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Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

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### June 15, 1995

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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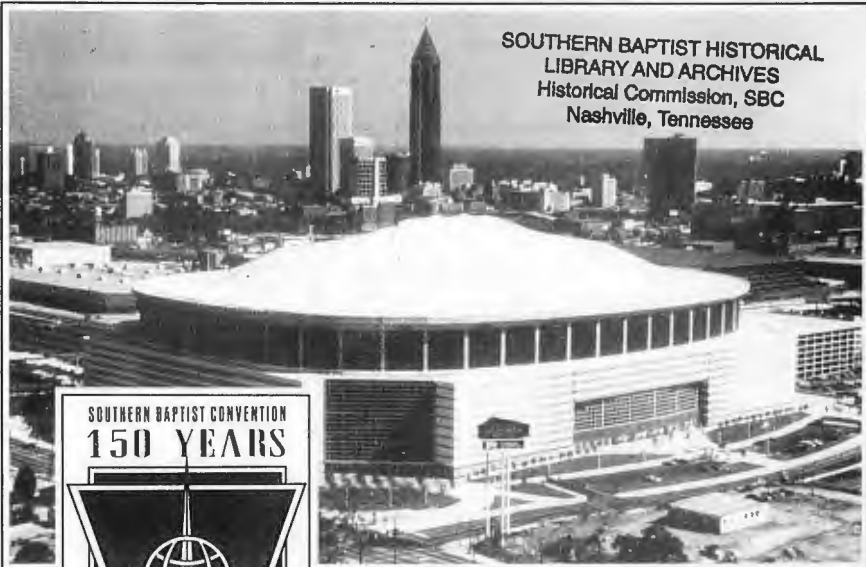
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# ARKANSAS BAPTIST



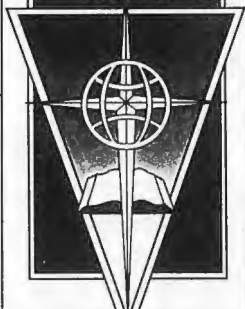
Volume 94, Number 12

June 15, 1995



SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL  
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SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION  
**150 YEARS**



**EMPOWERED**  
*For the unfinished task*  
*Matthew 28: 18-20*

**S**outhern Baptist messengers will gather next week at the Georgia Dome in Atlanta to celebrate the Southern Baptist Convention's sesquicentennial. The June 20-22 meeting also will feature a vote on the "Covenant for a New Century," a proposed restructuring plan for the SBC.

# Moore leads spiritual focus for missionaries in Senegal

Don Moore, executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, recently led spiritual renewal sessions during the annual gathering of foreign missionaries assigned to Senegal and surrounding areas in western Africa.

Moore, accompanied by his wife, Nita, left Arkansas June 1 to speak at the two-day meeting of 27 missionaries in Dakar, a port city in Senegal.

Explained the purpose of the meeting, Moore noted, "Every year all of the missionaries are brought in and they not only try to do things that renew themselves spiritually, but they also look at the reports from the past year and make plans for the coming year. The business end of missions takes place at the annual meeting."

## Words of encouragement

"What they asked me to do is come in and do the retreat messages that would inspire and encourage them to have them discover the will of God and do it together," he added. "This involved me preaching six times in two days."

He said he was invited to deliver the messages after he was recommended to the missionaries by Henry Blackaby, author of *Experiencing God*.

Moore said he received renewal by seeing the work of the missionaries. "I have been on missions trips in India, Brazil, Guatemala and Bangladesh and every field is different," he commented. "The thing that this work has in common with Bangladesh is that you have a population that is about 98 percent Muslim.

"Now missionaries do have a lot of

freedom to propagate the gospel," he added, "but the converts are so persecuted that it is hard to get large numbers together to build churches. It helped me to see how slow the work is in Muslim areas."

Despite the hardships, missionaries are making "miraculous" advances, according to Moore. "Al Hodges believes God has given him a word that God is going to bring a revival that will result in large numbers of Muslims being saved," he said. "They are seeing more results now than they have ever seen."

He told of two results of missionary efforts. "Missionary Dirk Pierce lives in a city near Dakar and has been invited by the Muslim religious leader to come on Thursdays to the mosque and teach the Bible to the men. That's a miracle."

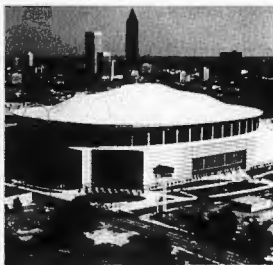
He also noted that Mike Hutchison, missionary to the Fulanis, "has been invited by the imam, the Muslim religious leader, to come and teach the Bible to his people.

If those community leaders for Islam become converted or more tolerant toward the gospel, then any number of people could be saved following that."

Highlighting "the dedication of the missionaries," Moore pointed out, "They showed it through the good feeling they have about where they are and the confidence they have. They are in a very discouraging area of the world. There are 27 (Baptist) adults ministering to more than 7 million people in Senegal.

"For the first time," he noted, "I think I also saw the kind of interpersonal stress that develops between missionaries. They live under lots of daily pressure."

## Cover Story



## SBC sesquicentennial

Southern Baptist messengers will gather next week at the Georgia Dome in Atlanta to celebrate the Southern Baptist Convention's sesquicentennial. The June 20-22 meeting also will feature a vote on the "Covenant for a New Century," a proposed restructuring plan for the SBC.

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# ARKANSAS BAPTIST



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# FMB drops request for Lottie trademark

BIRMINGHAM, AL (BP)—Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board administrators have dropped an effort to trademark the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions.

The decision was communicated to national leaders of Woman's Missionary Union during a June 5 meeting in Birmingham, Ala., by Don Kammerdiener, FMB executive vice president, and David Button, FMB vice president for public relations and development. The trademark application had drawn opposition from WMU leaders and others.

Kammerdiener said the decision was made the previous week in a telephone conversation with FMB president Jerry Rankin, who is visiting missionaries in Asia.

"The relationship between the WMU and the FMB is far more valuable than control of the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering trademark," Kammerdiener said in a joint press statement released by both organizations.

WMU executive director Dellanna O'Brien, one of four WMU leaders at the Birmingham meeting, agreed.

"This decision has helped to affirm the historic role of the WMU in its support for the offering," O'Brien said in the statement. "This has been an emotional issue for our membership. I believe the decision will help put this issue behind us and contribute to a closer relationship between these two missions partners."

Kammerdiener added that the board would not block any attempt by WMU to secure a trademark on its own. But he suggested "that it may be in the interest of both parties to drop the matter altogether."

"We're grateful for the freedom that the FMB has given WMU to apply for a trademark for the LMCO, but we have no immediate plans for doing so," O'Brien told Baptist Press. "For one thing, we haven't had time to consider pros and cons of such an action. And we certainly would not act without a directive from our executive board."

In the Birmingham meeting, WMU and FMB leaders also made several other Lottie Moon-related decisions.

They affirmed two basic Lottie Moon Christmas Offering principles: "The liberty of every church (in the Southern Baptist Convention) to give to whatever it wants" and "That all moneys contributed to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering should rightfully go to the support of missionaries appointed by the Foreign Mission Board." The offering raises nearly half of the FMB's annual budget.

FMB leaders said they initiated the

## Baptists top 99% of Lottie Moon goal

RICHMOND, VA (BP)—Southern Baptists increased their giving to the 1994 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering by about \$3 million over the previous year. They came short by \$67,402 or a mere .08 percent — of their goal, which hasn't been met since 1981.

The figures, released June 2 by the Foreign Mission Board, showed the final tally surpassed the board's March 10 projections by nearly a half million dollars. The 1994 Lottie Moon offering goal was \$86 million.

"I think this is one more way Southern Baptists have of saying regardless of any secondary circumstances, the primary thing is for them to move ahead in missions," said Don Kammerdiener, the FMB's executive vice president.

When the books closed May 31, giving stood at a record \$85,932,597.88 — 99.92 percent of the goal. The 3.66 percent increase over 1993 represents the largest annual jump since 1988 and the closest Southern Baptists have drawn to the goal since they met it in 1981.

Kammerdiener noted that after four years of a virtual plateau, offering receipts increased in 1993 and 1994. "Breaking through this plateau gives us

encouragement that the trend will continue," he said. "This gain points us toward the even greater gain needed to reach the \$100 million sesquicentennial goal."

That goal for 1995, Southern Baptists' 150th year, will require a 16.4 percent increase. "There is no question that the Southern Baptists have the capacity to give that amount (\$100 million) and even a great deal more," said Carl Johnson, the board's vice president for finance, in a memo to FMB trustees announcing the tally.

The 1994 offering will provide about \$2.6 million in capital funds for the field, compared with \$1.9 million it supplied last year. Such expenses include equipment, autos and housing. About \$83.4 million of the offering will go to the board's overseas operating budget, which primarily provides missionary support.

The offering, generally collected in churchwide campaigns during December, will fund about 46 percent of the mission board's \$186 million budget this year. The rest of the budget is expected to come through the SBC Cooperative Program, and other income, such as investments and hunger and relief receipts.

trademark application "after concerns arose regarding unauthorized use and distribution" of the offering named for famed 19th century missionary Lottie Moon. Some churches have reportedly raised funds in the offering's name and then sent some of the receipts to the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship or to independent non-SBC missionaries.

### Further consultation planned

The Birmingham participants also agreed to further consultation between the FMB and WMU and that WMU's New Hope publishing arm will publish a new biography of Lottie Moon, written by Rankin. O'Brien will write the foreword for the book. Kammerdiener also invited WMU leaders to meet with FMB trustees during their October board meeting.

The disagreement between WMU and the FMB over the trademark issue began May 13 when the Virginia WMU's executive board said they had learned the FMB had applied 10 months earlier for a trademark on the Lottie Moon offering.

WMU leaders in Birmingham said they

were "surprised and disappointed" to learn of the action.

Rankin responded on May 18, saying the board had put the application on hold until the board could consult with WMU leaders. He also expressed regret for the oversight of not consulting with WMU leaders, and for the "insensitivity to their historic identification with the offering." Rankin said the FMB had "no intention of offending or neglecting" WMU. O'Brien, in turn, said she was "pleased with the action" and added:

"When a Christian brother asks for forgiveness, you give it. The details will have to be worked out later. This is the first step toward a fuller understanding of this unfortunate incident."

The trademark disagreement occurred at a time some Southern Baptists feel SBC leadership is attempting to minimize WMU's role through the SBC's proposed restructuring process.

Rankin has insisted, however, that nothing will change in the historic partnership between the women's auxiliary and the Foreign Mission Board.

YOU'LL  
BE GLAD  
TO KNOW

By DON MOORE  
ABCS Executive Director

Changing times, societal pressure and uncertain conditions caused the Jewish believers of the first century to waver at times. The writer of Hebrews urged the believers of that day to "hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful" (Heb. 10:23).

Believers are discouraged today. Scores have just "hung it up," as we sometimes say. I do not know whether Christians are more fragile in our day or if offenses against them are more severe. It just seems that more people find more reasons to abandon the Lord and His work every year. Most of the offenses used to justify inactivity and unfaithfulness come, not from the pagan community, but from within the family of faith itself. Some of the causes are so petty it is embarrassing to even mention them. Backsliders, without shame, announce their intentions to go away from the family of God to do their own thing. Maybe it is selfish desire more than severe offenses that people use as an excuse to turn away.

In Hebrews some of both probably existed. It is doubtful that anyone of us has stood to lose what they did for their faith. Yet they were expected to press on. Many of them did press on. Hebrews 11 indicates that their faithfulness involved torture, imprisonment, floggings, chains, stoning, swords and saws. It says, "The world was not worthy of them." I guess not!

Neither are we! When we, with such careless disregard, excuse ourselves from Christian duties, we are not of the same spiritual character as those early believers.

Hebrews 11:39 says, "These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised." What a rebuke to us. We feel that we have to see results. They saw so little results in their day, yet all succeeding generations have been blessed. The generations that follow us will be blessed or cursed by the measure of our faithfulness. Believers, keep on keeping on. Even when everything goes "haywire" around you, keep on keeping on for Him. God said, "If my righteous one shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him" (Heb. 10:38).

RONNIE ROGERS

## President's Corner

## A moderate departure



The difficulty of whether to classify the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship as a denomination or not resides in the very nature of the CBF. It was organized by and for moderates, and moderates tend to be more comfortable in the middle. Thus, the CBF is a "moderate departure" which means they are not totally gone nor are they totally with us; like other moderate decisions this leaves a lot of us very confused.

Although their departure is not complete, it is significant enough to justify classifying them as a denomination — even if it's a denomination within a denomination. For example, they have departed from conservative Southern Baptists in three significant areas:

■ **Theologically:** In the CBF address to the public, the interim steering committee stated, "The Bible neither claims nor reveals inerrancy as a Christian teaching." In the 1992 meeting of moderates in Georgia, Cecil Sherman told them, "Issues never were merely political. Where the fundamentalists are going to take the SBC is to their theology. Where the moderates would have taken the SBC is to their theology; the theology of the two groups was, in and will be quite different."

■ **Financially:** In 1992-1993 the CBF increased the percent of dollars diverted from the SBC to the CBF by 24 percent while simultaneously decreasing the percentage of dollars channeled through the CBF to the SBC by 34 percent. To put it another way, in 1991 they kept

\$1,857,710 from the total funds sent to them and in 1993 they kept \$8,400,750. Shortly before Keith Parks joined the CBF, in reference to conservatives, he said, "If they go to the same Southern Baptist churches for support, I can't see it as anything else but direct competition." I don't know if he still believes that since the organization he now belongs to does the same thing.

■ **Denominationally:** In the 1992 CBF meeting, Cecil Sherman argued against the CBF being a denomination because they were "too small." Unless I have forgotten the principles of logic, their smallness would only prove they are not a large denomination, but not whether they are a denomination. Herschel Hobbs, in an ABP article said, "They have a denomination in embryo." The CBF has annual meetings, mission programs, administrative officers, and they support, with considerable financial influence, approved seminaries, ethics agencies, a news service and a publishing house.

If you apply the old duck test (you know, if it looks, acts and quacks like a duck...) or any other standard of logic, they are a denomination.

I'm grateful that those who disagree with the conservative direction of the convention have somewhere to go; however, we must all realize that a duck is a duck is a duck.

Ronnie Rogers, pastor of Lakeside Church in Hot Springs, is president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

## Personal perspectives

"Our world vision has been enlarged by having (Arkansas Baptist) brothers and sisters come over."

—Larry Carson, pastor, Emmanuel Baptist Church, Hoensbroek, Netherlands

"The full job of world evangelization is beyond any one group or denomination."

—Avery Willis, FMB senior vice president of overseas operations

# Full, free, fair debate — the Baptist way

Southern Baptists are less than a week away from voting on one of the most significant proposals to face convention messengers in recent years. The report of the Program and Structure Study Committee will be presented next Tuesday on the opening day of the 1995 Southern Baptist Convention in Atlanta.

During the past three months, the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* has published more than 20 news articles, editorials and letters about the proposed changes, including an in-depth point/counterpoint analysis published in the June 1 issue. Even with all the complex details involved in reducing the number of national SBC entities from 19 to 12, Arkansas Baptists have no excuse for failing to be informed about the recommendation.

The SBC Executive Committee's approval of the plan in February has been followed by diverse opinions about the motive, wisdom and long-term impact of the "Covenant for a New Century." Trustees of the Foreign Mission Board and Christian Life Commission as well as seminary leaders have enthusiastically embraced the plan while Brotherhood trustees, Home Mission Board president



## STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR

By TRENNIS HENDERSON

Larry Lewis, Woman's Missionary Union leaders and convention historians have been among those who have questioned various aspects of the proposal.

Study committee members have readily acknowledged that their proposal isn't perfect. Yet they have declined to amend the plan, insisting that the recommendation is their best possible effort and that it is designed as a complete package.

SBC president Jim Henry, a strong supporter of the restructuring plan, has pledged to "do everything possible to be fair" in moderating discussion of the proposal.

During an on-line news conference last week on SBCNet, Executive Committee president Morris Chapman noted, "The committee is recommending the report in its entirety because they see it as an organic whole. Nevertheless, amendments may be offered from the floor and if the body adopts them, they would become a part of the report."

Study committee members have spent countless hours asking tough questions and making difficult choices in an effort to prepare Southern Baptists for more effective ministry in the decades ahead. Each SBC messenger has the responsibility to ask equally tough questions and personally seek God's guidance about how to respond. The opportunity for full, free and fair debate is vital to the long-term success of any plan adopted by messengers. That's the Baptist way.

"The messengers have the final say so," Henry insisted. "We will stand by the messengers." Once all sides have been heard and the majority has made a final decision, all Southern Baptists will then have the privilege to work together for the common good as the SBC strives to impact the 21st century with the gospel of Christ.

## Search the Scriptures

I would like to present another side of the issue of the role of women in churches. There is much opposition to ordaining women either as minister or deacons. The writings of Paul have been cited as a justification for this position, especially proof texts such as 1 Timothy 3:1-2 and Titus 1:6. To use these alone as support for this position does not do justice to Paul or to women. These texts would have excluded Paul, John the Baptist and even Jesus.

Paul is also a strong supporter of equality among all people. In Romans 3 he declares that the righteousness of God is available to all who believe. There is no difference in race, national origin or gender. In Galatians 3:28 Paul declared, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor free, neither male nor female for we are all one in Christ." Again in Romans 3, Paul encourages the believers to exercise the various gifts that have been given to them. How will we answer the woman who has the gift of preaching when she asks for the privilege of doing so?

There also was a woman deacon in the church at Cenchræ (Rom. 16:1). Paul spoke highly of her and commended her to the Romans.

A study of the words "servant," "minister" and "deacon" reveals that these words all had one common word,



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

*diakonos*, in the New Testament. It was the King James translators who separated and mistranslated these words. There was no English word for deacon, so the translators created one. Neither is there any clear-cut usage of the word "ordain." The KJV translates at least a dozen Greek words into the word "ordain." There is no uniform definition of these Greek words.

When the veil in the Temple was split it signified that everyone had equal access to God by faith; priest and laypersons, Jews and Gentiles, men and women.

My hope is that we can search the Scriptures instead of our traditions to find the will of God in these matters.

Roy Remont  
Hot Springs, AR

## Issue is sad, not funny

It saddens my heart to see letters to the editor in support of women pastors and opinions which state that God thinks this issue, along with disagreeing views, are "funny." Well, I don't think it funny nor do I presume to give a direct quote from God saying it is.

I am a young pastor in an SBC church who has searched the Scriptures and I find no biblical support for women to assume the scriptural position of a pastor.

Some have used Galatians 3:28, "there is no male or female," to support women pastors. First, that scripture talks about unity in Christ, not the biblical positions of authority. Second, let's quit manipulating Scripture to defend what's not there!

Southern Baptists have traditionally long stood on the biblical principle of men in the pastorate. Except for a few radicals along the way, this is traditionally part of who we are and what we stand for because it's biblical. If people don't agree with our scriptural interpretation then why are they Southern Baptists? Why don't they change denominations? I don't agree with their denominational views — that's why I'm Southern Baptist.

Does God use women? Yes! Can women minister? Yes! Can women serve? Yes! Are women any less spiritual than men? No! In fact many churches would have died had it not been for the support and leadership of women. But try as you might to rewrite Scripture, reinterpret or read into it what you want to believe — it's just not there. There is no biblical authority for women pastors!

Thank you, Ronnie Rogers, for taking a stand of leadership on this biblical issue.

Dan W. Ingram  
Dutch Mills, AR

# Partnership feedback

*European pastor says missions partnership 'enlarges world vision'*

By Russell N. Dilday

Associate Editor, Arkansas Baptist

European Baptist pastor Larry Carson evaluated his congregation's partnership with an Arkansas Baptist church during a recent visit to Arkansas. The partnership between the two churches is part of the three-year missions partnership between the European Baptist Convention and the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

Carson, pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Hoensbroek, Netherlands, visited First Southern Baptist Church in Bryant along with his wife, Joy, June 3-5. He preached during the Sunday morning service and spoke that evening during First Southern's Vacation Bible School opening service.

Carson, who has served as pastor of Emmanuel Church since 1980, also served on the EBC executive committee that voted to enter into the partnership with Arkansas Baptists. He also was president of the EBC from 1990 through 1992.

He noted that the current missions partnership is the third for the EBC. "We really had blessings from all of the partnerships," he affirmed.

"Our churches are in need. They are static," he explained. He said the need often results from the high turnover rate in EBC churches, many of which still have a high ratio of American military members. "We don't have the continuity that many churches in the States do. We only have a short span of time before we send our members out."

Carson is well aware of what the military presence in Europe means for EBC churches. After serving as a lay pastor for Emmanuel from 1975-1976 while he was stationed at a nearby Army base, he became the full-time pastor there when he retired from the Army in 1980.

From his pastorate in 1975 which "began with five families," he said the congregation has grown to include "about 155 resident members and 15 to 20 associate members."

"The church is primarily military — Army, Air Force and NATO," he noted. "We also have several Sri Lankan refugees. There is a Sri Lankan refugee camp nearby."

The church has been located in downtown Hoensbroek since 1985 in a former car dealership.

Carson said the church is "the center of life" for members "mainly because we zero in on discipleship and the family. We have one Russian family that drives an hour one way to attend."

## **EBC leaders request aid in leader search**

**Dear Arkansas Baptists:**

Greetings from Europe where so many of your pastors and laypersons are ministering through the partnership of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention with our European Baptist Convention. Many of our churches have formed "sister" relationships that bear much fruit. So we express our thanks and appreciation. We also share this prayer request:

For many years missionaries John and Elizabeth Merritt have ministered here with great results. They will retire in 1996, so we must fill the position of general secretary. We desire your prayers and recommendations.

What type leaders do we envision? Our candidate profile sounds like any of our former EBC pastors or current Southern Baptist missionaries. We believe that this person has previously lived in a non-American setting. A working know-

ledge of German is necessary — or a willingness for serious language training.

We began over 30 years ago ministering to American military but now reach business people, refugees, exchange students and local nationals comfortable in international circles. Because our members are young and transient, we need a career-minded leader able to serve up to 15 years. We're growing and have long-term plans!

Our leader must function in an international, multi-cultural environment since our 64 churches are scattered in 20 countries. We do lots of traveling!

Please pray with us for God's chosen leader. As chairman of the search committee, I can receive your recommendations at Jenaer Str. 35, 65205 WI-Nordenstadt, Germany.

C.W. Bess

Wiesbaden, Germany

He said the discipleship emphasis is important for members, noting that the church is "deeply involved" in MasterLife and Continuing Witness Training.

The emphasis on discipleship may be among the reasons that 46 men in the church have surrendered to Christian service during Carson's tenure, although he acknowledged, "I can't tell you why."

"I don't think I do anything out of the ordinary," he noted. "We let the body be the body. We let them find their spiritual gifts and we are real flexible."

### **Mutual benefits**

He said that even though Emmanuel Church is self-supporting, the partnership has helped them meet specific needs.

"The partnership has meant a lot of things" to his congregation, Carson added. "This is the first time we have been linked church-to-church."

"We can draw on First Southern for different needs," he said. "They build our pulpit and they will teach VBS in July with 23 people they will send over."

Carson said First Southern also has given a less tangible gift: "Our world vision has been enlarged by having brothers and sisters come over. Sometimes God can enlarge our world vision and the larger vision of His work when they interact" with American Christians.

Bryant pastor Jim Lagrone said the benefits from involvement in the partnership are mutual. "The partnership has also

expanded our world vision. We have had members excited and thrilled when they get back.

"It is the best thing to promote missions we can do," Lagrone said. "We have so many missionaries and we need to see some of those missionaries."

Emphasizing that "there needs to be more ABSC partners," Carson listed discipleship, lay renewal and Vacation Bible School as EBC projects needing Arkansas Baptist leadership.

He also shared a prayer request for the EBC's selection of a new general secretary to succeed John Merritt, who recently announced his plans to retire in 1996.

Although Emmanuel Church is financially stable, Carson also listed financial needs as common among EBC churches. "One of the biggest problems in our convention is that some churches are not strong enough to pay what we would call a decent salary to their pastors."

"Some have to skimp, some can't even pay," he explained. "When you put yourself in their shoes, you come away looking for a way to help that."

Suggesting one Arkansas Baptist remedy for the EBC financial dilemma, Carson said, "Retired Arkansas pastors can very much benefit our churches which cannot afford decent salaries for pastors."

Assessing the overall partnership, Carson declared, "We really do appreciate Arkansas Baptists," adding that sentiment is "conventionwide."

## Arkansas doctor holds clinics in Romania

Retired doctor Rogers Edmondson, a member of Pickles Gap Church, recently completed a nearly three-month medical mission trip to Romania as part of the missions partnership between the European Baptist Convention and Arkansas Baptists. He said "too many coincidences" occurred during the trip "for the Lord's hand not to be in it."

Edmondson, who described himself as an "old, retired country doctor," left for Romania March 7 and returned May 31. He worked with foreign missionaries Mike and Kathy Kemper and Church Start International, a Southern Baptist group working in conjunction with the Baptist General Convention of Texas-Romanian missions partnership to build churches.

Bill Davis, president of CSI, said Edmondson was "used greatly" by God "to relieve suffering and minister to the Romanian people."

"It is hard to believe," said Davis, "that one doctor could have 43 medical clinics, treating more than 1,600 patients and have 250 professions of faith in 80 days time."

Edmondson said at each clinic he "would go where they were starting a mission or had an organized church and would hold a clinic, most in a home."

He said that "if they really worked and put out the publicity, I generally had all the patients I could see."

"They would give me a room with a daybed in it and I would examine them and dispense medicine or refer them if it were bad," he recalled. "I saw people that had never seen a doctor in their lives. 'We can't afford it,' they would say. 'We can't even afford transportation to go down there and see one.'"

While he conducted each clinic, local Christians would share the gospel with patients, often as they stood in line to see Edmondson.

He initially had planned to work at a poorly staffed and equipped Romanian orphanage, but found conditions improved when he arrived. He then decided to hold the medical clinics.

He said the decision to hold the clinics was confirmed when "one old saint there

claimed he had been on his knees till he nearly wore them out trying to get a doctor to come over there. I told them I was 10 years behind (in medical knowledge) over here, but they said they were 40 years behind over there, so I would be 30 years ahead of them."

The need for the clinics was evident when he arrived, he said. "They supposedly have socialized medicine but, like everything else in Romania, it's not working."

He said lack of drugs was a problem for clinics and that he had to buy many supplies he needed in Romania.

Another problem he encountered during the trip was from Eastern Orthodox Church clergy, who threatened Romanians being served at the clinic. "The biggest obstacle we have to evangelical Christianity in Romania right now is the Eastern Orthodox church. They would rather see people go to hell than go to a Baptist church."

Doyle Plummer, state-side coordinator for the Arkansas-EBC partnership, said Edmondson also has donated \$10,000 for use in Romania to start churches.

## Arkansas Baptist Men unveil new mass feeding unit



Members of Arkansas Baptist Men eat a meal prepared in the new 48-foot disaster relief trailer as they gathered for disaster relief training June 3 at Inmanuel Church in Little Rock. The event, which involved 71 Arkansas Baptists, featured training in working with the American Red Cross, mass feeding, clearing disaster sites with chainsaws and disaster-related child care. The unit, which is equipped to produce from 20,000 to 30,000 meals daily during disaster relief operations, was built with donations by Arkansas Baptists. The mass feeding trailer will be hauled by the Alton Bean Trucking Co. of Amity in response to disaster calls.



## Risk management seminar offers 'preventative measure' for lawsuits

More Arkansas Baptist churches may be faced with litigation in the near future, warned Jimmie Sheffield, associate executive director for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

"An awareness we are beginning to have is that there are issues surfacing from churches preparing for possible lawsuits," he noted. "Nationally, it is a well-known fact that churches are becoming the objects of many lawsuits. There is a need for information before something bad happens.

"We have had calls from Arkansas churches that have faced these problems in child care and other situations," he explained. "So far we have not had any lawsuits, but the potential is there."

Sheffield said the Risk Management Seminar, scheduled for Aug. 17 at Immanuel Church in Little Rock, will provide answers to many legal questions from Arkansas Baptist churches. The seminar, sponsored by the ABCS and Southern Baptist Annuity Board, will be offered to pastors and church staff, as well as attorneys and insurance agents who work with churches.

ABCs executive director Don Moorc urged pastors to attend, "along with your staff, treasurer, financial personnel and laypeople. In our recently published *Church Legal Issues* handbook, we came to realize that this is one of the most important issues confronting the local church."

The seminar program will include conferences on potential legal issues churches face, including sexual miscon-

duct, child abuse, liability, negligent supervision and pastoral counseling.

"The conferences will be a preventative measure primarily," said James Walker, director of the ABCS stewardship and annuity department. "They will provide churches with the steps they can begin to take to avoid lawsuits."

"It will be a real opportunity for churches to be on the cutting edge of something and not find themselves in a reacting stage," Sheffield added. "They can be proactive in this area if they will take advantage of this conference."

A lawsuit "could put a church into bankruptcy," he pointed out. "Most churches couldn't handle it."

The seminar will feature Richard Hammar, an attorney, accountant and best-selling author specializing in legal and tax issues affecting churches and clergy. He is the author of *Pastor, Church and Law and Church and Clergy Tax*.

"We chose him to lead the seminar because of his expertise and practice in the area," Walker said. "He's the guru in this area and has done a lot of pioneer work with churches on these issues."

The cost for the seminar is \$15 per Southern Baptist participant and \$25 per non-Southern Baptist. The cost includes lunch and a packet of materials that includes the *1995 Minister's Tax Guide* and *Arkansas Baptists' Church Legal Issues*.

For additional information, contact Sheffield or Walker at the ABCS; phone 501-376-4791.

## Associations host Sunday School conventions

Challenging Arkansas Baptist leaders to "carry the light," Milton Redeker, director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Sunday School department, said "Carry the Light" is the theme for the 1995 Associational Sunday School Conventions. The events will be held in 41 locations throughout the state in September.

Redeker said the conventions are a "first" for Arkansas. "This is the first time it has ever been done. The whole idea behind this is to train 5,000 Sunday School leaders in five days. It's going to happen. We're seeing the momentum roll."

He said the conventions will be held in local associations in an effort to "include more people. At the large Sunday School convention usually held in Little Rock, we get a good crowd of 1,200 to 1,500. That's a long ways from 5,000.

"This is going to be geared mainly for leaders, people who are already teaching," he explained. He listed Sunday School

teachers, department directors, outreach leaders, care leaders, prayer leaders, pastors and general Sunday School directors as targets for the events.

Redeker said the conventions will be led by eight teams of five training leaders. He said the curriculum for the conventions will be "built around the new leadership training books, *Towards 2000*. We will be looking at the changes taking place in methodology in our churches from the smallest to the largest. These conventions should appeal to every size church.

"When we get through with these conventions," Redeker added, "there will be no doubt in the minds of the people of Arkansas where the Sunday School and Bible teaching churches are headed."

Individuals interested in additional information may contact their associational director of missions or the ABCS Sunday School department; phone 501-376-4791, ext. 5128.

## Jr. High Jamboree: 'summer adventure'

With a combination of "the latest in event recreation with high energy multi-media rallies and small group witness training," Randy Brantley said Arkansas Baptists' 1995 Junior High Jamboree will be "one fantastic end-of-summer adventure."

The "Jam" is open to students who have completed the sixth through the ninth grades.

Brantley, an associate in the Arkansas Baptist State Convention evangelism department, said the Jam, to be held Aug. 1-3 at Williams Baptist College in Walnut Ridge, will offer participants "evangelistic training, recreation and a great program."

During the small group time, he said, "We will be teaching the youth Roman Road presentation. It prepares students to become comfortable in sharing their testimony and ending in a commitment to accepting Christ."

He said one of the most "attractive" offers for the Jam will be the recreation, featuring a Friday afternoon recreation time on "big toys like the Velcro wall, bungee run, bouncy boxing, sumo wrestling, Velcro Olympics and human bowling."

He said the preaching program will be "non-traditional. We're constantly looking for new methods to spread the same message."

The worship sessions will be led by XTREME Productions, "a group of dedicated young adults who are committed to sharing the message of Jesus Christ through music, drama, multi-media and the preached Word," Brantley explained. "The XTREME team shares the vision of presenting the life-changing message of Jesus Christ to Generation X."

The team is led by Gale Kelsey, former minister of youth for Immanuel Church in Rogers.

The cost for Jr. High Jamboree is \$45 per person. The cost includes five meals, lodging, workshops, recreation and a T-shirt. Students must provide their own Bible, linens, pillow, towels and personal items.

Students must be accompanied by adult sponsors of at least college age. Brantley recommended a ratio of five students per sponsor.

For additional information or to register, contact Brantley at the ABCS evangelism department; phone 501-376-4791, ext. 5132.

# Ketner's state WMU service spans 25 years

By Russell N. Dillard

Associate Editor, Arkansas Baptist

Arkansas Baptist Woman's Missionary Union executive director Julia Ketner celebrates her 25th anniversary of statewide WMU leadership next month. She was honored earlier this year for her service during the state WMU annual meeting in Conway.

Ketner began work at the Arkansas Baptist State Convention as Girls in Action and Mission Friends director in July 1970. Four years later she became executive director of the department. Her rise to her current leadership position began, not surprisingly, as a GA member at New Zion Baptist Church in Wauchula, Fla., where she noted that "the seed was planted."

"I really didn't think about doing denominational work," she recalled of her childhood years. But at age 16 she felt God's call to Christian vocational work.

"At that point I thought it was to foreign missions," she said. "It was a very definite leadership that God wanted me to do something special."

Ketner felt that "something special" was to teach in foreign missions service. She attended Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, Tenn., where she earned a bachelor of science degree in elementary education in 1964.

She became an elementary school teacher in Winter Haven, Fla. after graduating from Carson-Newman. During that time, she became involved as a staff member for GA summer camps.

"The director of the camp, our state Acteens director in Florida, was the biggest influence in opening my mind to the possibility of doing state WMU work," she remembered. "That had never crossed my mind. I worked for three summers at the camps and they were probably the most encouraging — the atmosphere, the work. Those three summers started my thinking that if the Lord wanted me, I could do that or maybe do it on the mission field."

Her call to missions work led her to study at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary where she earned the master of religious education degree in 1970.

"During the time I was interviewing for a job I was told by the Foreign Mission Board that they really didn't appoint elementary education teachers," she said. "It floored me." Confident that her call to



State WMU president Barbara Wikman (left) recognized Julia Ketner's 25 years of service during the 1995 state WMU annual meeting.

religious education was still valid, she said, "I started interviewing for a church staff, but I couldn't see myself being inside the four walls of a church."

The week of Ketner's graduation from seminary, former Arkansas WMU executive director Nancy Cooper was on Southwestern's campus to interview candidates for a position as an Acteens associate. Ketner interviewed, but did not feel led to work in a position working with teens.

The phone rang a week later. It was "Miss Nancy," said Ketner, still wanting to interview her in Little Rock. When Ketner arrived in Little Rock, she received a surprise. "When I met with Miss Nancy, she told me the position I would be interviewing for was for GAs. Another associate had taken the Acteens position."

She served as GA and Mission Friends associate until Cooper retired in 1974. Six months later Ketner was elected to succeed her former supervisor.

Ketner said her current position as WMU executive director has allowed her to utilize the gift of administration. "I think that is one gift I do have that God has enabled me to use," she affirmed.

Another gift, she acknowledged, is "being able to relate to the majority of our churches. I grew up in small churches and understand what small churches go through in helping them see they can have missions education in a small church."

Barbara Wikman, president of Arkansas WMU, said Ketner brought other gifts to her office as well. "She has such a character of integrity in her leadership role as executive director, a commitment to fairness and such a compassion and love

for the cause of what she is working for — missions."

While Ketner's professional ministry has involved missions education and women's ministry leadership, she also has applied her work to her personal life, participating in several mission projects in the U.S. and in foreign countries.

But her personal life is not all work, either. An avid sports enthusiast ("I'm a wild Hog fan," she says) she fishes and collects "a few thousand" baseball cards during her spare time. "I'm honing in on rookies right now."

Wikman indicated that Ketner's interest in "rookies" isn't limited to baseball cards.

"I cannot say enough how she has been patient, supportive and affirming of me in my

new role as president," Wikman said. "There's a warmth to Julia that sometimes we don't see in our professional roles. There's a warmth, joy and fun there and she is so willing to help you."

Ketner also is single, a position she said has "given me the freedom to accept any assignment and not worry about home. I admire those who are married and can do it, but I am not sure I could."

"Some days I would have loved to go home and have someone to spill the beans to, but it has been a strength for me — the freedom," she said.

Discussing the organization she has served for a quarter century, Ketner highlighted the significant curriculum changes occurring in women's ministry through the WMU.

Affirming the need to change, she said, "We hear that we (WMU) are dying. We are going to die if we do not change. I firmly believe that this is our opportunity to offer something new and different. If we don't move with these changes, I can foresee what will happen; WMU will not last if we don't see this as a challenge and an opportunity."

Reflecting on her first 25 years of WMU service in Arkansas, Ketner said, "It's been the people out in the state who have made this job for me — people who have become supporters and encouragers. I can't begin to count the special friendships I've had in this work.... This is home."

"The potential in involving women and bringing up Acteens and GAs is a challenge," she noted. "But with some of the girls I see in leadership, it is a bright future."

## Evangelical leaders affirm unified efforts

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA (BP)—More than 4,000 Christians concluded a nine-day world conference in Seoul, South Korea, with a global commitment to taking the gospel to the world's least evangelized people.

Global Consultation on World Evangelization (GCOWE '95), brought together church leaders, Christian lay leaders and mission personnel from 186 countries. They met to explore ways of increasing the pace of world evangelization during the final five years of the century.

The meetings, May 17-25, included representatives from the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board and Home Mission Board.

"The full job of world evangelization is beyond any one group or denomination," said Avery Willis, FMB senior vice president of overseas operations. "This conference helps make it possible to discover what we can do together."

FMB president Jerry Rankin added that Christian organizations "who choose to work alone will find themselves left far behind and isolated."

"The main unity comes from having a common vision, not necessarily a common, detailed ideological statement," said Luis Bush, international director of the AD2000 and Beyond Movement, an organization created to call evangelicals to unity in missions.

## Baptists aid refugees from Chechnya war

GROZNY, CHECHNYA (BP)—Baptists in war-ravaged Grozny, the capital of Chechnya, continue to minister despite the death and destruction around them, say two Southern Baptist missionaries who visited there.

Jack Shelby and Norman Lytle, both based in Moscow, visited Grozny and Vladikavkaz, about 70 miles away, to evaluate refugee needs and the use of Southern Baptist hunger relief funds.

The visitors brought away vivid memories of bombed buildings, sniper fire, land mines and bodies of victims slain in the fighting. Chechnya is a small, predominantly Muslim republic in the Russian federation located east of the Black Sea. Russian troops attacked when leaders there declared independence.

Before the fighting broke out, there were about 300 Baptists in Chechnya, about two-thirds of them in Grozny. Today only about 150 Baptists remain in the war-ravaged city. Two Baptist women, ages 60 and 80, were killed when Russian troops pounded Grozny with artillery shells. About 20 homes of Baptists have been destroyed.

The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board appropriated \$50,000 in February to help war refugees in the region. Shelby recommended the FMB send another \$50,000 after verifying the funds were being managed with integrity and that supplies bought are indeed reaching needy people.

## Bulgarian officials counter Baptist plans

SOFIA, BULGARIA (BP)—The city government of Sofia, Bulgaria, has moved one step closer to confiscating property where Baptists were building a school, orphanage and church.

In its most recent action, Sofia's mayor and city council referred an investigation of the Baptist project to the Commission for Education and Culture, which reportedly is hostile to the building project.

Sofia is the capital of Bulgaria, one of many Eastern European nations struggling with the responsibilities of freedom after decades of communist rule. Former communists, who now call themselves socialists, control much of the government there and align themselves with the powerful Bulgarian Orthodox Church.

The European Baptist Press Service has called for prayer vigils to sway the mayor, council and Bulgarian people to stop persecuting Baptists.

On Feb. 17 the city notified Baptists they had begun investigating the project and ordered that the construction halt. But the council repeatedly postponed action on the matter after a storm of protests through Bulgarian consulates in several countries and letters and faxes to city officials.

The Baptist Union of Bulgaria and Sofia Baptist Church secured necessary documents and approvals before beginning construction in 1994. Baptists already have spent about \$175,000 on the project.

## BWA women's meeting set for Argentina

MCLEAN, VA (BP)—Women from 93 countries or geographic entities have registered for the 1995 Baptist World Alliance women's department "Reunion of Baptist Women" July 31 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The reunion will be held prior to the 17th Baptist World Congress in Buenos Aires, Aug. 1-6.

Planners expect the July 31 event to attract 3,000 participants. "I am very excited in that it appears we shall have our biggest meeting ever in numbers of women and the number of countries represented," said Catherine Allen, president of the BWA women's department, auxiliary to the Baptist World Alliance.

The reunion is one of several women's activities planned during the global Baptist gathering in Buenos Aires, Allen said. Individuals may pre-register by contacting the BWA Women's Department, 6733 Curran Street, McLean, VA 22101.

## Robert Lindsey, former pastor in Israel, dies

TULSA, OK (BP)—Robert L. Lindsey, a retired Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board representative who began work in Jerusalem three years before modern Israel was formed, died May 31 in Tulsa, Okla. He was 77.

Lindsey was known and loved by Jews and Arabs alike. A scholar fluent in both Greek and Hebrew, he became known as a father to the Messianic Jewish community.

Lindsey gained lasting notoriety in Israel after losing his left leg below the knee when he stepped on a land mine in 1961. The accident occurred as he was crossing the border without authorization to retrieve an orphan detained in Jordan.

In 1944 he and his wife, the former Margaret Lutz, were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board to work in Israel. Later three of their six children became foreign missionaries.

The Lindseys retired in 1987. Since then, until a recent illness, Lindsey divided his time between Oklahoma and Israel, writing, teaching and publishing. Various Baptist ministries evolved from Lindsey's dreams, including Baptist Village near Tel Aviv, the largest Christian conference center in Israel, and Dugth bookstore and publishing house, an outlet for Christian books in Tel Aviv.

Teddy Kolek, former mayor of Jerusalem, was among the speakers during a June 7 memorial service at Narkis Street Baptist Church, where Lindsey formerly was pastor.

## Mission volunteer dies from heart attack

ST. JOHNS, ANTIGUA (BP)—Southern Baptist foreign mission volunteer Phillip Knott died May 30 of a heart attack on the Caribbean island of Nevis.

Knott, 54, of Swan Quarter, N.C., was serving a three-month stint as pastor of First Baptist Church of Brick-kiln on Nevis. He had been there since May 1.

In the early 1990s Knott was a two-year volunteer through the Foreign Mission Board's International Service Corps, serving as pastor of an international Baptist congregation in Japan. He participated in several other volunteer projects, including trips to France, Togo and Haiti.

Knott is survived by his wife, Karen; two children, Christine Avery and Charles Glen; two brothers and two sisters.

## HMB's Lewis seeks changes in SBC plan

ATLANTA (BP)—Southern Baptist Home Mission Board president Larry Lewis said he will fully support the proposed restructuring of the Southern Baptist Convention if three amendments are made in the plan.

Lewis' proposed changes, outlined June 2 in a three-page memorandum, followed a 12-page position paper he issued May 25 which called for the study committee report to "be referred back to the SBC Executive Committee for further study, including cost estimates, savings projections, and impact of proposed changes and possible revisions."

In his initial statement, Lewis noted, "A recommendation of this magnitude should be supported with adequate data and cost projections. I believe a thorough impact study should be made before messengers are asked to approve such a significant recommendation."

Lewis' June 2 memo was sent to HMB directors and members of the SBC Executive Committee. He said the detailed nature of his earlier observations had caused some observers to misunderstand his position.

"The only part of the PSSC (Program and Structure Study Committee) report that I oppose is that which deals with home missions philosophy and strategy," Lewis explained in the June 2 memo. "With a few simple word changes, I could support

the entire report and would be glad to do so on the floor of the convention."

Lewis' proposed changes include clarifying the proposed North American Mission Board's responsibilities to include cooperative mission strategies with state conventions as well as direct mission efforts.

He also recommends deleting the word "career" in the provision which directs the NAMB to "appoint, approve, support and equip career missions personnel." He said the committee's proposed wording could be interpreted as prohibiting the use of short-term missionaries such as church planters who compose 75 percent of the present home missions force.

Lewis' third recommendation is to amend the report's endnote which calls for larger, primarily southern state Baptist conventions "to fund their evangelism and missions staff and program." The amended version would read, "to fund more of (or a greater portion of) their evangelism and missions staff and program."

Unless changed, Lewis said, this note could lead to state Baptist conventions immediately assuming total responsibility for home missions work in their respective states, "including 1,300 home missionaries."

Lewis said he expects to present the proposed changes to the Home Mission Board executive committee during its

meeting the day prior to the convention. He also anticipates presenting his proposed amendments either to the SBC Executive Committee or to the convention.

Morris H. Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee, reacted sharply to Lewis' initial statements. "It is regrettable that the president of the HMB does not support the report of the Program and Structure Study Committee, but this does not lessen the strong belief of the committee members that it is important for our Southern Baptist people from local churches across this country to decide the wisdom of the report," Chapman responded. "The PSSC members realize the magnitude of the suggested changes but are convinced that adoption of the report is critical to the future of the SBC."

Chapman, responding to Lewis' concern that the PSSC went beyond the scope of its assignment, said the committee followed procedures and has "functioned with no illusions."

"It fully understands that its report will rise or fall as the full convention in session understands the will of God for the SBC and votes accordingly."

Lewis emphasized in his June 2 statement that he will give full endorsement to the report if his three proposed amendments concerning home missions work are adopted.

### Henry promises ample opportunity to discuss report

BRENTWOOD, TN (BP)—Southern Baptist Convention president Jim Henry plans for open discussion of the sweeping recommendation for SBC restructuring, during the SBC annual meeting June 20-22 in Atlanta.

"I want to give the people opportunity to discuss the recommendation and to ask questions," affirmed Henry, pastor of First Baptist Church, Orlando, Fla.

"My heart is that the messengers will have every opportunity to discuss freely the proposals from the Program and Structure Study Committee."

Mark Brister, chairman of the study committee, noted the committee "expects the parliamentarians to follow *Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised*. Hence, once the PSSC report has been brought, there should be time for discussion and a vote."

Henry said he will meet with his six parliamentarians in Atlanta to "determine the best way to present the report and give people a chance to respond. We will follow *Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised* concerning amendments.

"I will do everything possible to be fair, and I have six capable brothers to help me," Henry said. "I want the people to have freedom to speak."

Recognizing he is "everybody's president," Henry said he will be fair to both the committee making the report and the messengers who must decide the report's fate.

"I'm looking forward to a positive presentation and discussion

and trusting the Holy Spirit to lead messengers to accomplish God's will through us," Henry said.

"The messengers have the final say so," he emphasized. "We will stand by the messengers."

In a related development, about 35 language and ethnic leaders outlined concerns about the proposed reorganization during an informal meeting with two members of the study committee June 2.

Russell Begaye, director of the Home Mission Board's language church extension, said he was "very encouraged" by the dialogue.

However, the two representatives of the restructuring committee — Mark Brister and Al Mohler — apparently were not able to make any specific pledges in answer to the ethnic leaders' concerns. The restructuring proposal is now out of the committee's hands, and its fate and implementation lie with the Southern Baptist Convention and its Executive Committee.

"The key word we were looking for was 'intentionality,'" Begaye explained. "Ethnics must be intentionally involved in the denomination."

Ethnics must no longer be "stepchildren" in the SBC, he said. "We want to be a part of the new structure."

According to Mohler, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, "Without question ethnic leadership must be central partners" in implementing the plan.

## Staff changes

**Leroy H. Dickinson Jr.** began his ministry June 12 as director of missions for Black River Association, coming there from Baskin, La., where he had been pastor of Baskin Church since 1989. He previously was pastor of other churches in Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, Alabama and Florida. He also has served as a staff evangelist for Immanuel Church in Marshall, Texas, and has held associational and state leadership positions. Dickinson is a graduate of Clarke College in Newton, Miss.; East Texas Baptist University in Marshall, Texas; and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He is married to the former Sharon Stockfleth who is a graduate of Clarke College and Northeast Louisiana University in Monroe. They have three children,



## ARKANSAS ALL OVER

By MILLEE GILL

**Heather Lynn, Roger Howard and Chasity Kay.**

**Jim Fowler** began serving June 11 as pastor of First Church in Manila, coming there from Eastside Church in Sallisaw, Okla. He previously served Immanuel Church in Tulsa, Okla. In addition, he has been pastor of Arkansas churches, including East Side Church of Paragould, First Church of Perryville, Hopewell Church of Mountain Home, Leonard Church of Rector, Mount Pleasant Church of Maynard and Oak Grove Church of

Pocahontas. A native of Manila, he attended Southern Baptist College (now Williams Baptist College), Arkansas State University and Gulf Coast Baptist Theological Seminary. He is married to the former Brenda Camp. They have four adult children, Jamie, Perry, Lydia and Timothy.

**J.R. Hull** has announced his retirement as pastor of Foothills Church of Mountain View, effective Sept. 24. Hull has served as pastor of Foothills Church, which was constituted Sept. 22, 1991, since its organization as a chapel in 1986. He previously was pastor of churches in both Arkansas and Missouri. He also has preached in missions in Colorado and Indiana. Hull, ordained to the ministry by Pilgrims Rest Church in Independence Association, attended Boyce Bible School in Little Rock. He and his wife, Geneva, have four adult children, Howard L. Hull of Dallas, Texas, Katheryn Sharp of Floral, Jerry Ray Hull of Mountain View and Larry Wayne Hull of Omaha. Hull will be available for supply preaching, revivals or witness training. He may be contacted at HC 72, Box 120, Mountain View, AR 72560; phone 501-269-3956.

**Milton White** is serving as pastor of Riverside Church of Donaldson. He and his wife, Tina, have three children, Amber, M.J. and Megan.

**Bill Lindsey** has joined the staff of First Church in Walnut Ridge as associate pastor/minister of youth and education, coming there from Lexington, Ky., where he had served a church as minister of youth for six years. A native of Ohio, he is a graduate of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

**Johnny Green** has resigned as pastor of First Church of Yorktown to re-enter the field of full-time evangelism. He previously has been pastor of First Church of Crawfordsville, East Side Church of Fort Smith, First Church of Parkin, Philadelphia Church of Jonesboro and Bethel Church of Muskogee, Okla. Green is a graduate of Southern Baptist College (now Williams Baptist College). He and his wife, Frances, have four adult children, Steve Green, Kathy Hatfield, Carol Hunter and Kay Holland, and 10 grandchildren. Green may be contacted at P.O. Box 1238, Wynne, AR 72396; phone 501-238-7757.

**Charles "Chuck" Downey** concluded his service May 28 as pastor of First Church of Stephens. He and his wife, Vicky, and their daughters, Laura and Lindsey, have moved to Las Vegas, Nev., where they will be associated with Cross Walk Ministry, working to establish new churches there. During the summer, Downey will assist 10 teams, composed of students from various seminaries through the southwestern

## SEMINARY GRADUATES

### MIDWESTERN



**CHARLES COVINGTON**  
Doctor of Ministry  
Little Rock



**GENE E. HODGES**  
Master of Divinity  
Lincoln



**ROBERT MASSEY**  
Doctor of Ministry  
Heth



**ROBERT W. WEBB**  
Doctor of Ministry  
Jonesboro

### NEW ORLEANS



**BILLY CANTRELL**  
Master of Divinity in  
Christian education  
Warren



**CHARLES MCALISTER**  
Doctor of Ministry in  
pastoral ministry  
Hot Springs



**CHARLES RICHARD WHEAT**  
Master of Divinity  
Piggott



**JAY L. WILKINS**  
Master of Divinity in  
biblical studies  
Sherwood

No photo available: **KEITH ADAMS**, Master of Arts in Christian education, Forrest City

# ARKANSAS BAPTISTS



Members of First Church in Benton celebrated their first "debt-free" Sunday in recent memory as they burned a \$925,000 note during morning services June 4. Burning the note are: pastor Greg Kirksey; church trustee Dan Moudy; building fund co-chairman Dick Phelan; Bob Berry, associate pastor for administration; and trustee Kenneth Cook. The celebration also included an evening reception honoring Kirksey's fifth anniversary as pastor.

United States, in surveying possible sites for new missions.

**Larry Toller** is serving as interim pastor of Dermott Church. Toller is business manager for Arkansas Baptist Children's Home in Monticello. He and his wife, Kenett, have two children, Michael and Rebekah.

**Robyn Arnold**, a recent graduate of the University of Arkansas, is serving as summer youth intern for First Church of Rogers.

**Curtis Honts** has resigned as pastor of Ridgecrest Church of Benton to serve as an adult editor for the Baptist Sunday School Board. Honts previously served as a staff member of Lakeshore Drive Church in Little Rock. He and his wife, Toni, have two children, Lincoln and Camille.

**Wilbur Herring** of Jonesboro completed his ministry June 4 as interim pastor of First Church in Manila.

**Randall Littleton** and **Misty Brewer** are serving as summer interns for Baring Cross Church in North Little Rock. Littleton, a senior at the University of Memphis, has worked with youth as a Sunday School teacher, camp counselor, choir director and DiscipleNow leader. He directs the after school program for a children's academy in Memphis. Brewer is a senior at Ouachita Baptist University, majoring in sociology. Actively involved in Baptist Student Union activities, she has worked as a college discipleship group leader, DiscipleNow leader and Arkansas Super

Summer staffer. In addition, she has served as a youth intern in Huntsville.

## Church news

**Immanuel Church** of Rogers recently concluded a Here's Hope crusade that resulted in 90 professions of faith, 70 baptisms, 43 rededications and four commitments to special service. Crusade leaders were Stan Coffey, senior pastor of San Jacinto Baptist Church of Amarillo, Texas, and John McKay, a music evangelist from Texas. Thomas Hatley is pastor.

**Highland Heights Church** in Benton served as host May 1-2 for the fifth annual Arkansas Baptist Ukulele Jamboree. Activities included a Monday evening banquet for which Don Terry, a member of the host church, provided entertainment. Eddie Hardister of Park Place Church in Hot Springs and Louis Criswell of Baring Cross Church in North Little Rock directed music for the Tuesday morning session that also featured a "parade of bands" from Harrison, Yellville, North Little Rock, Hot Springs, Sheridan, Pine Bluff, Whitehall, Jacksonville and Benton. In addition, representatives from University Church in Houston, Texas, participated.

**North Central Association** held a recent ceremony to dedicate a new office building, located on the north side of the court square in Clinton. Participants in a ribbon-cutting ceremony were director of missions Frank Shell and his wife, Carolyn,

Jerry Neal of Leslie, Larry Loggins and Paul Brewster, both of Clinton. Jimmy Barrentine, director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention missions department, was the guest speaker and R.A. Bone of Clinton led the invocation. Music was provided by Lisa, Lana and Laura Nelden of Rupert Church and Pam Bradley, music director for First Church of Marshall. Bill Davis was presented with a plaque in recognition of his volunteer work in remodeling the building.

**Cabot First Church** honored pastor Del Medlin June 4 in recognition of 10 years of ministry during which the church has completed the building of a new family life center, constructed a new education building, purchased additional property and currently is constructing a new sanctuary with a seating capacity of 1,500. During Medlin's pastorate, the church has averaged 37 baptisms annually, including 63 baptisms last year. Membership has grown from 1,465 in 1985 to 2,295 currently. Rex Horne, pastor of Immanuel Church in Little Rock, was speaker for the evening anniversary service which preceded a fellowship that honored Medlin, his wife, Peggy, and their children, Jason, Michael and Ashley. The family received a love offering of \$4,000 and a memorabilia scrapbook. In addition, he was presented with a set of handcarved praying hands made from the wood of an oak tree which was removed from church property for construction of the new sanctuary. Medlin, a native of Virginia, came to Cabot from Ennis, Texas, where he served as pastor of Baylor Baptist Church for eight years. He is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

**Unity Church** of Paragould took a step back in history by gathering recently at Black River for a baptismal service. Pastor Terry Songer delivered a message prior to baptizing Tim McCormack. A fellowship concluded activities.

## Ordinations

**Helena First Church** ordained Clinton Smith to the ministry May 14. Smith serves as a youth minister in Richton, Miss.

**Benton First Church** ordained Bert Spann and Kellee McCoy to the ministry May 28.

**Hot Springs First Church** ordained interim minister of youth Aaron Harvie to the ministry May 28.

**North Maple Church** in Stuttgart recently ordained James Summers to the ministry. Summers is pastor of both First Church in Aberdeen and Hagler Church.

## Leadership Profile for ABSC Nominating Committee

Members of the Nominating Committee for the 1995 Arkansas Baptist State Convention want Arkansas Baptists to submit names of persons to that committee to consider when they bring the convention nominations for state committees and boards.

This recommendation will not insure nomination, but the committee will consider each recommendation. The committee will not contact any person recommended until they approve the nominations. The Nominating Committee will hold its first meeting August 3-4 and needs all recommendations no later than June 30.

Members of the committee include: Barry King, Chairman; Dennis Dodson, Bill Bowen, Wallace Williams, Delton Beall, Van Harnes, Bill Hatfield, Lou Sorrells, and C.B. Thompson.

### June 30 is the deadline for recommendations.

Nominee \_\_\_\_\_  Layperson  Minister Age \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Member of what church? \_\_\_\_\_ Association \_\_\_\_\_

#### Current leadership responsibilities

Professional \_\_\_\_\_  
Civic \_\_\_\_\_  
Church \_\_\_\_\_  
Association \_\_\_\_\_  
State or SBC Boards \_\_\_\_\_

#### Past leadership experience (within last five years)

State or SBC Boards \_\_\_\_\_  
Association \_\_\_\_\_  
Local Church \_\_\_\_\_

#### Personal

This person's greatest contribution, based on his or her past record, knowledge, and experience, should be in the area of: \_\_\_\_\_

Is this person currently active in a local church?  Yes  No \_\_\_\_\_

Is this person able to be away from family and work for at least one or two days, three times a year?  Yes  No

Give the name and phone number of at least one person, other than his or her pastor or Director of Missions, who knows of the nominee's involvement in Baptist life. \_\_\_\_\_

On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rank this person's understanding of and commitment to the way Southern Baptists work together? (Circle) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Check the board, committee or commission on which you believe this person could best serve.

#### Boards of Trustees

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- Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

#### Committees and Commissions

- History Commission
- BSU Advisory Committee
- Constitution and Bylaws Committee
- Convention Program Committee

**MAIL THIS FORM TO:**  
**Barry King, Chairman**  
**c/o Executive Director's Office**  
**P.O. Box 552**  
**Little Rock, AR 72203**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of person making this recommendation)

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

## BSSB to offer Calvin and Hobbs' commentaries

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—Beginning in October, the Baptist Sunday School Board will offer "Calvin and Hobbs."

No, the Southern Baptist publishing house isn't getting into the comic strip business; it's just making available adult Sunday School commentaries by Calvin Miller and Herschel Hobbs.

Miller, a best-selling author, speaker and seminary professor, will be featured in a new audio commentary on adult Life and Work Sunday School lessons. Released quarterly, "Sound Truths: Life and Work Bible Studies on Tape" will consist of comments, insights and applications written and recorded by Miller.

He is professor of communications and ministry studies and writer-in-residence at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

The new product replaces "Life and Work Pursuits: Cassette

Tape Edition," an audio version of Sunday School lessons designed for adults 35-54. "We think Miller's creative talent will capture people's attention and enhance their understanding of each week's biblical passage," said Rick Edwards, manager of the BSSB's adult biblical studies section.

October also marks the 28th year of Hobbs' commentary, *Studying Adult Life and Work Lessons*. One of the BSSB's most popular products, generating revenues of almost \$1.5 million annually, it will be renamed *The Herschel Hobbs Commentary*.

"Most people refer to it as the Hobbs' commentary anyway," said Ross McLaren, a biblical studies designer at the BSSB. "He's had such an impact on Southern Baptist Bible study, we felt it was time to name the product in his honor."

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# Coppenger elected president of Midwestern

KANSAS CITY, MO (BP)—Trustees unanimously elected Mark Coppenger president of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary during a called meeting June 1-2.

Coppenger, currently vice president for convention relations with the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, will assume the office of president Aug. 1. As the seminary's third president, he succeeds Milton Ferguson, who has held the post since 1973.

Trustee chairman Lewis Adkison said, "These are very historic days and very exciting days....We've come with feelings that God has led us in this process, and we're so thankful and grateful to Him."

Search committee member Ronnie Rogers, who also is serving on Arkansas Baptists' executive director search committee, said God impressed on him several qualifications to look for in a presidential candidate. He said the next president of Midwestern should be a man who has a

proven record as a leader, who has a heart for evangelism and missions, who is academically prepared, and who is "decidedly an inerrantist."

Rogers, president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, added: "I stand before you with no doubt in my mind...that our God spoke clearly to us, decisively, and knitted our hearts together that in his providence years ago, he began to prepare a man and a woman for such a time as this

and that is Dr. and Mrs. Mark Coppenger."

Coppenger, who grew up in Arkansas, is a former pastor of First Church, El Dorado. He is married to the former Sharon South. Her father, the late Rheubin South, was an executive director of the Missouri Baptist Convention and a former pastor of Park Hill Church, North Little Rock.

Following Coppenger's election, the board unanimously elected Ferguson as president emeritus of Midwestern.

## First Baptist Church, Branch Homecoming Day July 16

All former members, pastors and friends are invited to attend. Special memories, such as favorite teachers or bits of church history also would be appreciated. Contact the Homecoming Committee, FBC, P.O. Box 128, Branch, AR 72928; 501-965-2515.



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## MK PRAYER CALENDAR

Missionary kids attending college in Arkansas with birthdays in June and July include:

■ June 23 - Rhonda Shemwell, OBU Box 3205, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001; senior from Togo.  
 ■ June 29 - Marc Verlander, P.O. Box 278, Ridgecrest, NC 28770, OBU sophomore from Senegal.  
 ■ July 1 - Jennie Johnson, OBU Box 3984, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001; sophomore from Japan.  
 ■ July 4 - Matt Litron, OBU Box 3336, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001; freshman from Brazil.

■ July 4 - Julie Packwood, c/o Student Ministries, 1607 Troup Hwy 110, Tyler, TX 76701; OBU sophomore from Ecuador.  
 ■ July 5 - Eli Hicks, OBU Box 3874, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001; junior from Japan.  
 ■ July 13 - Jason Greer, OBU Box 4228, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001; sophomore from Nigeria.  
 ■ July 13 - Brent West, OBU Box 4275, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001; junior from Taiwan.

■ July 14 - Doug Dickens, OBU Box 4036, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001; freshman from the Philippines.  
 ■ July 21 - Joanne Baillio, OBU Box 4027, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001; sophomore from Honduras.  
 ■ July 27 - Nathan Stefanini, 1195 Dyer St, Memphis, TN 38122; OBU freshman from Belize.  
 ■ July 29 - Leigh Ann Miller, OBU Box 4417, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001; senior from Barbados.



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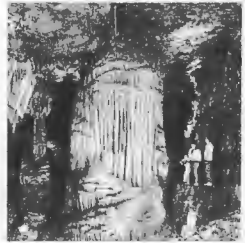
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BSU

## Inman named BSU associate at UAF

Kevin Inman was elected June 1 as associate director at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville Baptist Student Union. Inman, who will complete work on the master of divinity degree at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in December, will arrive on the field Aug. 1.

He currently is college minister for First Baptist Church in Arlington, Texas. He has served as recreation director for Centrifuge in Panama City Beach, Fla., and for the Centrifuge East Coast

Traveling Team.

He also has served as outreach director for the Arkansas State University BSU in Jonesboro.

A graduate of Gosnell High School, Inman earned the bachelor of science degree in business from ASU in 1990. He



Inman

served during the 1989-90 school year as state BSU vice president and as Arkansas State University's BSU president.

"I'm very excited to be going to Fayetteville," said Inman. "The number of students and type of students that attend there really will make a difference in the world."

"Kevin is an Arkansas product," said David James, director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention student ministry department. "He has a vast background of reaching students through BSU."

James described Inman's "people skills" as a strong factor in his election to the post. "He is a person who knows how to impact college freshman," James affirmed. "He has a strong commitment to evangelism, discipleship and missions."

Lynn Loyd, director of the BSU at Fayetteville, said Inman is qualified as an associate because "he has a proven track record of working with college students, involvement with BSU, leadership at Centrifuge and as a youth minister. All of those combined with an outgoing personality and athletic ability make him a person that attracts students to Christ."

Loyd said Inman's two "major responsibilities" will be involving freshmen in BSU ministries and training upperclassmen in leadership. "We will have 3,500 freshmen in the fall," he said. "The first three weeks of campus life is critical."

Inman agreed. "In the first three weeks, freshmen make decisions that last the rest of their college experience. What better time to influence their lives? If we can get them involved, there is a good chance they will commit their lives to Christ."

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## NATION

### Baptists, Assemblies lead giving trends

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—A national church giving study shows Southern Baptists and Assemblies of God with the highest per capita giving. It also cites budget pledging as a significant factor.

The American Congregational Giving Study included participants from five major denominations. Officials said the study, which included Assemblies of God, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Presbyterian Church (USA), Roman Catholic Church and Southern Baptist Convention, covered the "whole spectrum of Christian denominations in this country." It was commissioned by the Lilly Endowment, Inc., and surveyed 625 congregations, 125 in each of the five participating church bodies.

Although the findings are still being studied, researchers made some tentative conclusions, including:

- In general, the more orthodox the members' belief, the higher the giving.
- People who decide about giving for an entire year give much more than those who decide on the spot each week.
- Church size is not an important factor in giving.

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If interested, please contact the Arkansas church partner, First Baptist Church, 101 N. Elm, Jacksonville, AR 72076; telephone 501-982-1519, Marck Gibson, pastor.

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## HIGHER EDUCATION

### Coulter named ASU branch chancellor

William E. "Ed" Coulter, vice president for administration at Ouachita Baptist University since 1975, has been elected as the first chancellor of Arkansas State University's branch campus in Mountain Home.

Coulter, a graduate of Ouachita and the University of Arkansas, has served at OBU since 1970 where he also is a professor of education.

"Ed Coulter has a wealth of experience, both in educational administration and in community relations," affirmed Eugene

W. Smith, president emeritus and interim president of ASU. "I am confident that his leadership ability will enhance the future success of ASU's branch campus at Mountain Home."

"I am very honored to be given this opportunity and I am excited about the great potential for ASU-Mountain Home," Coulter said. He formerly was a high school principal in Mountain Home.

Coulter is immediate past president of the Arkansas Association of College and University Business Officers. He also has served on the Baptist Medical Center board.

Coulter and his wife, Fran, who has served as a professor of history at OBU since 1972, have three children.

"The combined service to Ouachita of Dr. Ed Coulter and Dr. Fran Coulter has been a major commitment and a source of strength for the university," noted OBU president Ben Elrod. "We wish them the very best in this new endeavor."



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**Music/youth director** — Keo Baptist Church, Keo, Arkansas. Send resume to: P.O. Box 87, Keo, AR 72083.

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 90 cents per word, must be included. Multiple insertions of the same ad must be paid for in advance. Classified ads shall be restricted to church-related subject matter. The ABN reserves the right to reject any ad because of unsuitable subject matter. Classified ads will be inserted on a space-available basis. No endorsement by the ABN is implied.

## Convention Uniform

### *They deserve it least!*

By David Welch, associate pastor,  
Geyer Springs Church, Little Rock  
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Focal passage: II Kings 7:3-10  
Central truth: God's greatest delight  
is flooding His abundant grace on  
those who deserve it least.

The story of John Newton is so well-known that it has become almost a proverb of God's grace. We all know that he ran away as a boy that he might "sin his fill." Most know that even though a slave for a short time, he later became a notorious slave trader. Though he was gloriously saved and ultimately wrote the world's best-known hymn, "Amazing Grace," very few realize the secret of his motivation: He never lost the profound awareness of God's grace toward him, a sinner.

When he was old, Newton's mind began to fail. As friends came to visit, he frequently remarked, "I am an old man. My mind is almost gone. But I can remember two things: I am a great sinner and Jesus is a great Savior." The mercy of God had so affected him, that even in senility he was overwhelmed by God's grace. "Grace" is the Bible's pinnacle word. These verses paint a portrait of His phenomenal grace.

■ *Our total unworthiness.* The setting was the city of Samaria in the midst of a Syrian siege. The people begged God and their king for relief (vv. 6:24-26). The people's suffering brought out the worst that humans can be — mothers were agreeing to boil and eat their own children (vv. 6:28-30). It makes one's soul shiver. The most worthless were four nameless lepers outside the city walls. If the city was suffering, then there are no words for the state of these four diseased creatures. They were total outcasts (vv. 7:3-4). In the spiritual realm, there is not one of us better than them (Isa. 64:6).

■ *God's phenomenal grace.* God chose to give the best spoils of the scattered Syrian army to the most despised and hideous outcasts in the land (vv. 7:7-8). First choice did not go to King Joram, nor to the temple priests, but to the lepers. The greatest who live on this earth do not deserve even one gram of His provision. Yet God's greatest delight is flooding abundant grace on those who deserve it least. And it really was grace; look at the lepers' response to it: They did not hordle it. Rather, they risked their necks to share it with the city (v. 7:9). O God, affect us deeply with the wonder of your grace.

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## Life and Work

### *Reaching the destination*

By Wilbur Herring, pastor emeritus,  
Central Church, Jonesboro  
Basic passage: Acts 28:11-31  
Focal passage: Acts 28:16-24  
Central truth: Paul's destination on  
earth was Rome.

God has a plan for every man and a man for every plan. God had a plan for Paul. His final destination on earth was Rome, the center of the Gentile world. There he was to preach Christ and the Kingdom of God which would be spread all over the world. God has a plan for you, a mission for you, the doing of which you will render the maximum value to God, to your fellow-man and to yourself.

God does not have a plan for Paul, Billy Graham and Don Moore, but no plan for you. Find God's plan for your life. Study Romans 12:1-2. Find that good, acceptable and perfect plan for your life.

■ *God had revealed to Paul that he was to preach Christ in Rome.* Paul was confident and certain of God's destination for him. This was God's great purpose for Paul and it was in keeping with the purpose of God for the world. All sorts of events came about in Paul's life to hinder his getting to Rome, but he knew that God would get him there safely.

■ *Paul was old when he finally reached the place where he was to render his maximum service to God.* It is estimated by some that he was 60 years of age when he arrived in Rome. This was very old considering the life expectancy at that time. It is considered old by some even now. There are not many pastors called to a church at this mature age. Yet, G. Campbell Morgan was 72 years of age when he was called to his last pastorate. Like Moses, Joshua and many others, most of us are in the last third of our life when we are called to do our greatest work for God.

■ *Paul did great work all along the way, but his most effective ministry was at Rome.* That was God's destination for him. Everything that happened to him along the way was God's hand in getting His servant, Paul, to Rome. What is your destination? I know that it is heaven, but God has the ultimate destination for you here on earth. Where is it? What is it? I hope that you discover it and get there — and then do your best for our Lord.

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## Bible Book

### *The worst and the best*

By Greg Stanley, pastor,  
First Church, Warren  
Basic passage: Mark 15:1-16:20  
Focal passage: Mark 15:1-16:20  
Central truth: God's power and  
grace can turn sin's worst into  
triumph.

The last two chapters of Mark's gospel can be viewed from two perspectives. We see in them the very worst display of sinful mankind's depravity or the grandest, most glorious exhibition of God's infinite power, goodness and love.

The difference in our perspective is our focus. When we look at those involved, we see a sad picture. Focusing upon the Son of God changes the view dramatically.

■ *A view of justice* (vv. 15:1-15). There was nothing fair or just about the trial of Jesus, either from the standpoint of Roman or Jewish law or the common standards of human decency. The crowd's demand for the murderer Barabbas in preference to Jesus makes us ashamed even today.

In contrast, there is the innocent Son of God, offering Himself for the sinful rabble. At their worst and most undeserving, mankind found a Savior's love.

■ *A view of cruelty* (vv. 15:16-19; 29-32). We can hardly imagine the cruelty and inhumanity the soldiers, curious passers-by, and religious leaders inflicted on Jesus. His physical suffering was compounded by the ridicule and mocking.

Those who see God as vindictive and judgmental need only look upon the voluntary suffering of Jesus and realize "God was reconciling the world to Himself in Christ" (II Cor. 5:18).

■ *A view of compassion* (vv. 15:21-22; 40-47). Amid these scenes of sin and unspeakable cruelty, there are a few bright spots that offer hope for mankind. Simon of Cyrene helped lift the physical burden of the cross while some believing women sought to minister to the last. Joseph performed a final act of love, respect and devotion in burying his body.

■ *A view of death* (vv. 15:33-16:8). Sin, through man under its curse, had done its very worst. The supreme tribute to the omnipotence, wisdom and grace of Almighty God is His turning man's greatest travesty into Heaven's greatest triumph.

Through Jesus' death and resurrection, man's most awful act became the means to eternal salvation. When we believe in Jesus, that miraculous transformation takes place all over again on a personal level.

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## Convention Uniform

### *A sliding scale judgment*

By David Welch, associate pastor,  
Geyer Springs Church, Little Rock  
Basic passage: Amos 1:1-3:2  
Focal passage: Amos 3:1-2  
Central truth: All sinful flesh  
deserves God's judgment, but those  
who know Him best will be judged  
more severely.

"Surprising" and "shocking" are the normative descriptions for the method and message of most Old Testament prophets. When God says something important, He usually says it in unusual ways.

A biblical case in point: the "non-prophet" Amos. He was a nobody shepherd and fruit-picker from Tekoa (v. 7:14). Quickly interpreted: He was a migrant field-hand from Judah, who walked into the royal court of Israel and declared the judgment of God on the nation of Israel. It is as if an illegal Mexican laborer walked into the White House and declared judgment on America. Look at what we learn from his message:

■ *God's judgment is sure and terrible for all who disobey.* Amos declared utter destruction for seven other countries surrounding Israel. The repetitive "I will send fire" is a pronouncement of military conquest and total destruction in each of those nations, where death and carnage will result. Without repentance from sin, so too is the fate of our nation and our own lives.

■ *God's judgment is surprising and severe for the disobedient who know Him best.* The other countries had been judged for the grossest of sins, such as barbaric torture of their military captives, inhumane slave-trade, infanticide where the wombs of women were cut open in order to kill babies. But as for Israel, they were being judged for seemingly innocuous sins such as bribery, inattentiveness to the poor, drunkenness and a bit of immorality.

The judgment on Israel was so severe because they were God's special people (vv. 3:1-2). They had known God's wonderful deliverance as well as His precepts and examples. They were in covenant with Him! They were without excuse...and so are we. In this generation, we are the ones who know Him best. Inevitably, judgment begins in the household of God (1 Pet. 4:17).

## Life and Work

### *Thanksgiving and prayer*

By David Napier, associate pastor,  
Immanuel Church, Little Rock  
Basic passage: Colossians 1:1-12  
Focal passage: Colossians 1:3  
Central truth: A thankful, prayerful  
attitude can provide a harmonious  
approach to discussing differences.

Have you noticed how much "finger pointing" and "name calling" goes on today? The world appears to grow more angry and intolerant daily. From radio talk shows to political forums, even in many pulpits, an antagonistic, even hateful attitude over differences seems to prevail. Sadly, much of this is done in the name of Christianity. Subtle differences in theology provide fertile ground for dispute in the church. Often, we would be much better off if we could agree to disagree. But sometimes that is impossible. We know that the infallible truth of God's Word remains the same. The message that salvation rests in Jesus Christ must never be compromised.

In writing the church at Colossae, Paul was faced with the difficult task of addressing heresy that was creeping into that church, undermining this central truth of the Gospel. The central problem of gnosticism was that it detracted from the central focus of Jesus as the Christ. It added humanistic philosophies to Christianity and was pervading the Colossian church.

Rather than raising his hand in admonition, Paul took a more effective approach. He offered thanks for their fruitful response to the Gospel. He told them he had "heard" about their good works, complimenting them for their "love for all of the saints," their "faith in Christ," and their "hope of heaven." Paul recognized these characteristics as vital cornerstones of the church at Colossae. Rather than immediately stating the problem, Paul affirms their good works. Then, in verses 9-12, Paul prays for their "knowledge," not a fleshly wisdom, but spiritual insight. He recognized that these were Christian brothers and sisters. He treated them as such, even if their doctrine was in error. In doing so, he opened the door for corrective dialogue.

With all of the bitter discussion among Christians today, we would do well to learn a lesson from Paul. Is there a brother or sister with whom you are in disagreement? Rather than confrontation, thank God for the good in their lives and pray for them. After doing this, you will probably find little room left for bitterness or anger.

## Bible Book

### *The call of Ezekiel*

By Marty Watson, pastor,  
Baring Cross Church,  
North Little Rock  
Basic passage: Ezekiel 1:1-3:27  
Focal passage: Ezekiel 2:1-6, 3:16-17  
Central truth: The call of God is not  
dependent upon the response of the  
world.

Ezekiel, part of a priestly family, was carried into exile prior to the fall of Jerusalem. Five years into Ezekiel's captivity, the Lord called him to a prophetic ministry among his fellow captives. As He did with Isaiah, God revealed Himself to Ezekiel through an incredible vision that revealed to him the awesome majesty, power and presence of the Living God. Ezekiel's response was to fall on his face before God.

Filling him with His Spirit, God issued His call to Ezekiel. God described Ezekiel's congregation as being a "rebellious nation that has rebelled against Me" (v. 2:3). He called them "impudent and stubborn children" (v. 2:4).

He painted a rather graphic picture of a deprived people. The message that Ezekiel was to deliver was a message of "lamentations and mourning and woe" (v. 2:10). It would be received with closed ears. Just as they refused to listen to God, they refused to listen to Ezekiel.

What then was the purpose of Ezekiel's ministry? God explained to Ezekiel that whether or not they hear him was not the issue. What was significant is that they would "know that a prophet has been among them" (v. 2:5). Ezekiel was to be a "watchman for the house of Israel." (v. 3:17) He was to sound God's alarm of the impending destruction that would befall their beloved Jerusalem. He was to deliver God's truth in the midst of much speculation on the part of false prophets.

The call of Ezekiel is a reminder to us that the call God has given us is not dependent upon the response of those to whom we are sent. It is our responsibility to fulfill that call in such a way that they will know that a prophet has been among them. The same resolve that God promised to provide Ezekiel is ours today. He will make our "faces strong against their faces," and our "foreheads strong against their foreheads" (v. 3:8).

He who has called us will empower us and sustain us. He will provide for us no matter what we face. May we be faithful to our call.



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## Florida board targets Stetson for lifting alcohol ban

JACKSONVILLE, FL (BP)—Florida Baptists' state board of missions has named a four-member committee to study the convention's relationship with Stetson University, which has reversed a century-old ban on the use of alcoholic beverages on campus.

The Florida board also registered its "dismay" and "sincere and anguished distress" over a decision by trustees of the Baptist-related college in DeLand, Fla., to allow beer, wine and wine coolers at approved parties and in some student residence halls.

Stetson University elects trustees independently and receives no direct Cooperative Program funding from the Florida Baptist Convention. However, each church is provided an opportunity on its remittance form to forward gifts to the university.

## Video curriculum to help churches begin AIDS ministries

DALLAS (BP)—The Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission and the T.B. Maston Foundation have produced a videotape-based curriculum to help churches begin ministries to people with AIDS.

"Echoes From the Valley: Beginning an AIDS Ministry" is an hour-long videotape divided into three 20-minute sections. A viewers' guide is included in the 24-page resource booklet, "AIDS: Facing Facts, Confronting Fears, Ministering to People." The booklet also includes a sample infectious disease policy, medical information on HIV, a biblical perspective on the AIDS crisis, suggested steps toward a ministry to people who are HIV-positive, a recommended format for AIDS education in a church setting and a caregiver's guide for working with homebound AIDS patients.

Information about ordering the videotape and accompanying resource booklet can be obtained from the Texas Baptist CLC, 333 N. Washington, Dallas TX 75246-1798.

## Oklahoma exec Bill Tanner announces '96 retirement

OKLAHOMA CITY (BP)—William G. Tanner has announced his retirement as executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma, effective June 30, 1996.

Tanner, 65, became Oklahoma's executive director July 1, 1986, following 10 years as president of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. He previously was president of Oklahoma Baptist University.

Tanner is a graduate of Baylor University, the University of Houston and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. In 1976 he received a distinguished alumni award from Southwestern. Tanner and his wife, Ellen, have four married children and five grandchildren. A sixth grandchild died in 1988.

## Texas Baptist Standard names Toby Druin new editor

DALLAS (BP)—The *Baptist Standard*, Southern Baptists' largest state Baptist paper, has named longtime associate editor Toby Druin as editor-elect.

The *Baptist Standard's* board of directors met June 6 in Dallas and unanimously elected Druin, 60, as successor to Presnall Wood. Wood, 63, will retire at the end of this year after 17 years as editor. Druin will assume his new duties effective Jan. 1, 1996. He has worked as associate editor since 1976.

Druin came to the Texas paper from the news service of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. Earlier, he had served as associate editor of the *Biblical Recorder* in North Carolina and as news director for Baylor University. He also had worked at several Texas newspapers and has served a number of churches as minister of music.

Druin, a graduate of Baylor, is current president of the Southern Baptist Press Association. He and his wife, Larra, have three adult daughters.

## Bob Terry elected editor of Alabama Baptist press

BIRMINGHAM, AL (BP)—Bobby S. "Bob" Terry has been elected editor of *The Alabama Baptist*, effective Aug. 1. Terry has served since 1975 as editor of *Word & Way*, the state Baptist newsjournal of Missouri.

The board of directors of *The Alabama Baptist* unanimously elected Terry during its regular annual business session May 26. Terry succeeds Hudson D. Baggett, who served as editor from 1966 until his death Nov. 17.

A native of Decatur, Ala., Terry, 52, previously served as associate editor of the *Western Recorder*, state Baptist newspaper of Kentucky. He is a graduate of Mississippi College and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Terry is a past president of the Southern Baptist Press Association and currently serves as the organization's part-time executive director. He also is a former president of Southern Seminary's national alumni association. He and his wife, Eleanor, who is senior associate dean of student affairs at William Jewell College in Liberty, Mo., are the parents of two married children, Brent Terry and Jean Cullen.

Subscribers through the group plan pay \$7.08 per year.

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