biblical world view and are willing to commit to a missions lifestyle," he said. Such commitment depends upon the training of young people today, he noted.

The trustees voted that notification be given for an anticipated vote in May to change the FMB bylaws, which now require that either the board chairman or one of the vice chairmen live in or near Richmond, Va., where the board's offices are located. The new recommendation removes this restriction. Board President Parks said, "This is really a matter of just cleaning up our bylaws."

Parks observed that in 1970, when the present requirement was established, the board met 11 times a year and not all trustees were required to come to all meetings. Having an officer from the Richmond area made simpler the signing of papers and having someone to preside over the meeting. This is no longer necessary since two staff members have been authorized to sign papers. The board now meets only six times a year, with trustees encouraged to attend all meetings.

Carl W. Johnson, vice president for finance and treasurer, reported that the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering is up substantially over the amount budgeted by the FMB, but he said receipts from the Cooperative Program may be less than the amount budgeted. Much of the increase from the Lottie Moon offering must be utilized to offset the deficit in receipts from the Cooperative Program, he said.

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Haitians Fighting Despair

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (BP)—Soldiers were firing guns a mile away, but Southern Baptist missionary Virgil Suttles said he's convinced he's where God wants him to be.

The violence on Haiti, a Caribbean island nation, does not bother Suttles as much as the lack of hope, he said in an April 6 telephone interview.

Haitians have seen their presidency change hands four times, sometimes with bloodshed, since November 1987. That is when Suttles and his wife, Patsy, and children, Paul, 13, and Kelli, 8, arrived in the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. They are from Elberton, Ga.

Haitian army officers tried unsuccessfully to overthrow their government again in early April. More than 30 soldiers and several civilians were reported killed during the fighting.

Schools and businesses were shut down as tension mounted and a state of emergency was declared. Nearly everybody "stayed put" in homes, except for soldiers who occasionally rode around and fired guns into the air, Suttles said.

The latest unrest came as Haitian Baptists were starting to feel more positive about life, Suttles said. He has been working with Haitians "to try to build up some hope in their minds." But violence "just fans the fire of fatalism—the ruling mindset of this country," he said.

"That's life in Haiti," say Haitians when unrest occurs. But Suttles is urging Haitians, especially fellow Baptists, to "become more God-centered and less man-centered, and to realize God is a loving God and not just a God who is far removed. We're not all down here like puppets on a string."

Poverty is another major contributor to despair, but young Baptist leaders realize "all the money in the world" is not the answer, Suttles said. They are starting to believe the answer is to develop "a perspective of reality and life itself that is directed by the Holy Spirit, and not by man."

The Suttleses and Southern Baptist missionaries Mark and Peggy Rutledge have seen the Baptist Convention of Haiti progress over the past two years as it established a program of church growth and long-range planning. As part of the growth program, Suttles is visiting the 600 Baptist churches to encourage more unity among them.

The Suttles children enjoy being out of school and don't mind the sound of gunfire, Mrs. Suttles said. In fact, Paul told his mother: "This is really exciting. We're living history."

The family, however, was disturbed to wake up April 2 and find that thieves had

entered their home through barred windows and crept into their bedrooms as they slept. They stole appliances and car keys, but not the car.

"We don't feel like we're in any danger," Suttles, 41, said of the military violence. "As long as we stay home and abide by curfew laws, we do not feel afraid."

"I'm enjoying the work here. I prepared for several years to come and serve here. God has really worked to hone me and shape me by all the things that have transpired. He has made me appreciate who I am and what he has given in the past and what I have now."

Hardships In Burma

JAKARTA, Indonesia (BP)—A Burmese woman scheduled to preside over a Baptist congress last year came to Indonesia in March and told how persecution kept her away from her duties.

"I'm making this visit to pay my debt to you," Esther Byu told Baptist women's leaders who heard her speak in four of Indonesia's largest cities. "I heard you did a good job of planning and carrying out the congress during my enforced absence. So I resolved to come and see you as soon as I could."

Byu was elected in absentia as president of the Asian Baptist Women's Union in 1983. But because of Burmese visa restrictions, she was unable to get into Indonesia to preside over the union's congress.

Byu told Indonesians about hardship in her native country. A Buddhist majority forced out all foreign missionaries in 1963. Three years later, the country nationalized foreign-supported institutions except for theological schools.

The Baptist seminary where she formerly taught was closed last August. Churches are allowed to meet only for regularly scheduled events such as Sunday school, worship services and Wednesday night prayer meetings.

But in the midst of restrictions, Burmese Baptists still find a way to share their faith. Baptists working in community centers spread the gospel while meeting human needs. An estimated 422,000 Baptists support about 900 missionaries, many of whom evangelize across cultural boundaries inside Burma.

Born into an ethnic minority group, Byu became an orphan at age 12. But she has attained education at the highest levels and has been equipped to serve as an international Christian leader because of God's grace, she said.