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### December 20, 1990

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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A Human Blackboard

# Arkansas Baptist

December 20, 1990



PERSIAN GULF  
**Christmas  
Without  
Daddy**

## Cover Story



BSBB photo / Jim Veneman

### Daddy Won't Be Home. . . 7

*The Persian Gulf crisis will keep many Southern Baptist families will be without husbands and fathers during the holidays, including this two-year-old who wants to send his blanket to Daddy.*

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## Graham Released From Kuwait

by Art Tolston  
SBC Foreign Mission Board

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—Southern Baptist worker Maurice Graham was heading home from Kuwait Dec. 10 to spend Christmas with his family.

"There's been a bunch of prayers and a big answer to them," said Dwight Graham of Winchester, Tenn., after receiving news that his younger brother's four-month ordeal in Iraqi-occupied Kuwait had ended. Maurice Graham's wife, Laurie, talked with him soon after his post-midnight arrival Dec. 10 in Frankfurt, Germany.

"He's tired, he's worn out," Dwight Graham said. "He's been under a tremendous strain." And he was recovering from the flu when he left Kuwait. "We know he's safe now. We're just waiting to see him."

After reunions with his wife and sons, Peter, 13, and Aaron, 10, in Nashville, Maurice Graham likely will "pick the phone up and call Mom and Dad," J.V. and Ruby Graham in Shelbyville, Tenn., then get some rest, his brother speculated.

Officials hoped to arrange for Graham to finish his journey home Dec. 10, in time for his wife's birthday that day.

Graham joined some 175 Americans and 150 other westerners on an Iraqi airliner that left Kuwait and Iraq Dec. 9 bound for Frankfurt.

Their exodus from Kuwait and Iraq came three days after Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's announcement that all foreign "guests" should be freed. Iraq's National Assembly added its formal approval Dec. 7 in a meeting on the Muslim Friday sabbath.

For most of the freed American hostages, the journey home resumed Dec. 10, aboard a flight scheduled to arrive around 5 p.m. at Andrews Air Force Base in Washington. Two representatives of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board were to meet Graham there and help with arrangements for the final flight in his return home to Tennessee.

According to board officials, Graham has expressed a desire for a time of privacy with his family after returning to Tennessee. If and when Graham is ready to talk about his experiences after Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait, he will contact the media, officials said.

R. Keith Parks, Foreign Mission Board president, issued a special call to prayer Dec. 3 for the release of Graham and other foreign hostages, coupled with a letter-writing campaign to Saddam Hussein via

the Iraqi Embassy in Washington. In November Parks urged Southern Baptist churches to make Dec. 9 a day of prayer for resolution of the Mideast crisis.

Graham, a Shelbyville native, and his wife, of Hutchinson, Kan., were Southern



Graham

Baptists' first full-time workers in Kuwait. They and their sons had been in Kuwait less than three months when Iraqi troops stormed the country in the early morning hours of Aug. 2.

The family took refuge with U.S. Embassy personnel after

Iraqi troops entered their apartment several times the day Kuwait was seized. The Grahams began holding nightly prayer services at the U.S. Embassy compound and Graham became the unofficial embassy chaplain, providing counsel or a listening ear to anyone who asked.

Iraqi troops cut off water and electricity to the embassy after the United States defied an Iraqi order to close the embassy by Aug. 24. A skeletal crew of some 10 diplomats remained there along with Graham and an undisclosed number of other Americans who had taken refuge there.

Mrs. Graham and her sons left Kuwait Sept. 12 as part of the evacuation permitted for American and other Western women and children. They have resettled in a home provided by a Nashville church.

The Grahams were in Kuwait to do youth and music work with the National Evangelical Church, where 28 ethnic groups worshipped each week. The English-language church is affiliated with the Reformed Church in America. A remnant of the church remains active and has embarked on various humanitarian ministries in Iraqi-devastated Kuwait.

According to the U.S. State Department, Ambassador W. Nathaniel "Nat" Howell and several other staff members at the beleaguered U.S. Embassy in Kuwait will remain there until all Americans who want to leave Kuwait have done so.

**[Editor's note:** As of press time, Ambassador Howell and his staff were scheduled to leave Kuwait on a Dec. 14 flight. The five were among the last 32 persons to leave; it is believed that all Americans who wish to leave Iraq have been evacuated.]

(See related story, p. 22)

# The Key to Christmas

J. EVERETT SNEED

Giving is the key to Christmas. God gave his Son to all mankind. Among the first people to give to our Lord were the Wise Men from the East. The Scripture in Matthew (see chapter 2) is vague in that it does not name nor even give specific numbers of these Wise Men. But we, today, continue to learn from their example of love. Our tradition of giving at this time of year is a result of the example of the Wise Men who gave to our Lord.

Many believe that the Wise Men were three in number because of the gifts that they presented to our Lord. The number of the Wise Men is not important, but it is significant that they gave the best that they had to their Savior. Each of the gifts presented were extremely valuable. Gold, frankincense and myrrh were then, as today, very costly gifts.

It is significant that these gifts were presented to Christ, whose birth we honor on Christmas Day. Jesus is no longer present with us, incarnate in the flesh, but he is just as surely in the world today as he was when the Wise Men delivered these gifts to him many years ago in his humble surroundings.

When our Lord was incarnate, he was both human and divine. Both his humanity and his deity were present in the world in a perfect manner. But during the days of the flesh he could be only one place at a time. Now, he is everywhere at the same time. Christians can be just as sure of his presence, as were the disciples who first followed him almost 2,000 years ago on his mission of love and mercy. We have been born many generations too late to have the joy and satisfaction of going to Jesus personally to give to him our Christmas presents. However, we can give to him just as directly as did the Wise Men long ago. When we give the gospel to those who are lost, we are giving to Christ. When we minister to those who have physical needs, we are giving to the Master. The Scripture says, "Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Mt. 25:40b).

There still are many places in the world where the sweet name of Jesus has not been heard. The thought of thousands of small villages without one mention of the name of Jesus at the Christmas season should move all of us to a new mission of compassion. There are great cities where



Offering for Foreign Missions.

One of the best ways we have to give to our Master is through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. Through our gifts, the gospel is carried around the world. The material and physical needs of the hungry and poor are met in many lands. As we give, many hear the gospel who would never have had opportunity without our giving.

The Lottie Moon Christmas Offering gives us the privilege of bringing a worthy gift to Jesus. In no way could a gift to him be better expressed. We bring to our Lord an offering that goes to meet needs where they are the greatest.

Today, our mission opportunities are probably the greatest they have ever been in the history of the Southern Baptist Convention. The Berlin Wall no longer exists. Much of Eastern Europe, which has been basically closed to the gospel for many years, is now open. Baptists in East Germany are now able to do open and unlimited evangelism. Our Baptists in Hungary and Czechoslovakia have been trying to catch their breath as church

teeming millions of people rush about making ready for Christmas who have no understanding of the true significance of Christmas. The thought of these events should urge us to support the Lottie Moon Christmas

members try out new avenues of witnessing and worshipping.

In Moscow, Soviet Baptists are organizing massive evangelistic rallies. In Estonia, Baptists are continuing their version of backyard Bible clubs. Romanians have responded to their newly won freedom by almost doubling the number of congregations registered with the government. Everyone wants to move quickly while the freedoms are still in place. Giving to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering will enable Southern Baptists to walk through many more open doors.

The real meaning of Christmas is the same today as it was 2,000 years ago. Man is in need of God's divine intervening grace because of man's deliberate rejection of divine love. Christmas declares the reality of the incarnation. The incarnation means that man is a sinner, but God has intervened to provide life eternal. Christmas means that God is love. The love is infinite and eternal. Christmas also means that man is in the image of God. Thus, Christmas is a season of repentance in faith, of humility and confession, and of dedication.

As we capture the real meaning of Christmas, we see that God took the initiative in giving the greatest gift possible to us and our responsibility is to give the gospel to others. We will be giving to Christ himself when we give to loved ones Christmas presents which honor him.

The greatest gift that Christ longs for is for each of us to give ourselves personally to him. He wants a measure of our devotion and as a result he wants us to share the good news of his incarnation, death, life and resurrection with men everywhere. This Christmas, let us give the gift that will honor Christ to the ends of the earth.

## Arkansas Baptist

VOLUME 89 NUMBER 33

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JANUARY BIBLE STUDY

# The Gospel for All People

by Frank Wm. White  
Baptist Sunday School Board

NASHVILLE—While youth and adults both will study the book of Acts during the annual January Bible Study emphasis in 1991, separate study materials meet the different needs of the age groups, according to Sunday School Board planners of the materials.

*Acts: The Gospel for All People (Adult Edition)* was written by J.W. MacGorman, distinguished professor of New Testament at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. *Acts: The Gospel for All People (Youth Edition)* was written by Deanna Harrison, a youth Sunday School worker at First Baptist Church of San Angelo, Texas.

The 1991 study is the first year for adults and youth to study the same book of the Bible, but "that doesn't mean they should be grouped together for the same study sessions," said James Harvey, growth consultant for January Bible Study in the board's Sunday School growth and administration department.

Judy Wooldridge, design editor of youth JBS materials, said applications in the youth textbooks relate to typical situation teenagers face.

The theme of extending Christ's mission is a theme of both youth and adult studies and provides an opportunity to tie in with the goals of Bold Mission Thrust, Southern

Baptists' goal of sharing the gospel with everyone in the world by the year 2000, said Harvey.

Because the entire book of Acts cannot be covered in depth in January Bible Study, the adult study highlights focal passages that are relevant to a focus on evangelism, Harvey said.

January Bible Study relates well to the 1990-91 Sunday School theme of "Breakthrough: Reach to Win" because "Acts is a key book to breakthrough when the gospel broke through barriers to reach all people," Harvey said.

A resource kit is available for adult January Bible Study and this year includes 12 overhead projector transparencies. The transparencies also can be copied to use for handouts, Harvey said.

As a cost savings, the youth teacher materials are contained in one book. All materials, including two posters, are in the teacher's book, reflecting a cost savings of about \$15 from past years when teachers had both a textbook and a resource kit.

January Bible Study resources are available in English for all age groups. A Spanish textbook, also on Acts, *Hechos: El Evangelio Universal* is available. The author is Joshua Grijalva, president of the Hispanic Baptist Theological Seminary in San Antonio, Texas.

Korean and Chinese materials feature a study of Second Corinthians.

BSSB photo / Jim Vanaman



*Even an afternoon basketball game can be an opportunity to share Christ as Heath Bump, upper right, found. Bump invited his friend Sam Bogue, lower right, to church for several months until he finally attended a lock-in at Bump's church, York Terrace Baptist Church in Sheffield, Ala., where youth worker Tony Ellifson, left, led Bogue to Christ. Overcoming barriers and sharing the gospel in all circumstances is the focus of the 1991 January Bible Study materials.*

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# 'We Haven't Done It All'

by Linda Lawson  
Baptist Sunday School Board

SAN ANTONIO, Texas—The author of the 1991 January Bible Study textbook in Spanish believes the study will be excellent preparation for Hispanic Southern Baptists looking toward stepped-up efforts in evangelism and church starts the following year.

Joshua Grijalva, president of the Hispanic Baptist Theological Seminary in San Antonio, Texas, wrote *Hecbos: El Evangelio Universal (Acts: The Gospel for All People)* which was recently released by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's special ministries department. This

is only the second year the Spanish textbook has been written in Spanish rather than being translated from English.

Grijalva believes the breakthrough for early Christianity described in Acts is just the right message at the right time. The 1992 Hispanic emphasis on outreach and evangelism coincides with the 500th anniversary of the discovery of America by Columbus, who was sent to the new world by Queen Isabella of Spain.

Grijalva hopes his book and the study of Acts will "sensitize people to the needs that lie before us and heighten awareness of how we can evangelize.

"I would hope 1991 would prepare the

way for the challenge ahead of us," said Grijalva. He noted that the number of Hispanics in the United States will increase from the current 20 million to 47 million by 2030.

"Enlarging the vision of evangelization is the message of Acts," said Grijalva, "and 1991 is a year of preparation for whatever we will do in the future.

Also in Acts, the Holy Spirit is mentioned 60 times. It is imperative that all Southern Baptists "grasp this concept and see the importance of Holy Spirit power as an ingredient of breakthrough, he added.

"I think the book of Acts is telling us we haven't done it all yet. The challenge still before us is taking the gospel to the ends of the earth," said Grijalva.

ERWIN L. McDONALD

## The Golden Years

### Learn to Live with What Ails You

"Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ" (Ga. 6:2)

For Christians who have reached the golden years, the good life is taking care of your health—mentally, physically, and spiritually—and doing what you can to help others.

This constitutes a sort of work view for Pearl Battenfield Meaders, a retired registered nurse and active member of Park Hill Church, North Little Rock.

Pearl, as she is known by her wide circle of friends and fellow church members, represents a large segment of women who by the law of averages are destined to spend many of their later years in widowhood. Her husband, Joe Meaders, a switchman for the Cotton Belt Railroad, died in 1975, ending 39 years of happy marriage.

"You see a lot of suffering, as a nurse," Pearl recalled of her lifetime career of nursing with the Veterans Administration. But in the 16 years since she officially retired, she has continued to find fulfillment in ministering to home-bound members of her church, as outreach leader of her Sunday School class, and in numerous other activities in her community and profession.

A native of Russellville, the sixth of nine daughters of John and Laura Goates Battenfield, Pearl learned a lot about sharing and being helpful to others as she



Pearl Battenfield Meaders

was growing up.

Two of her sisters still live, in Little Rock, and these, along with her affliction of templar arteritis, keep Pearl "close to the home base."

"We've got to expect, or at least not be cast down by things that come along as we grow older," Pearl philosophized.

As to personal afflictions, she concluded:

"Learn to live with what ails you. Unless you have to be on a restricted diet, eat whatever you like, as long as it is wholesome. And if you are on medication, take it faithfully and according to your doctor's orders."

Erwin L. McDonald is editor emeritus of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* and an active member of Park Hill Church, North Little Rock.

## BOLD MISSION THRUST

### Prayer Requests

Arkansas Baptists, the following prayer requests relate to spiritual awakening and revival efforts in our state. Please be consistent and persistent in your intercession.

—Pray for efforts to find and implement ways to help Arkansas Baptist churches deal with conflict. Conflict and turmoil within our churches prevent spiritual awakening from becoming a reality. Energy and attention are turned inward in an unhealthy way and there is little or no focus on world evangelization when a church is fighting. Conflict management conferences will be conducted across eastern Arkansas in May 1991.

—Pray for Hispanic work in DeQueen as they have just purchased property to build. They have outgrown their present meeting place. Pray for Oscar Salazar as he leads this work. There are about 1,200 Hispanics in the DeQueen area. A Bible study has begun in Wickes. Please pray as contacts are made that many will respond to the gospel.

—Pray for someone to replace Bob Gross as director of the Hope Migrant Mission Center. This position is critical to ministering to 20,000 migrant farmworkers who travel through Hope annually. Thank the Lord for the effective work of Bob Gross through the years and ask for his blessing on Gross and his family as he retires.—Carolyn Porterfield, state coordinator

# If Uncle Sam Calls Your Pastor . . .

*. . . Handle the Situation with Integrity and Sensitivity, a Former Chaplain Urges*

by Mark Kelly

Managing Editor, Arkansas Baptist

If your pastor serves part-time in the National Guard or Reserves, he is in danger of being called up for military service during the Persian Gulf crisis. A former military chaplain believes you need to decide now what you will do if Uncle Sam calls your pastor away.

"When any reservist or guardsman is called up to active duty, it causes enormous stress in the family," observes Carter Tucker, director of chaplaincy ministries for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. "If a man also is a pastor and the church does not handle the situation correctly, it can result in real trauma."

Tucker, a 16-year Army chaplain with service in Vietnam and Germany, encourages congregations to be sensitive to the needs created by their pastor's being called to full-time military duty.

A part-time soldier called to full-time duty will have many serious concerns on his mind, says Tucker, but his main concern will be for his family's wellbeing. If a congregation makes a commitment to watch over his family until he returns, the soldier can turn his full attention to his duties.

The soldier's family also has a tremendous need for encouragement and assistance, Tucker notes. Often they are in the dark about where he is and what he is doing, and their concern for his safety can be overwhelming. In addition, there are many daily "husband and father" chores with which a family may need help.

Church members can perform a significant ministry by helping with minor chores and offering friendship and support.

In addition, a church can make a concerted effort to maintain contact with their pastor-turned-soldier, suggests Tucker. Letters and packages from home mean a lot to anyone suddenly separated from home and family.

Another critical concern for a pastor will be what will happen to his job while he is away, Tucker says. He encourages churches to see their pastor's military service as a missionary extension of the church's ministry.

Many chaplains find themselves faced with exciting opportunities for ministry when called to full-time service, Tucker explains. Cast in with other soldiers who have been suddenly uprooted from home and sent into a dangerous military crisis, a chaplain will find many situations where he can share the love of God with hurting, lonely, and frightened troops.

"Think of your pastor as a missionary from your church," Tucker suggests. "As a chaplain he is doing missionary work. I recently heard from a chaplain friend of mine who says he has baptized 14 soldiers since he arrived in the Persian Gulf. That's an opportunity for ministry many pastors don't get."

A church can have a part in that ministry by continuing to support their pastor while he is gone. And knowing he will have his job waiting for him will assure him he is not going to have to start his career all over

when he gets home in six to 12 months.

Tucker counsels churches to grant their pastor a leave of absence during his active duty military service. He notes the law generally requires secular employers to retain guardsmen and reservists called to active duty and believes churches have a similar moral, if not legal, obligation.

Tucker also explains that a church should be aware that the new active duty chaplains' military benefits may not reach his family immediately. A congregation would be well to maintain financial support until those benefits do arrive and may need to continue supplementing those benefits if they are inadequate.

A congregation quickly realizes someone will have to assume the pastor's preaching, visiting, and organizing responsibilities, Tucker observes. Occasionally a church uses that argument to replace their pastor outright.

However, Tucker notes that many pastorless churches search six months or a year for a new pastor and get by with supply preachers and by delegating other responsibilities. The pastor-soldier's tour of duty may not last much longer than it would take to find a new pastor anyway, he says.

By keeping a pastor's pulpit for him until he returns, a congregation not only meets critical needs for him and his family, they also get the satisfaction of sending him out as a missionary to one of the most responsive fields of service in the world.

Two pastors, David McLemore of Russellville Second Church and Jerry Wilcox of Trumann First Church, have been called up for full-time service.

## Russellville Second's Mobilization Plan

When David McLemore, pastor of Russellville Second Church, received word just before Thanksgiving that his National Guard unit was being activated, the congregation was prepared. Nearly three months earlier, in August, they had adopted a mobilization plan.

According to the congregation's newsletter, the church:

- Clarified the additional responsibilities that Minister of Education and Music Rick Smith would assume, including counseling, visitation, weddings, funerals, and Sunday evening preaching.
- Other preaching responsibilities would

be shared by the director of missions and local Baptist Student Union director.

- Provided for a committee to secure additional pulpit supply as needed. Should the pastor be required to remain on active duty beyond the six months specified in his orders, the committee would lead in evaluating the need for an interim pastor.
- Planned to evaluate the interim arrangements at the end of the six months and each month thereafter until the pastor returned or the church deemed it necessary to vacate the pulpit and call another pastor.

- Committed to paying the pastor's full salary for two months, until his military benefits could reach his family. When those benefits do begin, the congregation will make up any difference between military and church salary and continue to pay pastor's retirement.
- Promised to escrow at least three months' full salary to provide severance pay should the church need to replace the pastor before he returned from active duty. Those funds would be returned to the general fund upon the pastor's return and would be given to his family should he lose his life in battle.

BSSB photo / Jim Veneman



**Daddy Won't Be Home for Christmas**—Two-year-old Gene Boyles prepared for Christmas, not by thinking of gifts he wanted to receive, but by telling his mother, Hazel, he wanted to send his blanket as a Christmas present for his father, Jim Boyles, stationed aboard the USS Saratoga. The Boyles are members of Oak Harbor Baptist Church in Atlantic Beach, Fla., where 27 of the 150 families presently have men deployed with the United States Navy in the Middle East.

## Wife Calls On Nation to Pray

ATLANTA (BP)—While her husband is on a mission for his country in Saudi Arabia, military wife Cassie McBride is on a mission at home.

McBride, a member of the Mountain View Baptist Church in El Paso, Texas, is asking Americans to participate in a national Pray for Peace Day. McBride hopes that on Dec. 24 at 10 p.m. Eastern Standard Time Americans will join in simultaneous prayer for a peaceful solution to the crisis in the Persian Gulf. The time will be 6 a.m. Christmas Day in Saudi Arabia.

McBride's husband, Darren, is a sergeant with the Third Armored Cavalry Fourth Squadron HHT based at Fort Bliss, Texas. He has been stationed in the desert northwest of Al Jubail in Saudi Arabia since Sept. 29.

To initiate a nationwide day of prayer, McBride has contacted both religious and secular organizations for support such as the National Prayer Embassy and several media affiliates.

"I really believe God's word when two or more gather together he answers prayer," says McBride. "I believe if we pray for peace, whether Saddam Hussein or President Bush knows it, God is in control and can intercede in their decisions."

## Parks Says Write Saddam Hussein

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—Churches should "mount an intensive campaign of petitionary letters to Saddam Hussein," says Southern Baptist mission leader R. Keith Parks.

The letters should inform Saddam that American Christians are praying for peace and a just solution to the Persian Gulf crisis, Parks recommended.

Parks, president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, has written a suggested letter to Saddam and encouraged churches to duplicate it for distribution to other area congregations.

Churches or individuals desiring a copy of the suggested letter to Saddam Hussein can call the Foreign Mission Board at 804-353-6655, ext. 395, and leave a recorded message.

Those wishing to write their own letters to the Iraqi leader should address them to: His Excellency, Saddam Hussein, President of the Republic of Iraq, Presidential Palace Karradat, Mariam, Baghdad, IRAQ.

Last in a Series of Seven Articles

## Making of a Megachurch

by J. Everett Sneed  
Editor, Arkansas Baptist

"We use a variety of methods to reach people for the Lord. A successful, growing church can never put all of its eggs in one basket," declared Ronnie Floyd, pastor of First Church, Springdale, a megachurch. Dr. Floyd believes that there are many things which have contributed to the church's dramatic growth since he became pastor in October of 1986.

Among these are: prayer, special event evangelism, members developing a witnessing life-style, visitation, publicity, a Sunday School which provides life-changing Bible study, and personalized help for individuals dealing with problems.

In 1985, the year before Floyd became pastor of the church, the congregation had averaged 1,813 in Sunday School and had baptized 77 people. Under the leadership of Cliff Palmer the church had grown from an average Sunday School attendance of approximately 400 to 1,800. This growth primarily had taken place in the decade of the 70s. In the 80s, the church had been in a transitional period with space being the primary problem.

When Pastor Floyd came to the church, the congregation was breaking ground for a new worship center. The new facilities have provided needed space for growth.

Dr. Floyd said, "A new pastor gave impetus to renewed growth and we worked to get the congregation back to the basic purpose of reaching people for Christ."

During the first year Floyd was pastor the church baptized 268 people. Average Sunday School attendance was 1,927, the first time the church had averaged over 1,900.

During the Sunday School year of 1989-90 the church baptized 468 and averaged 2,507 in the main Sunday School. The congregation has had approximately 2,500 additions in the four years that Pastor Floyd has served.

When Floyd came to Springdale, he used event evangelism to spark growth. In 1990, the church had three major crusades.

Apart from the special crusades, the members of the church are winning approximately six people each week to Christ through personal witnessing. Floyd feels



Springdale First Church Pastor Ronnie Floyd

this is a major key to the church's growth, enabling the church to baptize more than 300 a year without event evangelism.

The staff has weekly assignments to visit prospects. Normally the church has eight weeks of visitation in the spring and 10 weeks in the fall, but there is no regular visitation night scheduled for the other weeks of the year.

Floyd's goal is to develop life-style evangelism in the church. Last year the church used four Sunday School lessons prepared by the Home Mission Board on "How to Share Christ." This training was provided for everyone from children to adults. As a result 150 people went out on a Sunday afternoon and visited 800 homes. There were three people saved and two of these were baptized into the church. Many people in the congregation are now beginning to witness to friends, relatives, and co-workers. Floyd said, "This is the most effective evangelism a church can have."

Floyd believes that prayer is the most important ingredient in church growth. In December of 1989, the ministerial staff of 15 determined to pray for spiritual revival. On each Monday, Floyd teaches a principle of prayer to his ministerial staff. Each staff member then uses 10 minutes to teach this principle to five men and 50 minutes is spent in prayer.

Floyd's goal is to have three men out of each group who will be willing to receive training during the discipleship training hour on Sunday evening, who will in turn teach five other men this principle and pray with them. Floyd said, "This approach should permeate our church with people who know how to walk with God and how to pray for others. When people walk with God they will be witnesses for Christ."

Publicity and use of media are extremely important in the growth of a megachurch. Ads are placed on television, on radio, and in the newspaper, as well as the use of direct mail to prospects.

A prospect list is compiled from all of the individuals who have visited the church in the last four months and from a group of ladies that visit all of the newcomers to northwest Arkansas.

Floyd observed that the telephone also can be an extremely effective tool in contacting prospects. He said, "In the 1990s I believe that the phone and other methods of contacting prospects will be used more than a specific visitation night."

Donnie Smith, a Sunday School teacher and layman, emphasized the importance of Sunday School and church growth. Smith, who teaches young adults, 30 and 31 years of age, said, "It is a challenge to teach people of this age because they are success oriented. We need to draw them back to Jesus. People must recognize that they are important, not because they drive big cars or make big salaries, but because of what Christ did for them."

Another vital ingredient in a growing church is worship. The purpose of worship is to lead an individual to have an encounter with Christ. Floyd wants people to sense the presence of God the moment they enter the worship center. Music which celebrates what Christ has done for us and expository preaching prepare the way for the Holy Spirit to convict the lost of sin and for Christians to grow in Christ.

Minister of Music Buster Ray said, "We believe that the primary focus of music is to lead in worship. The worship celebration should result in evangelism."

The church has 200 in the adult music choir and about 40 in the orchestra. There are total of 1,036 involved in the graded music program.

Another program that meets personal needs and results in evangelism is the "Overcomers Anonymous." When Pastor Floyd returned from a Rapha conference he challenged the people to become involved with the real needs of hurting people. Les Garrett volunteered to head up this program, which deals with problems including alcoholism, compulsive overeating, drug addiction, smoking, child abuse, sexual compulsion, etc.

Currently there are approximately two people being saved each week out of this ministry. Each group of eight has a facilitator which enables the group to provide support for each other.

Floyd concluded, "We don't try to do everything at First Church, Springdale. We try to do some things well. Each pastor must recognize that he must develop the ministry that God has for his church."

EXECUTIVE BOARD

# Missions Director Employed

Jimmy Barrentine, director of missions for the Bowle Association in Texarkana, Texas, was elected Dec. 4 to lead the state missions program for Arkansas Baptists.

Barrentine will succeed Conway Sawyers, who will retire Dec. 31 after 11 years as Missions Department director.

The Arkansas Baptist State Convention Executive Board elected Barrentine during a meeting at Little Rock's Baptist Medical Center. The board also approved a report from its nominating committee that divided board members into their committee assignments for the next year.

A native of Mississippi, the 44-year-old Barrentine currently serves as director of missions for the Bowle Association in Texarkana, Texas. He served as a Southern Bapt-



Barrentine

tist missionary to Paraguay for seven years and as director of missions in Ouachita Association at Mena for two years prior to moving to Texas in 1984.

He is a graduate of Mississippi College and holds a master of divinity degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He pastored churches in Mississippi and Texas prior to serving in Paraguay.

Barrentine and his wife, Joan, have two children, Daniel Wayne, 19, and Jenifer Renee, 13.

Executive Board members also approved a report from their nominating committee that assigned them to committees for the coming year. Elected were:

**Operating Committee—1991:** Jerry Kirkpartick, Homer Shirley (chairman), Betty Daily; 1992: Shelby Bittle, Ron Sanders, Billy Kite; 1993: Bobby Walker, Kent Farris.

**Program Committee—1991:** Stanley Ballard, Sid Carswell, Dennis Coop, Nelson Eubank, Ronnie Floyd, Melvadeen Friday,

Bill Gunter, Bob Harper, Captain Lovell, Bryan Moery, Don Phillips, David Pierce (chairman), Clyde Vire, Jerry Wilson; 1991: Mark Brooks, Joel Faircloth, John Greet, Barbara Hassell, Cary Heard, Bob Kinnett, Larry Loggins, David McLemore, Nancy McClure, Eddie McCord, Dillard Miller, Glenn Morgan, Sonny Simpson, Bruce Tiplitt; 1993: Travis Beeson, Harrel Cato, Tommy Cunningham, John Dresbach, John Edwards, Jim Files, Harold Henson, Scott Hinton, Rich Kincl, Ken Lilly, Katsy McAlister, David Moore, Bratton Rhoades, Donald Settles, Greg Stanley, J.D. Webb.

**Finance Committee—1991:** Charles Atkinson, Ronald Bracken, Tom Calhoun, Horace Gray, Stephen Hatfield, Peggy Jeffries, Alice King, Jimmy Miller, Charles Osborne, Don Rose, Paul Seal, Ray Thffar, Joe Thompson, Noble Willes; 1992—Virginia Cram, Terry Eaton, Joe Finfrock, Jody Gannaway, Robert McDaniel, Merle Milligan, Jere Mitchell (chairman), Carolyn Pendergraft, William Piercy, Tim Reddin, Gearl Spicer, Mitch Tapson, Michael Trammell, Phil Whitten, Charles Womack; 1993: Eugene Anderson, Bruce Bond, Otto Brown, Jerry Cooper, Jim Edwards, Carroll Evans, Bob Floyd, Lance Hudnell, Larry Jones, Gerald Perry, Larry Pillow, Glen Power, Lynn Robertson, Clyde Spurgin, Kyle Sumpter, Billy White.

**Executive Committee—Jim McDaniel (chairman), Mike Huckabee, Tim Reddin, David Pierce, Jere Mitchell, Homer Shirley.**

**Nominating Committee—1991:** Don Phillips, 1992: Sonny Simpson, Tim Reddin (chairman), 1993: Kent Farris, Kyle Sumpter.

ABN photo / J. Everett Sneed



**Lavaca Dedicates—First Church, Lavaca, dedicated a new multi-purpose facility Nov. 25. The facility has a regulation size basketball court that also serves as a fellowship hall with a seating capacity of 300. In addition, the new building has several Sunday School classrooms and the administrative offices. The 18,000 square foot building was constructed at a cost of \$538,000 without any long term loans. A church building has been on the same property for 135 years. The dedicatory message was delivered by ABSC Executive Director Don Moore, who spoke on "A Day of Great Celebration" from Nehemiah 6-8. The church has experienced significant growth under the leadership of Pastor Grant Eitbridge, who is in his third year as pastor. The church was averaging under 200 when Pastor Eitbridge came and is now averaging approximately 375.**

## Classifieds

**For Sale—1983 Ford Econoline Champion, 29 passenger people mover. First Baptist Church, Fordyce, Arkansas 372-7133. 1/2**

**Needed—The Search Committee for Springlake Baptist Assembly in now receiving resumes for Camp Director. Resumes should be sent to Oscar N. Golden, 612 Valley View Road, Benton, Arkansas 72015 by January 1, 1991. 1/17**

**Needed—Music/Youth Minister. Full-time position. Send resume to Memorial Baptist Church, P.O. Box 280, Waldo, AR 71770. 1/2/20**

Classified ads must be submitted in writing to the ABN office no less than 10 days prior to the date of publication desired. A check or money order in the proper amount, figured at 80 cents per word, must be included.

# LOCAL & STATE

## Arkansas All Over

MILLIE GILL

### People

**Harry Black** will begin serving Jan. 6 as pastor of Natural Steps Church at Roland, going there from First Church in England.

**Steve Pate** has resigned as minister of education at Second Church in Little Rock to join the staff of Applewood Church in Denver, Colo.

**Lawson Hatfield** of Malvern is serving as interim pastor of Park Place Church in Hot Springs, succeeding Thurman Braughton who, with his wife, Kathie, returned to their missionary assignment in the Philippines Nov. 24.

**Steve Stanart** has joined the staff of Dollarway Church in Pine Bluff as youth director. He and his wife, Daylene, have two daughters, Stephanie, and Savannah.

**Alan Cureton** resigned Dec. 9 as pastor of First Church in Rector.

**John Shaw** was ordained to the gospel ministry Dec. 16 at Harmony Church at Pollard.

**Dwayne Monk**, associate pastor of Grand Avenue Church in Hot Springs, was ordained to the gospel ministry Nov. 11.

**Harris Shuffield** has joined the staff of Lakeside Church in Hot Springs as associate pastor.

**Mark Soucy** is serving as pastor of Oden First Church. He recently was ordained to the ministry by Concord Church at Van Buren. Soucy and his wife, Theresa, have two children, Michelle, and Michael.

**Rodney R. Reeves**, a professor at Williams Baptist College, began serving Dec. 9 as interim pastor of First Church, Mountain Home.

**Robert McCarver** is serving as pastor of Guernsey Church, Hope.

**Milton White** is serving as pastor of Mandeville Church, Texarkana.

**Roy Chatham** will retire Dec. 30 as minister of education and music at Woodland Heights Church in Conway, following more than three years of service. Chatham, who has served other Arkansas churches in his more than 16 years of service, will continue to serve churches on an interim basis.

**Cecil Davis** of Paragould died Dec. 3 at age 76. He was a member of Alexander Church in Paragould and the father of Cecil Mack Davis of Kansas City, Mo., and a former Arkansas pastor. Other survivors are his wife, Alice Davis; two daughters, Rita Lange of Lafe, and June Keeling of Paragould; a brother; two sisters; and four grandchildren.

**Andrew M. Hall** of Fayetteville will teach a January term class in pastoral leadership at Barbados Baptist College.

**Richard E. Walker** of Mountain Home is serving as interim pastor of Immanuel Southern Church at Salem.

**Roger Franks**, a basketball coach in the Mountain View School District, is serving Desha First Church as part-time minister of youth.

**John Gerlach** will join the staff of Immanuel Church in Little Rock Jan. 6 as associate pastor of education and outreach, coming there from Crestview Church in Midland, Texas. He is a graduate of Texas

ABN photo / J. Everett Sneed



**Searcy County Church, Marshall**, started a mission at Pindall Nov. 18. There were 14 in attendance for the initial service. **Joseph A. Hogan**, who recently retired as pastor of Woodland Heights Church, Harrison, will serve as pastor. Two buildings are being provided, without rent, for the mission. The furnishings for the building were purchased by the Searcy County Church, following the sale of a bus which was given by the ABSC Brotherhood. The Morning Star Mission, the first to be organized by Searcy County Church, gave \$100 to assist the Pindall Mission. Three acres of property, on which a future building will be erected, have been purchased by the ABSC Missions Department. Pictured are (left to right) are J.A. and Marie Hogan and Rena Treat.



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Hot Springs

PEOPLE TO DEPEND ON

Wesleyan University and Southwest Baptist Theological Seminary. Gerlach is married to the former Alta Lynn Turner. They have two daughters, Alexandria Layne, and Jocelyn Dayne.

Lee Gwin of Mansfield is serving as pastor of Temple Church at Waldron, coming there from Huntington Church.

James Simons has resigned as pastor of Calvary Church, Booneville, effective Jan. 6.

Darrin Mechling will join the staff of Crossett First Church Jan. 6 as minister of youth and evangelism. A native of Del City, Okla., he is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Southwest Baptist Theological Seminary. He is married to the former Carmel Hunt, also a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University.

## Briefly

**Pine Grove Church** at Pocatontos observed homecoming Dec. 9 with special morning and afternoon services

**Newport First Church** recently held a four-day revival that resulted in 130 professions of faith. A highlight of the revival, led by Alan Celoria and the Celoria Family Singers, was the Tuesday Youth Night in which more than 250 local high school students came in a heavy rain storm for a pizza supper. There were 75 professions of faith made at the close of this service, according to Pastor A. Timothy Hight.

**Brinkley First Church** will serve hot chocolate and coffee Dec. 29 to holiday travelers at the White River Rest Area.

**Refuge Church** at Story ordained Alton Abernathy to the deacon ministry Dec. 2.

**Concord Chapel** in Van Buren held a tent revival Nov. 11-15 that resulted in 12 professions of faith. William Blackburn was evangelist. Randy Hogan serves as pastor of the chapel, which currently is in the process of selecting a building committee to build its first permanent facility.

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**First Church, Desha**, held a noteburning service Dec. 9. The congregation is now debt free. The 17,000 square foot facility, valued at more than \$500,000, was constructed at a cost of \$135,000 with the use of donated labor. The auditorium will seat 250 people with an additional choir loft for 30. The educational facility consists of 23 classrooms, a pastor's study, a choir rehearsal room, and a fellowship hall. The church financed \$70,000. The morning message was delivered by former Pastor Paul Huskey who was pastor during the time of the building construction. Keith Sandefur became pastor of the congregation in November of this year. Pictured from (left to right) are former pastor Steve Peltz, Deacon John Kelley, Deacon Keith Richardson, Sandefur, Huskey, Chairman of Deacons Max Edwards, and Deacon Dan Moody.

ABN photo J. Everett Sneed



**Woodland Heights Church, Harrison**, held a noteburning service Nov. 18. The \$22,000 note was paid off in July of this year. The church has erected its building in stages with much of the work being done through donated labor. Small loans also were secured for materials used in the work which was begun in 1959 and is now debt free. Participating in the service were (left to right) Frank Dees, chairman of the finance committee; Andy Rhodes, chairman of deacons; Fred Gregory, chairman of the building committee; and Marshall Boggs, pastor.

## GA Director Employed

Sandra J. Wisdom has been employed as Girls in Action/Mission Friends director for Arkansas Woman's Missionary Union. She succeeds Frances Urey, who resigned in September, and will assume her new duties on Jan. 2, 1991.

Wisdom is a graduate of Southern Illinois University and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. She has been minister of church social work at Fourth Avenue Church in Louisville, Ky. She also worked for two years a summer intern for Illinois Woman's Missionary Union.

Wisdom is a former personnel specialist with the Illinois Army National Guard, and has an extensive background in social work and camp programs. She was twice the recipient of the Illinois WMU Mission Education Scholarship and holds several academic awards and honors.



*Wisdom*

## Nailbenders Need Volunteers

Volunteers are needed to cope with the rising number of Arkansas Baptist congregations requesting construction assistance from Nailbenders for Jesus.

Seventeen churches have asked for assistance in building new units during 1991, said Nailbenders coordinator Frank Allan. This creates a need for at least one more full team of volunteers.



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## Resumes Sought

Resumes sought for position of Executive Director of the Christian Civic Foundation of Arkansas, Inc. Submit material by Feb. 1 to:

Christian Civic Foundation  
8300 Geyer Springs Road, Suite 201  
Little Rock, AR 72209.

Since their organization in 1988, Nailbenders for Jesus has built 25 church buildings at an estimated savings to Arkansas Baptists of more than \$2 million. With a second team of volunteers, the group could serve two congregations a month.

Persons interested in helping with volunteer church construction projects may contact Allan at Rt. 1, Box 25, Williford, AR 72482; phone 501-966-4982.

## Vance Honored For 15 Years

Charles Vance recently was recognized by Beech Street First Church in Texarkana for 15 years of service as minister of music.

Pastor Mike Huckabee and John Hough, minister of education, coordinated activities which included a reunion luncheon, a reception, the presentation of a love offering, and special musical presentations by Vance's daughters, choir members, and former choir members.



*Vance*

The music ministry at Beech Street First

Church, under the leadership of Vance, has grown, with the youth choir membership growing from three members to a choir that has participated in mission trips in Arkansas, Utah, south Texas, and Mexico.

The adult choir has grown in number and annually gives Christmas and Easter performances. The children's choir work also has grown.

Vance is married to the former Bo Boyd. They have three children, Barton Timothy, Melody Elaine, and Cindy LaRay. He is a graduate of the University of Corpus Christi and has also served churches in Texas.

## New Year's Eve For Singles

Singles' Celebration '90, the fourth annual non-alcoholic Christian New Year's Eve party for single adults, will be held Dec. 31 at Little Rock Baptist Medical Center's J.A. Gilbreath Conference Center.

The celebration, sponsored by Immanuel Church in Little Rock, will feature hors d'oeuvres, door prizes, entertainment, and a midnight breakfast buffet.

Al Fike, a Christian comedian, will provide special entertainment.

For ticket information call 376-3071.

## State Acteens Panel

Four teenage girls have been selected to serve on the 1990-91 Arkansas Acteens Advisory Panel. The panelists will be available to speak at associational and local church Acteens activities. Also, the panelists will help plan statewide Acteens activities, participate in the Acteens All Stars and Encounter programs, and speak at the Arkansas WMU Annual Meeting.

Chosen by the State Acteens Committee were Missy Jones of North Little Rock Park Hill Church, Monica Justice of Little Rock

Cross Road Church, Debra Sibley of Perryville First Church and Tonya Staten of Jonesboro Central Church.

Acteens is the missions organization of Woman's Missionary Union for girls ages 12-17. There are approximately 2,000 girls involved in Acteens organizations in Arkansas and more than 105,000 in Acteens nationwide. Acteens seeks to help girls grow spiritually through Bible study, prayer, witnessing and "hands on" missions experiences.



*Jones*



*Justice*



*Sibley*



*Staten*

## Is It Too Late?

by Don Moore  
ARBC Executive Director

The Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions is passed. It is too late for the week of prayer, but not too late to pray. The December promotion for the Lottie Moon Foreign Mission offering is passed. But it is not too late to give. Most churches continue receiving the offering throughout the month of January. Every Arkansas Baptist should make some contribution to foreign missions through this offering. Every church should give their people an opportunity to give, and should encourage them to give. They will not starve themselves nor bankrupt the church by what they give, but what they give will be significant. Plus, you will be training them right.



Moore

**Concerning Prayer**—Bartholomew Association is considering calling for a Day of Prayer for peace in the Middle East. Perhaps your association or church should do the same. We all know someone who is being impacted by the call-up of troops. These families need our encouragement and prayers. Apart from the intervention of God, war seems inevitable. Let's pray for his intervention.

**Evangelism Conference for lay persons, too.** God has chosen to use our State Evangelism Conference in a special way in recent years. Last year's conference, shared with the three black Baptist conventions, was the greatest ever, in my opinion.

This year Bob Hamblin, Tupelo, Miss.; E.K. Bailey, Dallas, Texas; Darrell Robinson, Atlanta, Ga.; and Roy Fish, Fort Worth, Texas, will be our preachers.

An added feature this year is the music ministry of Mike and Faye Speck. We had to schedule them three years ahead. Arkansas Baptists love evangelistic music. They will lift our souls to heaven as they glorify the Lord and challenge his servants.

The conference will be Jan. 28-29, 1991, at Park Hill Church, North Little Rock. We hope record numbers of people will come to have their hearts stirred to be better witnesses.

**RA Special! RA Special!** The awakening in many hearts is real. This is the last generation of Southern Baptist missionaries unless something is done to ignite the fire of zeal in young people's hearts. Not enough women are doing it for the girls.

Even fewer men are doing it for the boys. RA's is the best way to do it.

For this reason, we are going all out to prepare the most practical and inspiring program to help men who are willing to work with RA boys.

Jan. 12, 1991, is the date. Immanuel Church, Little Rock, is the place. Five leaders are being brought in to train our men. Please, men, make the most of this opportunity! You will have added excitement and confidence in your work if you will take part in this event. The time is 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Lunch will be served, but reservations will be required.

**Area Media Library Conferences**—East Side Church, Fort Smith; Central Church, North Little Rock; Wynne Church; and OBU, Arkadelphia, are the locations for this year's Media Library conference. These conferences will be held Jan. 21-24, 1991, respectively in the order of the places listed.

Staff from churches and associations should attend. Experienced workers should attend as well as new staff. Three consultants from the Media Library Department of the Sunday School Board will be on hand to assist you. You will not have a better opportunity this side of Glorieta or Ridgecrest for help in this specialized area.

**Guatemala Plans**—Before we know it, our three year partnership with Guatemala will be over. Many have gone. They have had great results. Souls have been saved, buildings have been built, the sick have been doctored, teeth have been pulled, leaders have been trained—and those doing it have been blessed most of all.

Shouldn't you go during this year? You will need to get plugged into a project soon if you are going to help with this special mission opportunity. You will not find a better field, more accessible, and less expensive than going to Guatemala. It is hard work, but also rewarding.

Our teams have to be limited in size because there are limited missionaries or translators to help. This is why I wanted to encourage you to get your plans underway lest you be left out.

I will be in Guatemala ministering the Word of God to our missionaries Jan. 20-25. I would appreciate your prayers. Call 376-4791, ext. 5158, if you want to work. It isn't a vacation!

**Pastor?** How are you handling parenting? Are you a good pastor to your wife? What would you do if an outbreak of suicides took place in your community as it did in Sheridan? Have you been able to

make computer technology work for you in your ministry? Have you even explored the possibility? Would you like to ask a person who has just grown up in a preacher's home some questions about PK's special problems? Would you like to get a fresh, new grasp of growth concepts for reaching people from a veteran?

If you have any of these questions, the place for you to be March 11-12, 1991, is at the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Pastors' Retreat at Camp Paron. You will never find better fellowship and more help in a shorter period of time than at the Pastors' Retreat.

We are thankful that the expense is subsidized by the Cooperative Program so that the cost to pastors is only \$35. That includes all meals from lunch Monday through the evening meal on Tuesday, plus your housing. You will need to bring your own bed linens.

## Church Media Library Media Library Conferences

Area Church Media Library Conferences will be held in Fort Smith, North Little Rock, Wynne, and Arkadelphia Jan. 21-24, 1991. Each conference will provide three workshops and participants may choose to attend one.

Danny Ayala will lead "How to Use Video in the Local Church." This workshop is designed for pastors, staff and other church leaders who use video as a learning or promotional tool. Ayala was on the BTN production staff before joining the Church Media Library Department. This conference will equip participants to use video as a learning aid. It will also provide help to local church leaders interested in using video as a promotional tool for their church.

Barbara Freese will lead "Advanced Church Media Library Administration." This workshop will provide media library staff members an in-depth training experience in media library administration. Participants should have completed a basic media library administration training project.

Anne Long will lead "The Church Media Library in the Smaller Membership Church." This workshop will equip



Ayala

pastors, church media library staff, and interested leaders in how to provide an effective media library ministry in the smaller membership church.

Each area conference will begin at 9:30 a.m. and adjourn at 4:30 p.m. Monday's conference will be at East Side Church in Fort Smith, Tuesday's conference at Central Church in North Little Rock, Wednesday's conference at Wynne Church, and Thursday's conference at Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia.

For additional information contact the Discipleship Training Department, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203-0552; telephone 376-4791 ext. 5160.—Gerald Jackson, associate

## Stewardship/Annuity

### A Gift Suggestion

Most churches give their ministers and other employees a cash contribution or a Christmas bonus. Such gifts are appreciated and needed.

Churches should consider contributing to the Church Annuity Plan if they want to give a gift that keeps on giving. Any church employee, ministerial or supportive, is eligible to participate in the retirement program. A 10 percent of salary monthly contribution would make an ideal gift.

If a church cannot give 10 percent, what would a \$52.50 monthly contribution produce for a 55-year-old pastor? First, the state would contribute \$17.50 for protection benefits that include a \$52,500 survivor benefit and a \$300 monthly disability benefit. In addition, the church's monthly contribution would produce an estimated \$645 in monthly retirement benefits at age 65. That is a good gift. A 10 percent contribution would enhance the gift.

Many secretaries, custodians and other supportive staff members have no retirement program other than Social Security. The church could start contributing to the retirement program on their behalf. Such action will produce a gift that will last a lifetime.

Servants of the church are often forgotten after they retire. A church can make sure this doesn't happen to those who are serving now. A contribution to an employee's retirement program is one gift that can produce a lifetime gift for the employee and his or her spouse. Contact your annuity representative for more information.—James A. Walker, annuity representative

## Church Music

### Festival Time

Springtime means "festival" time. A time when musicians from all over the state can gather to enjoy the musical experiences that have been occurring in their local church through choirs, handbells, instrumentalists, and soloists. It is also a time to receive constructive evaluation of the

discipline that is required in the preparation of this area.

March 1-2, Handbell Festival, will be the first. This festival has become one of the most consistent events. The all-purpose room at Immanuel Church, Little Rock will be packed to capacity with handbell choirs. What a fantastic sound. The clinician will be Mary Kay Parrish from Oklahoma Baptist University.

May 11 will feature the Youth Music

## *Evangelism*

### State Evangelism Conference

The State Evangelism Conference is privileged to meet with Cary Heard and Park Hill Church Jan. 28-29, 1991. Park Hill Church is located at 201 East 'C' Street in North Little Rock.

The theme for this conference is "Theological Foundations Upon Which to Build Evangelism." The messages will be based upon many of the great Christian truths in the Bible. Theology and evangelism never conflict. The always complement each other.

The conference is built upon the following session themes: Monday afternoon, "The Trinity;" Monday evening, "God's Crowning Creation, Man;" Tuesday morning, "Christian Responsibility;" Tuesday afternoon, "Sirs We Would See Jesus;" and Tuesday evening, "The Future."

We are privileged to have some of God's choice men and women coming to us from out of state as speakers and singers.

Our featured musicians for the conference will be Mike and Faye Speck. Mike, Faye, and daughter Melody have recorded a total of 10 albums. They have been instrumental in producing and arranging for many other Christian artists. Their most recent recording is entitled, "Let's Talk About the Lord." Mike and Faye are well known in Arkansas. Mike now serves Eastwood Baptist Church in Tulsa, Okla., as staff evangelist, and they make their home in Owasso, Okla.

E. K. Bailey is the well known National Baptist pastor of the Concord Missionary Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas. Dr. Bailey preached one of the most popular messages of our State Evangelism Conference in 1986. We have asked him again to do the message on "I Am Hosea." The Concord Missionary Baptist Church was founded by Bailey. This church has grown from 200 to 5,000 members. It now has a staff of 29 ministers and lay personnel. God will use him to speak to both National and Southern Baptists in this conference.

Roy Fish is professor of evangelism at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is a native Arkansan and deeply appreciated and loved in our state. Dr. Fish will be preaching three times in the conference and will make a tremendous contribution in developing our themes.

Bob Hamblin, presently director of the L.D. Hancock Foundation in Tupelo, Miss., will both teach and preach in our conference. Dr. Hamblin is the co-author of the doctrine book for 1991 on the Lordship of Christ. He is former director of evangelism for the Home Mission Board and now serves as a full-time vocational evangelist.

Darrell Robinson, director of evangelism for the Home Mission Board, will speak two times. Dr. Robinson is making a tremendous impact across our convention on the Total Church Life emphasis. He was a very successful evangelistic pastor for many years. His heart beats with pastors as they seek to penetrate their area with the Good News of Christ.

H. Michael Owen will bring the flavor of foreign missions to our conference. He is presently serving as a Southern Baptist missionary to Guatemala. Owen will help Arkansas Baptists relate to and feel the heartbeat of our partnership with Guatemala.

Besides these, there will be many wonderful instate speakers in our conference. This conference will seek to inform, interpret, and inspire you to total New Testament evangelism.—Clarence Shell, director

Festival at Baring Cross, North Little Rock. This festival has a fresh and exciting new look this year. You can hear choirs, ensembles, vocal and instrumental solos, pianists and organists, and song leaders. New this year will be the addition of a mass choir rehearsal and outstanding performers in each area will perform for the entire group. New starting time of 10 a.m. will help those with great distance to travel.

May 20, 21, and 23 will be the Adult Choir Festivals at Alma; Clinton; and Park Hill Church, North Little Rock; Elmdale Church, Springdale; Watson Chapel, Pine Bluff; Olivet Church, Little Rock; Walnut Street Church, Jonesboro; and Central Church, Magnolia. Choirs will enjoy a great time of listening to each other sing. All members will have the opportunity to learn a new anthem at the festival.

There is a festival for you, don't miss out on the great experience a festival can provide. Planning to participate must start now. Most handbell choirs have already started rehearsing the music. All required music is in stock at the Baptist Book Store. See you at festival!—Glen E. Ennes, associate

## Sunday School

# A Great Year Ahead

A great year is ahead for Sunday Schools in 1991!

New administrative study course books will be available in January. The Breakthrough series will include books for general Sunday School work, Sunday Schools in smaller churches, and work with single adults, youths, children and preschoolers. These will replace the books in the Basic series.

Improved leadership and pupil's materials will be available for the October, November, December quarter.

The Sunday School department will depend on ASSISTeams (Associational Sunday School Improvement Support Teams) to help interpret the new Breakthrough books and the improved literature. Associational Sunday School directors are enlisting ASSISTeams for this purpose.

On Feb. 8-9 personnel from the Baptist Sunday School Board will train ASSISTeams in interpreting and using the new materials. This meeting will be held in Immanuel Church, Little Rock.

Call on your ASSISTeam to help your Sunday School leadership do a better job of reaching and teaching people.—Larry Sherman, associate

# Looking Ahead

## January

12 RA Counselor Fellowship, *Little Rock Immanuel Church (Bbd)*

21 Area Media Library Conference, *Fort Smith East Side Church (DT)*

22 Area Media Library Conference, *North Little Rock Central Church (DT)*

23 Area Media Library Conference, *Wynne Church (DT)*

24 Area Media Library Conference, *Ouachita Baptist University (DT)*

28-29 State Evangelism Conference, *North Little Rock Park Hill Church (Ev)*

## February

2 "Carry the Torch" 1991 Rally Evangelism Training Day, *Beech Street First Church, Texarkana (Ev)*

4-5 Interfaith Witness Awareness, *Lakeshore Drive Church, Little Rock (Ms)*

8-9 ASSIST Training, *Immanuel Church, Little Rock (SS)*

8-9 State Church Renewal Workshop, *Levy Church, North Little Rock (Bbd)*

12 Starting Multiple Sunday Schools, *Otter Creek Holiday Inn (SS)*

14 Church and Community Ministries Workshop, *Levy Church, North Little Rock (Ms)*

15-16 State Single Adult Conference, *Park Hill Church, North Little Rock (DT)*

16 "Carry the Torch" 1991 Rally Evangelism Training Day, *Springdale First Church*

22-23 Volunteer/Part-Time Music Leader Retreat, *Camp Paron (M)*

27/3-1 Directors of Missions Retreat, *DeGray Lodge, Arkadelphia (Ad)*

## March

1-2 Handbell Festival, *Immanuel Church, Little Rock (M)*

1-2 State Church Recreation Conference, *Camp Paron (DT)*

3-10 Week of Prayer for Home Missions and Annie Armstrong Easter Offering, *(WMMU)*

5 State Vacation Bible School Clinic, *Immanuel Church, Little Rock (SS)*

7-8 Total Church Life Seminar, *Camp Paron (Ev)*

11-12 Pastors' Retreat, *Camp Paron (Ad)*

11-14 Praising II, *Opryland Hotel, Nashville, Tenn. (M)*

11-15 District Bible Drills/Speakers' Tournaments *(DT)*

15-16 HSBYM State Basketball Tournament, *Park Hill Church, North Little Rock (Bbd)*

15-16 WMMU Annual Meeting, *First Church, West Memphis (WMMU)*

16 Associational Baptist Youth Night *(DT)*

16 "Carry the Torch" Rally Evangelism Training Day, *First Church, Forrest City (Ev)*

16-22 State Building Tour *(SS)*

25-26 Pastor/Staff Sunday School Conference, *First Church, North Little Rock (SS)*

29-30 State Youth Convention, *Statehouse Convention Center, Little Rock (DT)*

### Abbreviations:

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

BAYLOR UNIVERSITY

## Fund Release Rejected

by Orville Scott  
*Texas Baptist Standard*

DALLAS (BP)—The 193-member Baptist General Convention of Texas executive board narrowly voted down a motion to ask the BGCT Christian education coordinating board to release from escrow all convention scholarship funds allocated to Baylor University in Waco, Texas.

The motion by board member Clyde Herring, pastor of First Baptist Church, The Woodlands, Texas, drew considerable debate at the quarterly Dec. 4 board meeting in Dallas and was defeated by a margin that observers said was as close as a similar vote at the annual meeting of the Baptist General Convention of Texas in Houston, Nov. 13-14.

The Christian education coordinating board placed convention funds for Baylor in escrow after Baylor trustees Sept. 21 unilaterally changed the university charter

to shift "sole governance" of the school from the 48 trustees elected by the BGCT to a 24-member board of regents.

Baylor President Herbert H. Reynolds said the action was taken to protect religious freedom and to avert a takeover by "fundamentalists" such as has occurred in the past 12 years to institutions of the Southern Baptist Convention.

At the BGCT annual session in Houston, messengers denied by a 29-vote margin—1,995 to 1,966—a motion to free about \$7.5 million in Baylor funds being held in escrow for 1991 and the remainder of this year.

The vote came on the heels of another minutes earlier that passed by a 2,164 to 1,991 count. The second vote was taken after Christian education coordinating board director Jerry F. Dawson noted that a mistake had been made in the printing of the Convention budget. He said \$91,160

For ministerial scholarships, as well as faculty fellowship grants had not been placed in escrow.

At the Dec. 4 BGCT executive board meeting, Herring asked that the board request the Christian education coordinating board to also release to Baylor nearly \$800,000 in "unfunded scholarships."

Dawson said these funds, given to the school for any scholarship need, were placed in escrow because they do not represent contracts with students as in the case of ministry scholarships.

After board member J.K. Minton of Houston said, "I think we should trust the process," the board narrowly voted down Herring's motion.

Robert E. Naylor, chairman of the 26-member Committee on BGCT/Baylor Relationship, released the names of a six-member sub-committee to meet with a six-member committee of Baylor trustees yet to be announced.

"Baylor administration and trustees are cooperative," he said, "but resolution of the matter will require God's intervention."

The Arkansas Baptist's

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# A Human Blackboard

by Mark Wingfield  
SBC Home Mission Board

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (BP)—A speaker at a national church growth conference illustrated the difference between multiplication and addition by chalking up totals on a human blackboard.

The demonstration showed the difference between pastors who equip their people for evangelism and pastors who do everything themselves.

Ron Barker of the Home Mission Board's evangelism staff gave the illustration during the HMB's first national church growth conference in Scottsdale, Ariz.

He called on two participants to play the roles of pastors with different approaches to evangelism. He labeled one pastor an "equipper" and the other a "super hired holy man."

Each began by "converting" one other member of the crowd through personal evangelism.

The man tapped by the super pastor sat down while the pastor continued to work. "Give him a card and pack of envelopes," Barker quipped.

Meanwhile, the other pastor equipped his convert and they each went out and "converted" another person from the crowd.

Standing on one side of the platform were the equipping pastor and the three converts his church had won. On the other side stood the "holy" pastor and the one

convert he had won.

"What happens to this pastor with the good intentions is he begins to fold all the bulletins, he begins to mow the lawn, patch the roof, and do everything else that comes along," Barker explained. "He has to work in order to get God's approval.

"He doesn't understand that when he gets before the Lord, the Lord's not going to ask him what he did in the association, what size his church was or how many he won. The Lord's going to ask him, 'Did you do what I asked you to do? Did you equip your people?'"

"The guy who says he's a great soul winner but doesn't equip his people is not doing what God told him to do.

"You may baptize a thousand people a year. But if you win them all, you're not doing what God told you to do. The rest of the church is how many of your people are winning people."

To further illustrate, Barker sent the equipping pastor and his three members out to each bring in another, while the other pastor went out by himself to win one person.

Then he sent the equipping pastor and his seven members out to each bring in yet another new member. The holy pastor did not do this time.

"What begins to happen at the super pastor's church is he doesn't have time to preach either. So sometimes people start leaving the church."

To illustrate, one of the holy pastor's two members moved to the other group, symbolically moving his membership.

By the time the demonstration concluded there were 32 people in the church of the equipping pastor and only two in the church of the do-it-all pastor.

"This is where most of our churches are because our pastors have not obeyed God," Barker said as he pointed to the smaller group.

"We could put 500 people over here and you could say what a great church. But if you're not winning them through your people, you're not doing what God called you to do."

## Seminary Hosts Aging Lectures

FORT WORTH, Texas—David Oliver, a nationally-known specialist in the field of religion and aging, will present the Kellogg Lectures in Christian Gerontology April 4-5, 1991, at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

Oliver will speak on the subjects, "Jesus Had to Leave the Crowd to Touch the Leper" and "Can the Church Be the Extended Family?" in Truett Auditorium at 10 a.m. April 4-5. These lectures are free and open to the public.

Oliver will also speak about "Hospitals and Churches: A Common Ground for Ministry with Patients and Parishioners," at a dinner on April 4. Dinner tickets may be purchased from the Continuing Education office at Southwestern by calling 817-923-1921, ext. 2440.

Oliver is vice president of physical medicine and rehabilitation and chronic care services at Heartland Centre, a hospital-based, long-term care component of the Heartland Health System in St. Joseph, Mo. He has served on the faculties of several colleges and has published widely on the subject of gerontology. His most recent book (co-written with Sally Tureman), *The Human Factor in Nursing Home Care*, was published in 1988.

The lectureship was endowed by Frank and Joy Kellogg of St. Louis, Mo., in 1987. Lucien Coleman, professor of adult education at Southwestern, said the annual event is intended to highlight the spiritual needs of the aging.

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*John H. Butler*  
Principal

## Largest and Fastest Growing

ATLANTA (BP)—Nineteen Southern Baptist Convention churches appear on a newly published list of the largest churches in America, while 25 SBC churches appear on a similar list of the 100 fastest-growing churches in America.

Both lists were compiled by John Vaughan, a church growth professor at Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Mo. The lists are included in the 1991-92 edition of "The Almanac of the Christian World," published by Tyndale House.

Vaughan's listing of the largest churches in America is based upon 1989-90 worship attendance, not upon membership.

North Phoenix Baptist Church in Phoenix, Ariz., is listed as the sixth largest church in America, with an average attendance of 9,500. Second Baptist Church in Houston ranks eighth with 8,500 in attendance.

The two Southern Baptist churches fall behind First Baptist Church of Hammond, Ind., Willow Creek Community Church of South Barrington, Ill., Calvary Chapel of Santa Ana, Calif., Thomas Road Baptist Church of Lynchburg, Va., and First Assembly of God in Phoenix.

## Across the Country

### Baptisms Projected to Increase 7.7 Percent

SCOTSDALE, Ariz. (BP)—Baptisms in Southern Baptist churches for 1990 are projected to be up nearly 8 percent over the previous year—the largest percentage increase in a decade.

Clay Price of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's research division presented that projection to state evangelism directors during their annual meeting in Scottsdale, Ariz.

The total number of baptisms projected for the year is 378,000, a 7.7 percent increase over the 351,107 baptisms recorded in 1989.

Official statistics on baptisms will be reported by the Southern Sunday School Board early in 1991. Price's estimate is based upon preliminary data provided by state evangelism directors. The increase in baptisms appears to be a uniform phenomenon across the nation, Price reported.

### November CP Produces 1990-91 Increase

NASHVILLE (BP)—Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program unified budget receipts for November pushed total receipts for the first two months of the 1990-91 budget year to \$23,123,282, a gain of 2.07 percent over the same period of 1989-90.

October receipts had fallen 4.20 percent below the same month last year, but an 8.6 percent increase in November produced the growth balance.

The total 1990-91 Cooperative Program basic operating budget of \$137,332,523 requires average monthly receipts of \$11,444,377.

### Fixed Fund Rate Projected 8.8 Percent

DALLAS (BP)—The anticipated crediting rate for the fixed fund of the Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention has been projected to be 8.8 percent for 1991.

Annuity Board President Paul W. Powell announced the number Dec. 5 after the investment division completed its analysis of fixed fund assets and prospects for new investments in the coming months.

In December 1989 the expected rate of earnings for 1990 was pegged at 8.9 percent, and earnings have been posted each month to fulfill that goal.

The Annuity Board announces a rate each December for the coming year to assist retirement plan members in their decisions on allocation of contributions and accumulations.

RA Counselor Fellowship



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## Porter Discusses Future

NASHVILLE (BP)—Southern Baptist Convention Registration Secretary Lee Porter has announced he will not be a candidate for the position as long as he is employed by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

In a Nov. 30 prepared statement, Porter said: "As part of discussions regarding comments I made during the Southern Baptist Convention in New Orleans, I was informed by the administration of the Baptist Sunday School Board that it would be unwise for me, as a board employee, to continue to hold an elected office in the Southern Baptist Convention.

"I regret that my comments to students as a convention officer involved me in denominational politics. I am sorry for the pain and disruption caused by my remarks. I accept the position of the administration. Therefore, as long as I am employed by the board, I will not allow my name to be presented to the convention for re-election as registration secretary," the statement continued.

Porter, who has been registration secretary since 1977, said, "If the Lord should lead me to another position and God reveals to me and to Southern Baptist Convention messengers that the cause of Christ, denominational harmony and confidence in the registration and balloting process could be extended with my serving, then I would be most happy to continue to serve as registration secretary."

Porter, a 14-year employee of the board, was removed from his position as a design editor in the board's Sunday school youth-adult department as a result of remarks made during the 1990 Southern Baptist Convention meeting in New Orleans. He was reassigned to a non-editorial position as projects consultant in the same department.

During a June 13 session in the messenger registration area at the Louisiana Superdome, Porter met with a class from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. During the two-and-one-half hour session, he made personal comments on a wide range of SBC issues including messenger registration.

After reviewing the matter, board officials concluded, according to an administrative report, that Porter "violated the established parameters of the Baptist Sunday School Board for acceptable employee conduct."

In response to Porter's announcement that he will not run again for registration secretary as long as he is still employed by the board, Gary Cook, vice president for church programs and services, said "a conscious desire to avoid any appearance of political activity and the time requirements for work assignments were primary reasons for the administration's discussions with Lee Porter concerning the advisability of his continuing to hold denominational office."

## Crisis In Youth Evangelism

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (BP)—Churches don't suffer a lack of ideas for youth ministry today, but a lack of evangelism, a youth ministry expert said.

"We've got a crisis in the Southern Baptist Convention and it's in youth baptisms," said Dean Finley, a youth evangelism specialist with the SBC Home Mission Board. Finley led a workshop during the HMB's first national church growth conference in Scottsdale, Ariz.

He cited statistics showing that youth baptisms declined from 130,000 in 1972 to less than 90,000 in 1987. Youth baptisms increased slightly in 1988 and 1989 and are projected to increase slightly in 1990.

From 1972 to 1987 when youth baptisms declined by nearly 40 percent, the youth population declined only 12 percent, Finley observed. Also, the long term decline in youth baptisms occurred when resources for youth ministry proliferated.

"We don't suffer from the lack of ideas today," he declared. "We suffer from the lack of evangelism."

"When was the last time a teenager got saved in your Sunday school?" he asked. "Could a teenager get saved in your Sunday school if he wanted to? Too many times the answer is no. That's the scary part."

Evangelism should be the purpose of everything done in youth ministry, including every activity, Finley said.

## DATES SET FOR

# OPERATION INVASION

This news just in:

The joint chiefs of staff (for Super Summer Arkansas) have announced plans to **invade the Darkness** on high school campuses all over Arkansas in the Fall of '91.

All students who have completed grades 9-12 are encouraged to attend a strategic week of training on the campus of OBU June 17-21, 1991.

Mobilization will begin on June 21 after forces have been equipped to "shine like stars" (Philippians 2:15).

**Super Summer Arkansas - June 17-21, 1991 OBU**

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"Super Summer" has proven to be a spiritual asset to the youth ministry of our church. I have been impressed with the contribution it has made to our youth and the fruit that has been so evident.

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"Super Summer" can be a building block for your youth ministry. I encourage all our churches to participate and support

"Super Summer," I'm sold on it!

Sonny Simpson  
Pastor, Watson Chapel Baptist Church



# 'Practice What You Preach'

## Baptist Worker Comments About Confinement

by Wm. Fletcher Allen & Connie Davis  
Tennessee Baptist & Reflector

NASHVILLE (BP)—"You really get to practice what you preach," Maurice Graham says about his four-and-a-half month confinement in the American Embassy in Kuwait.

The Shelbyville, Tenn., native, who was released along with 150 other Americans Dec. 9, added, "You learn to pray for your enemies."

His escape came just weeks before all supplies would be depleted by the hostages at the embassy, said Graham, a Southern Baptist worker in Kuwait.

Graham commented on his stay in Kuwait during an interview with the *Baptist and Reflector*, the newsjournal of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, the morning after his arrival in Nashville.

He and his wife, Laurie, and two sons, Peter and Aaron, were part of a small band of refugees who went to the embassy just

after Iraqi troops invaded Kuwait Aug. 2. Their home and church building had been broken into and the hourly danger of being taken prisoner led them to make the move for diplomatic shelter. "We had no choice," he said.

Laurie Graham and the sons joined other Americans and Westerners who were released in September. They have been staying in a home provided by Woodmont Baptist Church in Nashville.

The situation was uncertain, shaky, at first, Graham said. "We were relatively safe inside the embassy compound, while all around us was devastation and destruction."

In their haste to evacuate the country, many people left everything they owned; and others went into hiding for fear of being captured by Iraqis. "Houses were ransacked, the church building was sacked, plumbing and pipes were ripped out and stolen—along with furniture, clothing,

everything," he said.

Graham reported he heard the kind of gunfire that indicated executions were taking place. Munitions were pointed toward the compound and mustard gas containers were placed near it.

He saw troops searching homes again and again to determine who had left—and who remained.

"If you are a resister to the invasion, or if you are caught helping to feed or hide people, you can be shot," Graham said.

The paradox to Graham was that he had worshipped with Iraqis in the National Evangelical Church, where he was associate pastor.

"They're human beings who are also caught in a situation in which they don't have a lot of control and, from my point of view, which they don't really understand."

"What's important "is not how much tuna I ate," continued Graham, referring to the tuna and rice which were the main ingredients of their diet. Accounts of people's needs and the healing work of The National Evangelical Church are the important things, he noted.

# CONGRATULATIONS!

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Julee Anne McHaney	Faulkner
Valerie Gordon	Independence
Holly Freeman	Little River
Kimberly Ann Looney	Mt. Zion
Melodie Pike	North Pulaski
Lori Jones	Ouachita
Monty Self	Pulaski
Natalie Ellen Turner	Red River
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Kelly Martin	White River

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**Convention Uniform***God's Grace is Fair*

by Jim Lagrone, Bryant First Southern Church

Basic passage: Mt. 20:1-16

Focal passage: Mt. 20:13-16

**Central truth:** Benefits of the Kingdom of God are the same for everyone who receives him.

Grace has been defined by several people as unmerited favor. God's grace is limited only by his nature which is limitless. The grace that anyone who comes to Christ receives knows no limits.

This parable is not a parable on payment of hired people, it is on the generosity of God himself. There are three simple messages in this passage.

First of all, the landowner had the resources to pay as he wished. One cannot question the resources of God. One also cannot question how God dispenses these resources. It is not humanity's place at any time to determine how God might choose to move or how God might choose to bless other people.

Secondly, God has the right to dispense his grace as he so chooses. Immediately, preceding this parable, Peter had asked the question and stated that they had left everything to follow him. So what's going to be in it for the disciples? "What's in it for me?" was the cry that he was stressing. Jesus was illustrating to them in chapter 19 and continuing in chapter 20, that he was sovereign in all matters, even those concerning eternal life and that Peter should be content with his situation.

The third lesson illustrated here is in God's nature to dispense grace. You see the grace of God does not deceive or defraud anyone. It is impossible to earn the grace of God, it is impossible to earn the favor of God. Each worker got what he was promised. Each worker received exactly what was given to him. It is interesting to know that only the workers who began in the morning were quoted a price for their services. The workers who came later in the day were just promised a fair wage. It is quite possible that those in the 11th hour can't realize and be more sincere than those committed at an earlier time.

God does not dispense his grace on a merit system. The saving grace is offered to all and the response which he desires is implicit trust. True servants of Christ will rejoice at anyone's salvation, regardless of the timing on mankind's calendar.

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**Life and Work***The Dividing Christ*

by Bobby Tucker, Maple Grove Church, Trumann

Basic passage: John 7:14-18, 28-39, 40-46

Focal passage: John 7:40-46

**Central truth:** Jesus demands a definite decision to follow him.

If we were to survey our neighbors, fellow employees, and those with whom we socialized by asking them, "Who is Jesus Christ?", invariably, we would have a multitude of responses. And more likely than not, many of the responses would be erroneous, if not downright heretical. For example, some would say, "He was a good teacher" or "Jesus was a good moral leader." Of course, the list goes on and on. The last verses of John chapter seven paint a similar picture. This crowd responded to Jesus in at least three different ways.

First, some thought Jesus was a prophet. Indeed, he was. But more so than the Old Testament version. Some today say Jesus was a great prophet (teacher). Yet, they fail to see what makes him prophetic—his divine nature. Our towns, and cities must recognize through our clear testimonies that Jesus is God, not merely a teacher.

Secondly, some of the crowd recognizes Jesus as the Christ (v. 41). Let's make a contemporary parallel and call these the church. Those who are saved, who recognize who Christ is, belong to the church. Those who recognized Jesus was Messiah in the New Testament followed him. They were disciples. Today, the church needs disciples that first know who Jesus is, then will follow him unconditionally.

There is a third group mentioned in this passage of Scripture. This group represents those who have heard bits and pieces of biblical truth all of their lives, yet have never come to a knowledge of the truth. That is tragic. Our tasks as believers are to clearly present in both word and deed gospel truth. If you are saved, then live, talk, and act like it. Why? Because if you don't, you run the risk of causing division. Today, the last thing the body of Christ needs is that.

If you teach the Bible, make sure you do it not only efficiently, but clearly. Your hearers need to understand the message you are attempting to convey.

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**Bible Book***Trust Jesus*

by Bill Howard, Salem Church, Benton

Basic passage: Luke 12:1-13:21

Focal passage: Luke 12:5-10; 12:34

**Central truth:** Our relationship to God through Jesus Christ is the only permanent value we will even know.

The importance of Jesus' teaching in Luke 12-13 is how to place our trust and build our treasures in life. You have no reason to fear man, but every reason to fear God (vv. 5-10). All men can do is destroy the body which is a temporary temple, but eternal fate rest in the hands of a just God. Every lost person should fear the wrath and justice of God because every sin shall be judged (Ro. 20:11-15). Every believer should fear him as a child fears to bring displeasure to his parents who love him. We should live in obedience in order to not hurt the heart of God.

The fact that God is all knowing (vv. 6-7) will bring two responses. If one is out of fellowship and living in sin, it will bring fear. If one is in fellowship and walking in obedience, it will bring peace and a great sense of security.

The myth about secret disciples is dispelled (vv. 8-9). Jesus himself teaches that we are to openly confess him before men upon this earth, if we are to expect him to present us to the Father in heaven. There are scores of people who have heard the salvation message. They given mental assent to it but they never trust the person of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior to the point of openly confessing him. Paul's message to the Romans centered in this fact (Ro. 10:9-11).

Our relationship to God is given to us through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. This is for all who trust him and openly confess him as Savior and Lord. His representative to the world and indwelling in each believer today is the Holy Spirit (v. 10). He is the third person of the Trinity. He is God. "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit and these three are one (1 Jn. 5:7). Jesus admonishes us to honor the Holy Spirit for he is no less than God and he directly deals with us today (Jn. 14:17-28; 16:7-14).

When we seek God's will everything else we need will be provided (Lk. 12:31). This is not an excuse for laziness. It is a mandate to trust God and look beyond the horizon.

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## Convention Uniform

### True Preparation

by Jim Lagrone, Bryant First Southern Church

Basic passage: Matthew 25:1-13

Focal passage: Matthew 25:13

Central truth: Responsibility is reflected in preparation.

Recently, as a result of a scientist prediction, many people in northeast Arkansas prepared themselves for a catastrophic earthquake. If the earthquake occurred, those who were prepared will survive much easier than those who did not. If the earthquake did not occur, those who procrastinated in their preparation will feel justified. However, knowing human nature those who were prepared would be begged to help those who are unprepared if the earthquake occurred.

Jesus tells us to be prepared for him. Jesus gives us an illustration of being adequately prepared.

Some believe that this is a picture of the waiting church. The believers of Christ are told to be prepared when Jesus returns to this world again. Whether or not you are premillennium, postmillennium, or amillennium in your eschatology, Jesus will return someday. Preparation must be maintained. Preparation must be personal, and it must be based on your relationship with Christ and must be complete in nature.

Another way some have interpreted this passage of Scripture is that the virgins and their lambs represent a faithful Jewish remnant during a time of tribulation.

Still others believe it is a picture of being alert and prepared for the fullness of God's kingdom to arrive.

The spiritual application is rather simple. Are you prepared to see Jesus? Are you prepared for the coming of the Lord? Or have you been procrastinating in your decision about Jesus Christ in your life. People tend to put off preparing themselves for all eternity. What this parable is teaching us is that Christ is going to come when we least expect it and we need to be always continually prepared.

It also illustrates another truth found throughout the New Testament that salvation is based upon the personal relationship with Jesus Christ. No one can be saved, for you, no one can provide salvation to you, no one can buy it for you.

Are you prepared to see Jesus or not? Individually, it is your choice and your decision.

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## Life and Work

### Blinded by Sight

by Curtis Honts, Lakeshore Drive Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: John 9:24-25, 28-30, 33-41

Focal passage: John 9:24-25, 28-30, 33-34

Central truth: Our blindness to new sight is often self-imposed.

The familiar passage of Jesus' healing of the man born blind both delights and instructs us as we learn from the positive and negative reactions to God's wonderful provision for this man's need.

First we see the positive, trusting reaction of the blind man. The scriptures tell us little about this one. Was he devout? Did he expect a Messiah, a Savior? If so, was it a Messiah interested in him and his needs? Had he ever heard of Jesus? We do not know.

We do know that he did not ask Jesus to heal him, but that Jesus initiated the encounter. Through his own experience and tradition (no one born blind had ever received sight - v. 32) gave him no reason for hope, "he went his way" in obedience when Jesus told him to wash in the pool of Siloam. He could see!

Contrasting the simple obedience of the blind man is the dogged resistance of the Pharisees. They quickly realized that they could not challenge the fact of the healing so they hurriedly switched the focus hoping to discredit the Healer.

When the poor man insisted that Jesus had done something wonderful for him they tagged him as trouble maker and cast him out of the synagogue. The Pharisees simply would not accept a work of God that did not fit their understanding.

While we long to exercise the growing, unquestioning faith of the blind man, how often do we display the Pharisees' bondage to the limits of our particular tradition? Do we decline to accept as brothers those Christians of other denominations because God's work in their lives varies from his work in our lives?

Do we refuse to learn from people on the other "side" in our own denominational unrest because their experience differs from our own? Do we attempt to "cast out" those who do not readily recognize and accept our position on some issue? If so, we injure and reject one whom Jesus has healed and chosen, just like the Pharisees did with the man born blind.

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## Bible Book

### Responding to Salvation

by Harry Black, First Church, England

Basic passage: Luke 15:11-12

Focal passage: Luke 15:11-12

Central truth: Christians should be like the Father in welcoming all repentant sinners into the kingdom.

"Jump! Jump!" A man perches on a ledge 12 stories above the pavement as the crowd shouts below. Concerned family and friends plead from within. Finally, the confused man climbs through the window to safety. The family cheers, the crowd boos, and we see a picture of salvation.

In the story of the prodigal son we see society as Jesus saw it: a world confronted by and responding to salvation and to those who come to salvation.

First, we see the lostness of the son. With very few words we recognize traits which are typical of every lost person. (1) The son was "self" centered: self-advancing, self-fulfilling, and self-satisfying. (2) The son wasted his inheritance. Every person receives an inheritance which may include family, talents, and opportunities. We use or waste this inheritance as we choose. (3) The son found himself to be in need. Every person comes to that place in their life where they realize that they have a need which they cannot fill.

Next, we see the compassion of the father. The self-centered son came with an unusual request; to receive his inheritance early. The father's compassion is seen in his granting his son's request and in his willingness to let his son go. He did not force the son to be and do right, but rather gave him the freedom to be lost. The father's compassion is most clearly seen in his enthusiastic reception of the lost son. No condemnation, no "I told you so," no moral superiority. The lost son returned in repentance, the father welcomed him with rejoicing.

Finally, we see the resentment of the brother. It is a pity that such a beautiful story should be marred by the open hostility of a resentful brother. In Jesus' day it was the Pharisees who resented the "sinners" being welcomed home. In our day there are still church members who resent the "prodigal's" homecoming.

Next Sunday morning when the prodigal comes home (be he convict, alcoholic, wealthy executive, or just different) some will rejoice and some will resent. What will you do?

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## EASTERN EUROPE

**Surviving the Winter**

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—Southern Baptist churches can help Romanians, Bulgarians and Soviets survive the harsh conditions expected this winter.

Many people in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union are facing not only a cold winter but economic chaos and hunger as their nations struggle to adjust to profound social change.

For several months, Western European Baptists have been sending food and basic medicine packages to Romania and Bulgaria. Each parcel contains items such as margarine, oil, flour, rice, cheese, powdered milk, coffee, soap, washing powder, aspirin, soups, sausages and canned meats.

In a carefully coordinated operation, the packages of essentials have been mailed directly from Baptist churches in Western Europe to churches in the East. "If guidelines are followed, the governments will not require senders or recipients to pay expensive customs charges on aid packages," said Karl-Heinz Walter, general secretary of the European Baptist

Federation.

The response of European Baptists has been so great that better and cheaper arrangements now have been made to ship the parcels. They now will be trucked into Romania and Bulgaria, with some packages being shipped on to the Baltic republics and other parts of the Soviet Union.

Southern Baptists and others in North America who have requested opportunities to help also can participate, but not by sending parcels. Baptist World Aid and the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board have made joint arrangements for supporting the aid effort by opening a special fund. Contributions received will be forwarded immediately to the European Baptist Federation in Hamburg, Germany, and used to pay for food packages.

Paul Montacute, director of Baptist World Aid, the relief division of the Baptist World Alliance, estimated each package will cost \$25 to put together and ship. "If the same package was shipped from the United

States it would cost nearly \$50 to airmail and \$25 to send by surface mail, and then it would not arrive until winter had ended," said Montacute. "This system will feed more people."

"The beauty of this plan is that it allows Southern Baptist churches of any size or even individual families to help," said Keith Parker, FMB area director for Europe. "Winter is going to be awful in these countries. Indications are that many people will face hunger and that shortages in medicines will cause untold suffering to families. Already many items are being rationed. Here's a chance for us to make a difference."

Churches are being asked not to send large loads of food and clothing because of problems with both storing and distributing bulky shipments. The small packages shipped by European Baptists will be distributed to the most needy through networks established by local churches in Romania and Bulgaria.

"We already have heard reports that the packages are getting through," Parker said. "It is essential that the packages be sent through this system, though, since we've heard of others winding up for sale on the black market."

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## WORLD

### KAZAKHSTAN

# To Ease the Suffering

by Marty Croll  
SBC Foreign Mission Board

ALMA-ATA, U.S.S.R. (BP)—Three separate environmental calamities in the Soviet republic of Kazakhstan present an open door for Southern Baptists to help people who have long been hidden from the eyes of the West.

Through their service organization, Cooperative Services International, Southern Baptists plan to send up to 700 volunteers to Kazakhstan next summer to provide assistance in many fields. It could be the largest Southern Baptist volunteer group ever to participate in a single overseas project. Southern Baptists also have begun to ship a series of huge containers of food and nutritional supplements to the beleaguered area.

Much of the assistance during the project, scheduled June 20-July 8, 1991, will focus on the heavily Muslim people living along the fringes of the Aral Sea, where over-draining of upstream rivers has caused water to recede. Forty percent of the seabed has turned to salty dust.

Other support will go to an area surrounding a nuclear testing site and to an earthquake-stricken region.

Because the region has long been out of contact with the West, most Kazakhs have never met a Christian.

"How we respond to their needs gives rise to the question, 'Why?' and we can answer them, 'Jesus Christ,'" said John Cheyne, who administers Southern Baptists' overseas hunger and disaster relief funds. Cheyne traveled to the area in September at the invitation of the Golden Apple, a group set up to help Kazakhstan by fostering exchanges between the Kazakhs and other cultures.

Cattle and sheep—lifeblood to the economy of Kazakh farmers and herders descended from the ancient Turks—still graze on the hillsides near where the Soviet government is believed to have staged atomic tests similar to the ones the United States conducted in the American western deserts.

Disfigured children inhabit the village of Sarzhah, near where underground atomic blasts reportedly were vented into the air. In Sarzhah, a collective farm project with some 35,000 people, Cheyne visited the home of a 40-year-old woman and was told her dwarf-like appearance resulted from radiation exposure.

Kazakh leaders told Cheyne nuclear testing dangers were not evident for some time. They thought other factors caused growing malformation and mental



Some disfigured residents of the Soviet republic of Kazakhstan met with John Cheyne, right, to discuss the possibility of aid.

disorders in the region. More recently, however, signs of radiation poisoning such as cancer, leukemia and pulmonary problems have become overwhelming.

The tragedy along the Aral Sea also has heartbroken to Cheyne. "The people there suffer from a combination of hopeless desperation and fatalism." Because of their traditional religious beliefs, they feel they must stay in the area despite the little hope they hold for the future.

As water flow into the sea has fallen sharply, an estimated 40 percent of the sea's surface area and 60 percent of its volume have disappeared, Cheyne said. Without a change in the use of upstream waters that feed it, the sea could become a geographic memory in the next century, some experts say.

In the earthquake devastation area, people have been able to make only limited attempts to prop up buildings left unsound with gaping cracks. Little, if any, rebuilding is evident. In some places people have welded metal braces like angle irons on the outside corners of concrete structures.

Kazakh officials particularly want radiologists, infectious disease specialists, dentists, prosthetists and nurses. Health volunteers will teach and work in hospitals and go into rural clinics.