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Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

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June 8, 1989

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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The Best Prescription

Arkansas Baptist

June 8, 1989



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Touched by Love

Cover Story



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IT'S UPLIFTING

Trouble And Love

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—When Rhonda Cole enrolled at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, she didn't intend to end up with 27 children.

But as director of the after-school program at Baptist Community Center in downtown Fort Worth, Texas, Cole is a tutor, counselor, friend and second mom.

Cole, a religious education student, started two years ago meeting general needs of people who came into the building located in one of the most depressed areas of Fort Worth.

Her interests soon focused on neighborhood children. That's when the job turned into a ministry.

Cole's background as a child of missionaries in Ecuador and Nicaragua helps her minister to people in the mostly Hispanic neighborhood around the center.

After the children get out of school each day, they go to the center a block away. What they find is Cole eager to do crafts, play games, listen to their stories and be a friend.

"To me it was always so important to go home and tell mom how my day was. These kids don't have that," Cole said. Many of the children are from single-parent homes and would return to an empty house if the after-school program didn't exist, she said.

"It's a good time to unwind from

school," Cole said. And the program provides a place where "they can escape the reality of the way they're living."

With a growth in enrollment, Cole saw the need for additional supervision. A field education student from Southwestern was added and recently started a Bible club. Two Baptist Student Union groups volunteer in the afternoons.

"I get any volunteers I can so they can be a good influence on the children."

Special events show the children people care about them and demonstrate "the unconditional love of Christ," Cole said. "They see youth from outside their neighborhood who are good role models."

She hopes to broaden her reach at the center by creating a ministry for entire families. Adult Bible studies will be added to the English-language classes for adults Cole helps coordinate.

And as Cole's ministry at the center expands, so does her opportunity for evangelism. By building relationships, Cole said, she has more chances to share her faith: "I've seen a lot of changes (in the children). I've seen a lot of kids open up and not be so tough. They've learned there are rules and they must stick to them."

In the past two years, Cole has seen many of children come and go, which leaves her wondering about the lasting effect of her ministry.

"They're all so special, even the tough kids," Cole said. "The kids that give me the most trouble are the ones I love the most."

GOOD NEWS!

Tests for Selective Service

Judges 7

It is revealing to study God's method of selecting the soldiers to follow Gideon. First, God changed the hearts of persons. It is evident that the masses were intent on killing Gideon (Jg. 6:3). Yet, when the spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon, 32,000 men came together to become soldiers of Gideon. God changed men so that they changed priorities.

God chose soldiers who were unafraid (v. 3)—The first persons to be set aside as useless were those who were afraid. Twenty-two thousand out of 32,000 were disqualified because of fear. Two-thirds of the group were useless. Fear takes a large toll today. Peer pressures, financial commitments, leadership responsibilities in the church are a few of the fears that disqualify

many today.

God chose soldiers who were selfless (vv. 4-7)—He eliminated the fearful first, then the self-indulgent. All but 300 men thought only of their own needs. They did not look up to watch for the enemy or to see to their brother's need.

God chose soldiers who were alert (v. 7)—Three hundred persons were selected for a surprise night attack on the marauder's camp. The test by which Gideon's men were selected is variously interpreted. The drinkers' stance seems to suggest alertness. They kept a watchful eye for the enemy.

God is searching for good soldiers who can pass the entrance exams. The requirements are demanding: fearlessness, selflessness, and alertness.

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Baptist Diversity

J. EVERETT SNEED

Anyone who is well acquainted with Southern Baptist churches is well aware of the tremendous diversity in the size of congregations, programs and activities. This is as it should be, since it requires a variety of approaches to meet the needs of a diverse population. Yet, there are certain things that should be in common to all Southern Baptist churches. Among these are a commitment to New Testament doctrine, polity and cooperation.

Through observation of Southern Baptist churches, we can discover a number of practices which are common to most Southern Baptist churches. Certainly not all of these are requirements and they should not be used in a judgmental manner, but we believe that these are general characteristics of SBC churches.

All that a Southern Baptist church does should be an outgrowth of biblical doctrine. Obviously, there is some diversity in doctrines (teaching) of Southern Baptist churches, but through the years certain beliefs and practices have become identified with Southern Baptists. Some of these beliefs are Bible based and unchangeable. Some of our methods may be adapted to meet the needs of specific congregations. Our basic doctrines have been set forth in a major confession of faith. Our 1963 statement of faith, commonly called the *Baptist Faith and Message*, serves as a good declaration of our teachings.

Baptists are agreed that our Bible is our only source of authority for faith and practice. In other words our doctrines are to be directly derived from the Scriptures. The question arises: Why are other sources of authority unacceptable? The answer lies in the fact that the Bible is "God breathed." Our Scriptures, therefore, as originally given by God to his servant, contain no error and doctrines derived from his word give guidance for our beliefs and our actions.

A second distinctive of Southern Baptists is our church polity. Church polity determines how a church is to be governed. Some churches govern themselves while others have their daily activities determined by an outside ruling body. We believe that congregational church polity is the best for three reasons. These are: (1) it is biblical in nature; (2) it makes possible the involvement of all church members; and (3) it makes each church directly responsible



to Christ for its activity.

Polity is important in a church. The lack of a government may result in confusion or chaos. It has been estimated that 90 percent of the cults have been created by the violation of organizational principles. Often division has developed as a few members strive to dominate others. The end result is usually division.

Church government means organization. Across the years there have been certain organizations which have been identified as being a part of the SBC. These are Sunday School, Church Training, Woman's Missionary Union, and Brotherhood. Through these organizations, people are provided with opportunity for Bible study, membership training, mission education and mission action.

A third characteristic of Southern Baptist churches is cooperation with other churches. A Southern Baptist church will want to be involved in the life of the denomination on the local, state and national levels. Through the local association, state convention and SBC, churches are offered training and fellowship which will make any congregation more effective. While it is true that no church can attend every Baptist meeting, conference, and clinic, it is important both to the churches and to the denomination for every congregation to be involved on every level of denominational life.

Missions and evangelism are at the heart of everything that we do as Southern Baptists. The Cooperative Program remains the best vehicle to spread the gospel around the world. It is noteworthy that the constitution of the SBC makes finances a major criterion for a church's cooperation with the SBC. The reason is obvious for, as Jesus said "... where your treasure is, there your heart is also" (Mt. 6:21). A church committed to the work of Southern Baptists will want to support our work, at home and around the world.

Finally, a Southern Baptist church is one which is supportive rather than indifferent or antagonistic to the denomination. No, the Southern Baptist Convention is not perfect, but when a truly cooperative church sees something that needs correcting, the congregation will approach in constructively through love.

It is impossible to fully enumerate all of the practices of a Southern Baptist church because of our diversity. But these are some of the characteristics which should be present in every Southern Baptist church whether it is located in Arkansas, Alaska, or California.

Arkansas Baptist

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DON MOORE

You'll Be Glad To Know



I continue to schedule meetings on Saturday with bivocational pastors. The directors of missions provide the list for us, encourage participation and arrange for a place of meeting. From 9:30-10:00 a.m., we enjoy coffee and donuts as the group is gathering. From 10-11 a.m., I, along with three other program leaders from the Baptist Building, share matters we feel will be of help to the bivocational pastors. From 11 a.m. to 12 noon, the bivocationalists ask questions or share information with us that will help us in our planning and programming. We host them for lunch and fellowship. A number of changes have been made in recent years because of suggestions made by our bivocationalists.

It is a blessing to get to know these men. They love the Lord. They work hard. They do a good job. In fact, they baptize about as many new converts percentage-wise as pastors who have no other job but pastoring.

Bivocationalists make up almost one-third of our entire pastoral force in Arkansas. That compares to one-fourth throughout the Southern Baptist Convention.

Here are some questions and quotes from bivocationalists. "What do you do when the church tells you they want to grow, but when you get on the field, you find out they really don't want to?"

"Why are all of our programs taken from larger churches and altered to fit smaller churches? Why can't you take something that has been started in smaller churches and promote it rather than have us always make the adjustments?"

"Mission support is no problem when churches know what is being done. Many pastors and churches do not know what the state or association is doing for churches." "Our church had not taken the Annie Armstrong offering in four years. We informed the people and set a goal of \$200. We received \$231. Our people felt good about going over the goal."

"Why are pastors of large churches who come in from out of state nominated to convention offices within two or three years when those of us who have served faithfully for years are never called on?"

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

BOB PARKER

Today's Issues

CP and Us

The Southern Baptist Cooperative Program and I will be only 64 years of age this summer. It was born in June 1925. I came along a short time later on July 1. That's one reason I have a very special personal interest in this program. More importantly, I sincerely believe it's the best plan in existence for financial giving to causes outside the local church.

When my wife and I contribute through the Geyer Springs First Baptist Church, it's very gratifying to know that more than 17 percent will be channeled through the Cooperative Program which includes state and national (Southern Baptist Convention-wide) causes.

We feel a real sense of joy in knowing that, with thousands of other Southern Baptists, we are giving real support to the more than 7,000 foreign and home missionaries. It all adds up, regardless of the size membership church.

Two four-year Baptist colleges in Arkansas and six SBC seminaries where thousands of young people receive training for Christian service and responsibilities are also recipients of our tithes and offerings. Mission education through the Woman's Missionary Union and Bapt-

tist Brotherhood are also helped as we give. Religious education, family and child care, and other important programs are planned and provided for by our fellow Southern Baptists.

I'm really distressed when I learn of anyone leaving our Southern Baptist churches for other affiliations because when they do so, they are no longer contributing to the support of such a wide range of Christian ministries.

During the 27 years of pastoring Southern Baptist churches (including one period of being an associate pastor) I have urged prospective members to come if God so directs, but not to come otherwise. I would urge any considering leaving our Southern Baptist churches to also be sure God directs and not for any other reason. Weigh what is being considered in the scales of what your overall contribution will be, both here and throughout the world.

"Go ye therefore into all the world... (Mt. 28:19-20).

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



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'A Life Touched by Love'

Lisa Johnson will never forget the spring night 20 years ago that changed her life. Even though she was only 16, she felt her life was over. She had just flunked two classes in school, her parents refused to let her see her boyfriend and nobody seemed to understand her. She saw suicide as the only way out. But before she left her house for what she thought was the last time, she called someone who did understand—her pastor, Bill Jones. After a few intense hours of counseling and prayer, Lisa regained her faith in herself and God, and life seemed worth living.

After that night, Lisa saw Bill as not only a minister, but a friend.

Now Bill is retired from the ministry and Lisa is busy rearing three children. She still keeps in touch, but she feels she will never be able to return all the understanding, inspiration and faith he gave her.

This is what Annuity Board Sunday is all about—thanking the retired ministers in our lives for a "Life Touched by Love."

June 25th has been set aside to remember, honor and support the ministers who have helped Southern Baptists through the troubled and joyous times of daily living.

The spirit of "A Life Touched by Love" has moved Southern Baptists to help these retired ministers. Through generous donations to the Annuity Board's Retired Ministers' Support Fund, caring people have made a big difference in the lives of several hundred retired Baptist ministers and their widows.

The Retired Ministers' Support Fund is an endowment fund to undergird the retirement incomes of ministers and missionaries whose incomes are less than adequate. Southern Baptists send donations in the form of cash, real estate, interest payments, insurance and bequests in wills.

The endowment program is so vital because many elderly ministers and widows live at or below the poverty level. They frequently live on fixed incomes such

as Social Security and are forced to scrape together enough money for food and medical bills.

A monthly check from the Annuity Board can make the difference between eating and going hungry.

"The reasons for their financial problems are simple," said John Bloskas, vice president and director of endowment for the Southern Baptist Annuity Board.

"Many of the churches these dear people served didn't have the money to set aside for retirement. Those that did provide an annuity plan were able to make only small contributions," he said.

Bloskas added that inflation has eroded the incomes of hundreds of these retired annuitants. "A lot of them had adequate income when they retired, but they have lived so long this income is no longer enough," he said.

As Southern Baptists across the nation have been made aware of the needs of retired ministers and widows they have responded with donations.

Here is what three retired ministers had to say about the Annuity Board's financial support programs:

"I moved last month to a cheaper apartment and fractured my back doing so. Then in July I had a recurrence of cancer. I did not know how I'd ever get through this. Your donation is a wonderful gesture to me."

"Every night I thank God for my donor. If it wasn't for them a lot of times we would have gone to bed hungry. But thanks to the Good Lord and the Annuity Board, this hasn't happened."

"Medicare did not pay anything for nearly two months when I was in a skilled rest home—your gift was such a help."

For these three retired ministers, the gifts of many generous Baptists obviously made a difference. And for people like Lisa Johnson, these donations are a Christian way of saying, "thank you" for the gifts their ministers gave them.



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The Best Prescription

by Mark Wingfield
SBC Home Mission Board

BUFFALO, N.Y. (BP)—A pharmacist from Rome, Ga., has discovered that starting new churches is the best prescription for winning people to Christ in upstate New York.

As a pharmacist, Allen Baldwin said he knew the prescriptions he gave people ultimately would not save them from death. But as a church planter, Baldwin dispenses eternal medicine.

Baldwin changed careers 10 years ago after his wife took him to West Rome Baptist Church, where he became a believer in Jesus Christ. As a young pharmacist working in his hometown, Baldwin had achieved his life's goals. He had a beautiful wife, a new house, a new car and a contract to buy the drugstore where he worked.

After becoming a Christian, Baldwin discovered new goals that changed his life, he says. He sold the house, forfeited the option to buy the lucrative pharmacy and loaded the car to move his family to New York to start new churches as an unpaid volunteer.

That was nine churches ago.

Today, the 37-year-old Southern Baptist home missionary is a church-starter strategist in New York's Frontier Baptist Association. He makes half the salary he did as a pharmacist but claims he is twice as happy.

"We live right on the edge," he explains. "Every day if God doesn't do something, we're going to fall. But that's a wonderful, exhilarating feeling. It's the best life in the

world because you know it's real. You know people's lives are being changed eternally."

In 1988, Baldwin helped the association's 30 congregations begin seven mission churches. The association encompasses 1.6 million people and seven counties, from Niagara Falls on the north down through Buffalo to the Pennsylvania border on the south.

At one time last year, Baldwin was pastor of three of those new congregations. "I believe we could start a new work every week if we had the people to help," he says. "God has opened doors all around the association."

"We have people calling to offer the use of their homes for Bible studies. My greatest heartache is having areas where we could start churches today and not having anyone to provide leadership."

"You could take a map and throw a dart and randomly hit a place in our association that needs a church. Right now we're just trying to target the most needful areas."

Ten years ago the Baldwins would not have believed such a place existed, he says. "We had never given any thought to the fact that there was a place different from Rome, Ga., where there is a church on every corner," he explains.

After serving as Mission Service Corp volunteers in Watertown, N.Y., Baldwin said, he and his wife gained a new perspective on home missions. He determined church planting was where he should put his life.

Baldwin later was appointed a church planter apprentice in Ticonderoga, N.Y., where he began his second church. He assumed the strategist position in Buffalo in 1987 as part of Frontier Association's emphasis on starting new churches and the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's emphasis on reaching America's cities.

In 1988, to commemorate Frontier's 30th anniversary, the association's 30 congregations determined to establish 30 mission churches by 1993. With seven started in 1988, 23 more are needed to reach the goal.

"We're not proposing something outlandish," says Terry Robertson, associational director of missions. "We're simply proposing to do each year what we've done in 1988."

Robertson estimates 90 percent of the people who live in his association have no personal relationship with Jesus Christ. About 65 percent are totally unchurched, he says.

East Aurora, a Buffalo suburb where Baldwin recently started a Bible study, is typical of most communities where he works. "There are church buildings but not necessarily churches," he explains.

The Bible study meets at the home of Ron and Patty Graves. The Graveses, who have helped start Southern Baptist churches over places they have lived, approached the association about starting a congregation in their community.

"We need evangelical churches in East Aurora," Patty Graves says. "I don't have the statistics about how many people attend church. But I do know that when we go to church, other people around us do not."

Baldwin enters a community like East Aurora, finds a home to begin a Bible study and then starts knocking on doors.

"If I don't do anything else right, I'm going to make sure every door gets knocked on," he says. "This is the purest form of what we're supposed to do. We're told to go and tell."

Through surveying the community, Baldwin finds prospects and invites them to attend the new Bible study. Although gentle and soft-spoken by nature, he believes God has given him a "holy meanness" to aggressively approach people with the gospel.

Baldwin usually leads the Bible study for the first few months until it gets established and other leaders are enlisted. As the Bible study grows, it becomes a mission and then constitutes as a church.

"My goal is for every community to have a Bible-believing, soul-winning church that's easy to get to," Baldwin says. "We've got a wide-open field for starting churches here. I feel like a kid in a candy store."

BP photo / Ken Touchton



Allen Baldwin hopes this Thursday night Bible study will grow into a church.

Leadership Profile for ABSC Nominating Committee

Members of the Nominating Committee for the 1989 Arkansas Baptist State Convention want Arkansas Baptists to submit names of persons for 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 commit-

tee will not contact any person recommended until they approve the nominations.

The Nominating Committee will hold its first meeting Aug. 10 and needs all recommendations no later than July 14.

Members of the committee: Harold Elmore, chairman; James Schults; James Wilson; Ben Rowell; Bill Bowen; Jack Bledsoe; Carl Fawcett; G.B. Hambrick; and Harry Smith.

July 14 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? _____

Is this person able to be away from family and work for at least one or two days three times a year? _____

Give the name and phone number of at least one person who knows of the nominee's involvement in Baptist life beside his or her pastor or director of missions. _____

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.

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Mail this sheet to:
Harold Elmore, chairman
200 N. Lake Shore Dr.
Lake Village, AR 71653

Signed _____
(Name of person making this recommendation)

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

Ten Graduate Mid-America

Ten Arkansans were among the 45 May graduates from Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary in London, Tenn.

Receiving the master of divinity degree were:

—Charles Bradley Banks, son of Mr. and Mrs. W.E. Kilpatrick of Brinkley. He is a graduate of Southern Baptist College, and presently associate pastor of Fisherville Church, Fisherville, Tenn.

—George H. Carroll Jr., former volunteer chaplain and supply preacher while his formal position was director of engineering at Central Arkansas Radiation Therapy Institute.

—Robert E. Collier, former pastor of Providence Church, Jonesboro. He is a graduate of Arkansas State University.

—Gregory J. Murphy, currently minister of youth and music at Broadmoor Church, Brinkley.

—Gary W. Stafford, youth intern at Broadway Church in Memphis, Tenn. He was born in Little Rock.

—Curtis S. Styles, currently pastor of Joiner Church, and a resident of Marion.

—W. Kenneth Thornton, currently

associate pastor of Berean Church, North Little Rock. He is a graduate of Central College, Conway.

—Stephen G. Veteto, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ed Veteto of Hot Springs.

—V. Bryan Webb, former pastor of First Church, Hatfield. He is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University.

Receiving the master of arts in religious education was Christopher A. Perry, currently minister of music and youth at Fisher Street Church in Jonesboro. He is a graduate of Southern Baptist College.

Outstanding Four Honored at SBC

WALNUT RIDGE—Four persons were honored in connection with the 1989 Southern Baptist College graduation ceremonies May 12.

LeRoy Carter, a Leachville farmer, was named Distinguished Baptist Layman of 1989. A deacon at First Church, Leachville, for many years, Carter has held several positions in agricultural organizations on both county and state levels.

David Miller, director of mission for Little Red River Association, Heber Springs,

was honored as Distinguished Baptist Minister of 1989. He has served on state and national baptist boards and committees, and has conducted over 400 revivals in recent years.

Vivian Jones of Memphis was named Distinguished Baptist Lady of 1989. She and her late husband, Gordon B. Jones, for years traveled the world with the Gideons International ministry. Since his death, she has continued their work by giving financial support.

Arlliss Dickerson, a Southern graduate, was given the 1989 Distinguished Alumnus Award. He is the director of the Baptist Student Union at Arkansas State University. He has published numerous articles for student ministries publications, and has held state and national Baptist posts.

SBC Employs Davis

WALNUT RIDGE—David R. Davis of Black Rock has been employed by Southern Baptist College to teach chemistry, physical science and algebra.

Davis is a graduate of Southern Baptist College and Arkansas State University. He has been associated with Lynn High School since 1978.



Corinne Eubank at Hermitage



Brenda Gosnell making music at Hope



Benton WMU at Cass Job Corps

WMU In Action

The first Baptist Women mission trips sponsored by the Arkansas Woman's Missionary Union took place May 1-5. Originally, the plan called for one trip, but the response allowed two trips.

Ten women served at the Hermitage Mission center with Ariel Hernandez. Each day teams members led classes for which an average of 20 women participated. An average of 15 children were cared for so their mothers could devote attention to classes in English, nutrition, hygiene, sewing and Bible study.

Hermitage team members were Altha Adams, Warren; Shairley Ashcraft, Warren; Pam Rusher, Jonesboro; Louise Bunch, Batesville; Luois Wheeler, Clarendon; Corinne Eubank, Pine Bluff; Margie Edwards, Jacksonville; Martha Dewbre, North Little Rock; Louise Coker, Fayetteville; and Carolyn Porterfield, Arkansas Baptist Women/BYW director.

The second mission team was sent to Hope and worked with Bob Gross. Their main duties centered on literature and Bible distribution, serving refreshments, helping with clothing, crafts and working with children. During the week they saw 16 people come to know the Lord

through the ministry of the center.

The Hope team members were Brenda Gossett, McCrory; Lorece Wright, McCrory; Dorothy Stump, Gentry; Retha McGee, Waldron; Thelma Lee Rice, Waldron; Marjorie Grober, Little Rock; and Sybil Carroll, Little Rock.

In another mission effort, the Benton First Church Woman's Missionary Union recently took hygiene items to Cass Job Corps Center and toured the facility. Cass Job Corps Chaplain Ron Clark and Center Director Robert Hightower expressed thanks to Ruth Neal and Linda McGuire of the Benton group for caring enough to put prayers into action.

England Area Crusade Held

An areawide crusade was held in England's football stadium May 14-18.

Michael Gott of Jacksonville, Texas, was evangelist. Other speakers were Kenny Hatfield, head coach of the Arkansas Razorback football team, Patti Thorn, Miss Arkansas for 1988-89, and Carey Crawford, nose guard for the U of A Razorbacks.

Musicians were John and Debbie Sorrell of Lufkin, Texas.

Harry Black, pastor of First Church in England, served as publicity chairman.

Reynolds Church Observes 75th

Reynolds Memorial Church in Little Rock observed its 75th anniversary May 21 with two morning worship services which featured Glenn Hickey, director of missions for Pulaski Association, and James Walker, Annuity/Stewardship director for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, as speakers.

A homecoming dinner and an afternoon program that featured music and messages from former pastors concluded the observance.

The church, organized in 1914 as a mission of Little Rock Second Church, was originally known as Emerson Chapel. It was first located on East Sixth Street and in 1961 moved to its present location at 7111 Fourche Dam Pike. The church is now named for its first pastor and organizer, J.H. Reynolds.

NW Women To Host Conference

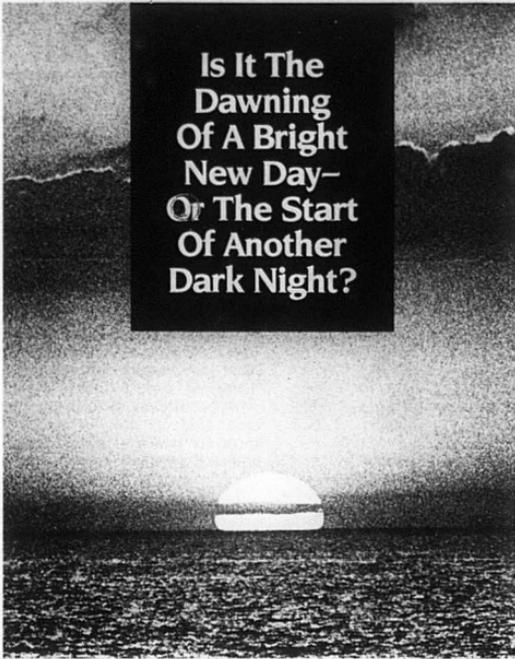
Northwest Arkansas Conference for Women will be held Oct. 5-7 at First Church of Springdale with the theme "God's Pattern For Today's Woman."

Key speakers will be Beverly LaHaye, Fay Anus, and Daisy Hepburn. Guest soloist will be Cynthia Clawson.

The conference will feature individual workshops, a bookstore, inspirational music, and a style show.

Co-chairpersons are Jeana Floyd, Springdale, telephone 501-751-0604, and Bettye Atchison, Rogers, telephone 501-636-8912.

Cost for the conference is \$25. To pre-register, contact Vickie White, P.O. Box 6142, Springdale, AR 72765.



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People

Dennis Tucker, a former Fort Smith resident, will represent Ouachita Baptist University at a July meeting of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelism. The meeting will convene in the Philippines with approximately 2,200 in attendance.



Jim Constable will join the staff of Woodland Heights Church in Conway July 1 as minister to youth. He is a recent graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Constable and his wife, Melanie, are both graduates of Ouachita Baptist University. They are parents of one daughter, Callie, four.

Donna Bowman joined the staff of First Church in Heber Springs May 28 as minister of youth. She graduated May 12 from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University. A native of Little Rock, Bowman previously served the Heber Springs church as summer youth director.

John Holston of North Little Rock will begin serving June 18 as interim pastor of First Church, Texarkana, Texas, Downtown.

Steve Harness is serving First Church of Amity as associate pastor and youth minister.

Brad and Jill Sullivan are serving as youth ministers at Richwoods Church, Arkadelphia.

Richard Hunt joined the staff of Central Church in Jonesboro June 7 as minister of music. A native of Waco, Texas, he grew up in the Philippines, where his parents served as Southern Baptist missionaries. He is a graduate of Wayland Baptist University in Plainview, Texas, and has done further study at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He has served churches in Texas and Oklahoma. He and his wife, Margret Ann, have three children, Mandy, Allison, and Aaron.

Linda Reagan has resigned as assistant childhood education director and interim preschool coordinator at Park Hill Church

in North Little Rock. **Diane Howell** will serve as interim for these positions.

Don Soderquist, vice chairman and chief operating officer for Wal-Mart Stores, Inc., of Bentonville, recently was presented an honorary doctorate of business administration when Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Mo., held its commencement exercises May 20. Soderquist delivered the commencement address.

Eric Hutchinson of Rogers was presented one of the two Life Beautiful Awards at the May 20 commencement exercises of Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Mo. His selection for the highest honor to SBU Students was made by faculty members, based on his academic, social, and spiritual life.

Vernon Wickliffe is serving as interim pastor of Vimy Ridge Immanuel Church.

Ed Walker will begin serving June 18 as interim pastor of Martindale Church in Little Rock.

Stuart Whitlow, a member, is serving Grand Avenue Church in Fort Smith as summer intern for work with single adults.

Hubert Weir and **Grace Nell Patterson** were recognized May 28 as Man and

Woman of the Year when Immanuel Church in Little Rock observed Senior Adult Day. Weir, a deacon, is a leader in the benevolence program of the church, is a Sunday School secretary, and participates in the work of the Pulaski Association crisis closet. Patterson, a former staff member and WMU director, continues to serve as a Sunday School teacher.

Briefly

Crystal Hill Church in Little Rock has launched a new work in Rolling Hills Mobile Home Park.

Heber Springs First Church began its summer lakeside ministry May 28 at Dam Site Park Amphitheater. Jim Lambert is coordinator, assisted by Collin and Freda Stark.

Des Arc First Church held a surprise fellowship May 28 for Pastor Verne Wickliffe in recognition of his recent graduation from Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.



First Church, Springdale, drew inspiration from the parable of the Feeding of the Five Thousand in a special emphasis week, culminating with a meal on April 23. Attendance goals of 2,500 in the main Sunday School and 2,500 in outreach Bible studies at off-site locations were set and met, with total attendance coming to 6,291 on Sunday. Spiritual feeding was followed with a physical feeding of a pork chop lunch after the morning worship service.

Bentonville First Church has planned a July 9 fellowship and a July 16 commissioning service for Pastor Tom Smith, his wife, Margaret, and their sons prior to their departure to the foreign mission field.

Cabot First Church hosted a reception May 28 for the Stephen Dewbre family prior to their departure to the foreign mission field.

Hot Springs Grand Avenue Church held a service May 28 to ordain Steven Harness to the preaching ministry. Harness is joining the staff of Amity First Church.

Wynne Church celebrated its 99th anniversary May 28 with traditional morning services and a homecoming dinner, followed by an afternoon of planned activities and a family worship service at Tri-County Association Camp.

Booneville First Church observed Charlie Rhodes' Day May 28 in recognition of 16 years of service as church custodian.

North Pulaski Association will launch an associational crisis ministry June 19 in a house which has been donated by First Church of Jacksonville. Initially the ministry will provide food and clothing for people in crisis situations.

OBU Students On Study Tour

Six students and one faculty advisor from Ouachita Baptist University left Saturday, May 27, for a five-week study tour and archaeological expedition in the Holy Land. The group, under the direction of Craig Price, instructor of religion at OBU, will be working in conjunction with the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, throughout the expedition, which ends June 25.

Students participating in the expedition are Sharon Brown, a junior history major from Blytheville; Letitia Campbell, a senior Christian education major from Little Rock; Geri Ann Stanton, a senior psychology major from Texarkana; Dennis Tucker, a senior biblical studies major from Charlotte, N.C.; Steven Walker, a junior biblical studies major from Forrest City; and Becky Wright, a senior youth ministry major from Fordyce.

The site of the dig will be Tel Batash (biblical Timnah), located in the Sorek Valley, about midway between Jerusalem and the Mediterranean coastline. It is the site of the Old Testament account of Sam-

son, recorded in Judges, 14 and of King Uzziah, who conquered parts of the territory in II Chronicles 26. The entire excavation crew from Southwestern will number about 30 people working as archaeologists at the site. The program is designed to give participants a greater awareness of biblical archaeological techniques.

Lake Nixon Celebrates 20th

Lake Nixon, owned and operated by Second Church in Little Rock, celebrated its 20th anniversary May 28. The highlight of the celebration was the burning of all indebtedness notes.

Other celebration activities included an afternoon of swimming and recreation, followed by a snack meal and birthday cake.

This 215-acre encampment with a 32-acre swimming lake provides Christian related activities for preschoolers through senior adults. The property houses a lodge which accommodates 30 people overnight, a caretaker's home, a bathhouse, restaurant, office, infirmary, and eight pavilions.

Barbara Long serves as director.

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LAS VEGAS SBC

Interest Lagging

by Dan Martin
Baptist Press

LAS VEGAS, Nev. (BP)—Interest apparently is lagging for the 1989 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, according to an informal survey of convention observers.

"I can't see any enthusiasm from either side for the Las Vegas convention," says one.

If projections are correct, the 1989 annual meeting, scheduled June 13-15 in Las Vegas, (Nev.) Convention Center, will be one of the smallest in a decade.

Registration Secretary Lee Porter and Convention Manager Tim Hedquist, both of Nashville, agree messenger totals for the session probably will not top 18,500 and may even dip as low as 15,000 or 16,000. "Conservative" leaders predict between 16,000 and 18,000 messengers, while other observers say attendance may sag as low as 12,000 or 13,000.

If the lower figures are correct, the Las Vegas meeting could be the smallest since Pittsburgh in 1983, when 13,740 were present. It surely will be smaller than 1985 in Dallas—the all-time record—when 45,519 messengers registered.

During the past decade, convention controversy has swirled around the election of Southern Baptist Convention presidents and their use of appointive powers to change boards of trust of the national agencies of the convention.

With the exception of 1983, the last seven conventions have centered on presidential campaigns. In 1981, 1985 and 1987, incumbent "conservative" presidents were challenged by "moderates"; 1984, 1986 and 1988 had wide-open races between "moderates" and "conservatives."

This year, an incumbent "conservative" president—Jerry Vines, pastor of First Baptist Church of Jacksonville, Fla.—is challenged by a "centrist" challenger—Daniel Vestal, pastor of Dunwoody Baptist Church in suburban Atlanta.

Convention watchers say the election of officers appears to be the only substantive issue facing messengers, and neither "conservatives" nor "centrists" have been able to generate much enthusiasm to get their supporters to Las Vegas.

They cite five reasons: geography, the site, complacency, tiredness and lack of other issues.

Las Vegas "is a long way away" from centers of Southern Baptist strength, observers say, noting meetings on the West Coast generally are poorly attended, simply because they are a long way away from

areas with large numbers of Southern Baptists.

The site is cited as another negative. Many Baptists appear reluctant to go to Las Vegas, with its gambling, glitter, potentially offensive shows and drinking.

"There seems almost a dread of going to Las Vegas," explains one observer. "Many people just do not want to go to Las Vegas, and, apparently, are not going."

Another factor may be what "conservative" leaders call complacency. "Many 'conservatives' seem to think the effort to correct the theological direction of the convention is over. They have become complacent," a "conservative" leader says.

Contrasted to complacency is the tiredness of "moderates." Their candidates and issues have been trounced for nearly a decade, and many in the camp say they are tired of fighting and losing.

Some "moderates" have stopped attending the annual meeting or have affiliated with the Southern Baptist Alliance, which appears to have pulled out of the effort to recapture the SBC.

However, another group of "centrists"—Baptists Committed to the Southern Baptist Convention—have vowed to continue to campaign for what they call "traditional Baptist values" in Las Vegas or for as long as they need to recapture the convention.

With the exception of the election of officers, the convention has few other issues. One leader says: "Against the glitz and glitter of Las Vegas — and it is very gaudy—the activities inside the convention hall are going to seem gray. Very dull; very gray."

One issue stirred controversy earlier in the year, but it apparently has been defused. That was a recommendation to create a Religious Liberty Commission to represent Southern Baptists in Washington, D.C., on religious liberty and separation of church and state matters.

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SBC President Vines in late April requested the convention's Executive Committee—which had recommended creation of the new agency—to defer action in Las Vegas.

Vines did not mention the controversial nature of the recommendation but noted he wanted to keep the focus of the convention on missions and evangelism. He also did not suggest what should be done with the recommendation—whether it should be restudied, reconsidered or perhaps resubmitted to the 1990 annual meeting.

The Executive Committee apparently will honor his wishes and pull the recommendation during its meeting June 12, at least toning down one possible item of controversy, observers note. The action, however, could have other ramifications, such as possibly setting off a floor fight over the budget of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, which currently represents Southern Baptist religious liberty concerns.

The Baptist Joint Committee and its executive director, James M. Dunn, have been at the center of an SBC storm for more than five years. The committee has been the subject of three special Executive Committee study committees, as well as at least two efforts to strip it of SBC funding.

"I think it is going to be the duller convention we have had this decade," says a watcher. "They (the messengers) probably will just come in, routinely go through the motions of adopting a budget, electing trustees, voting on officers and listening to singing and preaching. Then, they'll just go home, glad to be out of Las Vegas."

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Moratorium Considered

by Linda Lawson

Baptist Sunday School Board

NASHVILLE (BP)—During a five-hour meeting May 26 in Nashville, the Resolutions Committee for the 1989 Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting reviewed advance copies of resolutions it has received, including one proposing a one-year moratorium on resolutions.

The committee also identified issues likely to be subjects of resolutions during the 132nd annual meeting of the convention June 13-15 in Las Vegas, Nev., and committee members were assigned to write preliminary drafts.

Mark Coppenger, chairman of the 10-member committee, said a moratorium on resolutions is being considered "in light of the timing (of this year's convention) and the location in Las Vegas" where Southern Baptists are relatively unknown and Baptist work is new.

However, he emphasized, no decision has been made regarding a moratorium.

Topics being considered for resolutions in Las Vegas include the laity, because 1988-89 has been designated the Year of the Laity in the denomination, he said.

Abortion, a topic of resolutions in recent years, also is being considered, Coppenger said. A ruling is expected within a few weeks on a case recently heard by the U.S. Supreme Court, *Webster v. Reproductive Health Services*. That ruling, some observers believe, may result in restrictions or revocation of *Roe v. Wade*, a 1973

Supreme Court ruling which, by invalidating existing state laws, established abortion on demand in the United States.

Other issues of interest to the committee included racism, drug-related violence, the growth and influence of Islam in the United States, the growing influence of Satanism and the "great need for integrity in the lives of Christians," Coppenger said. "We stand ready to consider the full range of issues in Las Vegas."

Coppenger characterized the meeting, attended by all 10 committee members, as a "harmonious and hard-working" session.

Deliberations were guided by a "strong desire for a peaceful, harmonious convention," he said. "We are concerned for harmony and effectiveness in Las Vegas."

"There is clearly a desire that revival take place in our hearts in Las Vegas."

All resolutions submitted in advance to the committee must be submitted again for official consideration on the first day of the convention, Coppenger said. Members of the committee and a convention parliamentarian will receive resolutions during designated business sessions at a desk near the convention podium.

The committee will meet again June 12 in Las Vegas.

In addition to Coppenger, the committee includes two women, one layman and six pastors. By bylaw requirement, three committee members also are on the SBC Executive Committee.

Executive Committee members are Jerry

Brown, a truckstop operator and member of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Edmond, Okla.; Joy Dorsett, a homemaker and member of Central Park Baptist Church in Birmingham, Ala.; and Walt Tomme, pastor of Tyson Community Baptist Church in McLean, Va., but affiliated with the District of Columbia Baptist Convention.

Other members are David Allen, pastor of Audelia Road Baptist Church in Dallas; Kenneth Hemphill, pastor of First Baptist Church of Norfolk, Va.; David McAlpin, pastor of First Baptist Church of Pine Castle in Orlando, Fla.; James Merritt, pastor of First Baptist Church of Snellville, Ga.; Linda Shrewsbury, a member of Memorial Baptist Church in Tulsa, Okla.; and Jerry Sutton, pastor of Two Rivers Baptist Church in Nashville, who also chaired the 1988 Resolutions Committee.

Moyers Vote On Docket

LAS VEGAS, Nev. (BP)—During its June 12 meeting, the Southern Baptist Executive Committee will vote on whether to invite television journalist Bill Moyers to discuss his documentary, "The Battle for the Bible," before it airs in September.

Moyers requested an appearance before the 76-member committee at its June meeting after a resolution critical of his three-part series on religion and secular politics was adopted at the committee's February meeting.

The Executive Committee, by a 40-14 vote, adopted a resolution proposed by Paul Pressler, a Texas appeals court judge and one of the architects of the conservative movement in the Southern Baptist Convention, which called the Moyers documentary "biased" and expressed concern about the use of federal tax dollars to air the series on public television.

Following the action, Moyers sent a telegram to Pressler, with a copy to Charles Sullivan, pastor of First Baptist Church of Lenoir City, Tenn., and chairman of the Executive Committee, which referred to Pressler's "spurious accusations," and requested an appearance by both men before the June 12 Executive Committee session to "compare notes, take questions and discuss these matters in a Christian manner."

Sullivan told Baptist Press in May he had denied Moyers' request for an appearance in June "because of the time frame in which we meet. We have very restricted time and a number of items of business that have to be finalized for the convention (annual meeting). We can't give up an hour and a half for a debate and still get our business done."

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New Era of Growth

Vines Says Doctrine Debate is Settled

by Dan Martin

Baptist Press

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (BP)—Southern Baptists have resolved their theological dispute and are ready to move forward, Southern Baptist Convention President Jerry Vines said.

"To my view, we have settled the debate over the nature of Scripture. So the time is right to move into a new era of growth for our local churches," he said.

Vines, pastor of First Baptist Church of Jacksonville, Fla., made the comment in an interview with Baptist Press, the denomination's news service, as he nears the end of his first one year term as president of the 14.8 million-member denomination. He announced in February he is willing to be nominated for a second term when the convention meets June 13-15 in the Las Vegas (Nev.) Convention Center.

He said: "Southern Baptists have said in a variety of ways that we are a people who believe the Bible is the word of God, without error. The view which would question the accuracy and complete authority of the Scriptures is a pronounced minority view in the SBC."

After he was elected to the presidency at the 1988 annual meeting, Vines said he believed continuing the "theological correction," brought about in 11 years of dispute between conservatives and moderates in the SBC, is important.

In the 1989 interview, Vines said he believes "the theological renewal in our convention is underway. I am confident that our administrations and the boards of trustees of our institutions will lovingly monitor its progress unto resolution."

Of his presidency, he said: "I have made a conscious effort to create an atmosphere where healing and reconciliation could occur. I have purposely lowered the rhetoric, though I have not compromised my theological convictions. I have tried to avoid divisive or explosive statements."

"This year, I have seen signs that many who have differing convictions are coming to an understanding that these convictions can be held not only without compromise but in a spirit of kindness and acceptance toward one another."

His appointments to four key committees which will serve during the 1989 annual meeting in Las Vegas, "reflect my views on this matter," he said. "As I indicated, we have certain parameters which are overwhelmingly accepted in Southern Baptist life. These parameters have to do

with the nature of Scripture.

"Within those parameters there is splendid latitude in matters of interpretation. I believe my appointments this year, and, if I am elected again, my appointments next year will reflect this kind of openness."

Of his appointments, Vines said he had "made every effort, within the parameters I set for myself, to include as many people as possible; to name people who had never served before."

In reviewing his year as president, Vines said the presidency of the SBC is a "rigorous job. I have found there are not enough hours in the day or days in the week to do everything that has needed to be done."

"It has been rigorous but rewarding. Juggling the responsibilities as president of the convention, pastor of a large church and a husband and father has been quite difficult."

A big surprise was the "volume of the work," he said. "I was not prepared for the volume of mail and calls. Just handling the mail has been a considerable assignment. I have made every effort to answer every letter that has been written to me. I have not been as successful in returning all of the telephone calls because time just has not permitted me to do that."

He joked that "any man who wants to be president of the SBC ought to have his head examined," but then added: "I hasten to say that I can identify with Thomas Jefferson's statement concerning the presidency of the United States. He called it a 'splendid misery.'"

"It has been rigorous, but it also has been rewarding. One of the rewards has been that almost daily, I have received letters and calls telling me of prayer support, and that has made my impossible assignment possible."

Another reward has been his enjoyment at "moving among our Southern Baptist people," he noted. "I have found them to be a great people, a loving people and a group of committed pastors and people who have genuine desire to share Jesus with others."

His year in office, he said, "has given me a greater grasp of our work because being president has given me a perspective that cannot be obtained any other way. I have visited most of our major boards and have seen harmony and willingness to work together. The people on our boards do their own thinking but prayerfully subjugate their own desires for the good of Christ's kingdom and our SBC work."

Vines said he does not believe "anyone is necessarily entitled to anything" but said he is "willing to submit the matter of a second term to the will of the Lord and the will of the messengers. I will say that if the messengers favor me with the privilege of a second term, I believe I can be a better and more effective president during a second term because of the experience gained in the first term."

If messengers "favor" him with a second term, Vines, said the emphasis of his second term would be "an extension of the first year's emphasis, personal evangelism."

"The second year would reflect my understanding of New Testament evangelism, which I understand to be winning people to Christ and then involving them in a local Bible-believing church. Baptizing them and teaching them. In my second year, I would emphasize building soulwinning churches, and I would like to lead our convention to a renewed emphasis on church growth."

"The time is right. We have settled the debate over the nature of Scripture. Now it is time to move into a new era of growth in our local churches. We may very well be on the verge of the greatest years of growth in the local churches that we have ever experienced."

Vines said he is optimistic about the future of the Southern Baptist Convention: "While I believe we should be realistic, I believe we have every reason to be optimistic. I am optimistic because baptisms are up. They are not up as much as they should be, but I am thankful for any trend upward."

As he concluded the interview, Vines said: "I want to thank Southern Baptists for the privilege and honor to be their president this year. I would ask that all Southern Baptists join me in prayer for a harmonious convention in Las Vegas as we prepare to do what Southern Baptists do best: telling the old, old story of Jesus and his love."

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Sharing Power

Vestal Promises 'Winner-Share-All'

by Marv Knox
Baptist Press

NASHVILLE (BP)—If Southern Baptists elect Daniel Vestal as their president, his attitude will be winner-share-all rather than winner-take-all, he told a group of denominational "centrists."

Vestal is pastor of Dunwoody Baptist Church in suburban Atlanta and an announced candidate for the Southern Baptist Convention presidency. He will face SBC President Jerry Vines, pastor of First

Baptist Church of Jacksonville, Fla., and eligible for another one-year term, when the SBC meets in Las Vegas, Nev., June 13-15.

Vestal spoke three times to a symposium sponsored by Baptists Committed to the SBC May 1-2 in Nashville.

When Vestal announced his candidacy in mid-April, he said he would welcome Baptists Committed's support but insisted he does not belong to that or any other group. He does call himself a "centrist," a label adopted by most Baptist Committed members.

During two of Vestal's presentations in Nashville, he fielded questions from about 150 symposium participants. He also spoke on the authority of Scripture and Southern Baptists' declining adherence to the Bible.

The first question put to him was about how he would conduct himself as president. "The pattern of the last 10 years has been basically a philosophy of winner-take-all," Vestal said. "My philosophy would be that the winner shares all."

"My appointments would be from a different perspective. I would include all Southern Baptists—even the present leadership—because I'm a centrist."

Vestal also pledged, if elected, to seek a limitation on presidential powers. The 10-year SBC theological/political controversy has swirled around those powers, since the president initiates a chain of events that lead to the appointment of trustees for 24 entities related to the convention.

"The time has come to look at the powers of the president," Vestal said. "Something has got to happen structurally to prevent this (denominational strife) from happening again."

He would call for a study to formulate SBC bylaw changes "so we can de-politicize the presidential election every year," he said.

Vestal also promised to emphasize Southern Baptist missions and evangelism. "I am committed to the missions task of the church—to claim the kingdom and lead people to submit to the lordship of Jesus Christ," he said. "If it is the Lord's will that I be elected, we as Southern Baptists need to redefine and refocus on the future."

"Bold Mission Thrust (the SBC's plan to present the gospel to the whole world by the year 2000) was a focus on how we were going to fulfill the Great Commission. I will call us back to some refocusing on how we will live out our lives in the last year of this millennium."

That would involve calling special meetings of laypeople, ministers, and missions and evangelism leaders to "refocus on the task God has given us."

Vestal told the symposium audience "centrist" is a label that always has fit him: "I have tried to stand in the middle. I have always been identified as a conservative, a biblical inerrantist."

His decision to be nominated for the presidency had spiritual and human dimensions, he said.

"In a spiritual sense, this has not been an easy decision. I have struggled," he said. "This is a decision I have not made by political calculation. I am not naive to what we're up against."

"From a human sense," Vestal said, "I saw our convention lose its sense of missions commitment."

He recalled how, as a young pastor in 1977, he wept with conviction as Southern Baptists launched Bold Mission Thrust.

"Southern Baptists walked up to a moment in history and walked away," he said of Bold Mission Thrust and the controversy that, he claimed, has distracted efforts to reach its goals.

"The first thing we lost was that focus on world evangelism," he said. "The second thing we lost was our trust, to the point that now we're absolutely paranoid. "But what really turned the corner for me is we're losing our freedom. This is not a free denomination. Technically, we're still free; we can vote. But the process (of operating the convention) is controlled."

"I am enough of a Baptist that when I see us losing our freedom that I am willing to do what I can to protect that freedom."

During his speech, Vestal said Southern Baptists are being secularized. They have been "sentimentalized, superficialized, humanized, homogenized to a great degree because we do not take the Bible seriously," he noted.

"For 10 years, we've talked about the Bible, debated the Bible, but I fear we are not any more a people of the Bible than we were when we first started this theological, political wrangling. Indeed, we are less a people of the Bible than we were 10 years ago."

"We are not a biblical-thinking people. The Bible does not inform our values and priorities as much as our culture and egos. The Bible has become the object of our discussion and debate rather than the subject that confronts us with the transforming power of God."

Speaking of the nature of Scripture, Vestal said: "The Bible is the book that tells us the truth about God. The truth that is true; not exhaustive; ... truth without mixture of error. It is the truth that is always true to its intent and purpose."

Billy Graham Crusade Countdown

June

- 19-23 Follow-up Seminars
- 24 Leadership Breakfast with Dr. Lewis Drummond

July

- 4 Singles Rally
- 13 Prayer Rally with Dr. E.V. Hill
- 23 Operation Andrew Sunday

August

- * Youth Rally
- 3-4 Prayer Seminars with Millie Dienert
- 14-25 Nurture Group Training
- 21-27 Prayer Hosts Extend Invitations
- 26 Leadership Breakfast with Dr. Emmanuel Scott
- 27 Support Sunday
- 28-9/22 Prayertime Broadcasts

September

- * High School Assemblies
- 11-16 Rehearsals
- 17-24 CRUSADE
- 18-22 School of Evangelism
- 25-10/27 Follow-up Broadcasts

For more information on any of these events, contact your church's crusade coordinator or call the Crusade Office at 375-1989.

Practicing Free-Lance Faith

Brotherhood Commission photo

by Jim Burton
Brotherhood Commission

HARRISBURG, Pa. (BP)—The produce section in a Harrisburg, Pa., grocery store is neatly arranged behind a portable podium; its built-in sound system adjusted for feedback. Everything is set for a media event.

The Pennsylvania secretary of agriculture is due soon. He will encourage citizens to buy Pennsylvania farm products—pretty heady stuff in the midst of lettuce and cabbage.

With a bag full of Canon cameras, Associated Press free-lance photojournalist Fred Prouser, 37, arrives early to scope the situation. He has covered media events before—hundreds in fact—and this one may need all the help it can get.

For Prouser, life is full of events. Some are staged, while others occur naturally. With his wife, Rose, also a free-lance photojournalist, he lives from day to day for newsworthy events. They have no contracts, no guaranteed income.

"Every assignment we have is from one assignment to the next," said Mrs. Prouser. "So we never have worldly assurance of anything money wise. But God provides."

Yet they do have assurance in their Christian salvation and their calling to minister as laypeople.

"They see their call as photographers and they want to use that for the glory of God," said Marshall Chambers, Pennsylvania-South Jersey Baptist Brotherhood/evangelism director. "But they have also felt the need for a church in Susquehanna Township. Church planting came out of a sense of need rather than a call."

The Prouser family helped start First Southern Baptist Chapel in Susquehanna Township. Without their commitment, northeast Harrisburg still might be without a Baptist presence in Susquehanna Township, said Chambers, a chapel member.

The events that brought the Prouser family together never made the morning paper. She was a divorced mother with two children working as a hospital nurse. He was single, Jewish and frequently hospitalized for surgery and treatment of Crohn's disease, a progressive ailment that scars the lining of the intestine. The resulting damage inhibits the body's ability to absorb nutrients. She was led to faith in Christ when her children's babysitter invited her to church. It happened to be a Southern Baptist church, and the visit was a significant event in her life.

She met Prouser while he was in the hospital. They got together after a month-



Fred and Rose Prouser

long stay in 1975 when he let her pick one of his photographs to be his thank-you gift to his nurses.

He called her to make an appointment to deliver the photograph. She helped minister to college students as a volunteer and invited him to join them for an outing.

When she invited him to go to church, he would attend worship, but not Sunday school.

"Being Jewish, I figured Sunday school was where they got you," he explained.

They fell in love and were married in 1976 before he became a Christian. Both described their first year of marriage as an ordeal.

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"I couldn't share with the person who is closest to me the things that are closest to me," she said. "And that, of course, is my relationship with Jesus Christ."

But her new husband was moving toward a significant event in his own life.

"For a long time, I had been under conviction and then one night at home I decided to give my life to the Lord," he said. "Prior to all of this with the disease and being real sick and close to death several times, I had a real fear of death. When I became a Christian, that fear dissipated."

After they married, she made a career change and joined him in the precarious profession of free-lance photojournalism. Not only do they live without guarantees of income, they never know what an assignment might bring.

Most assignments are routine. But they face challenges, both to their professional skill and to their faith.

Their personal standards often are tested. When he received an assignment to photograph a nudist camp, he reasoned with the editor and writer that the photograph probably would not be used. The photography assignment was cancelled.

"I think God keeps giving you the same challenge and lets them come up over and over until you get the right answer—until you respond the way you should," said of turning down the beer ads. "Here we are, broke again."

Their standards and goals are set. He will remain a photojournalist while she contemplates her next career move after 10 years as a nurse and nearly 10 years as a free-lance photojournalist.

But they count on at least one connection in their lives—affiliation with a Southern Baptist church.

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Commuting Ministry

by Frank Wm. White
Baptist Sunday School Board

NASHVILLE (BP)—The image of the traditional college students whose lives revolve around the campus has faded, and Southern Baptist student ministry efforts now must focus on reaching the new norm—commuter students—according to a college dean.

Bill Baggett, dean of students at Georgia State University in Atlanta, told participants in a student ministry conference at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board that commuter students usually have been considered "non-traditional" but now are the majority of students on many campuses.

Nationwide, only about 17 percent of all college students live on campuses, Baggett said.

Inflation, the expense of building dormitories and the soaring costs of a college education have contributed to the increase in college commuter populations, he said. In fact, more than one-third of the nation's 3,000 colleges and universities, including Georgia State, do not have student housing on campus, he noted.

Commuter students have different needs than those of the resident student, Baggett said. Even among commuters, differences exist between those in the traditional college age group and older students.

"All of our programs for commuters, all of our outreach toward them, should aim at giving them a connection, at making them feel as if they belong on our campus

and are important there," he said. "They will keenly appreciate the word of personal greeting, the open door, the simple human contact that says, 'I know, and I care.'"

The students who are trying to deal with traffic, tight schedules, separateness and even disorientation in addition to normal educational stresses need help with their lives, he said.

"As conscientious ministers to the entire student population, we must consider these students and deal with their social, emotional, cultural, recreational and moral concerns," Baggett stressed.

Unfortunate stereotypes assign commuters a number of disagreeable characteristics such as "townies," "immature" and "troublemakers," he explained, adding that the stereotypes are not accurate. Commuter students defy easy classification and their lives are diverse, he said.

Baggett cited statistics that attempt to identify the commuter student but said: "The bits of factual information do not capture the commuter student as a person with distinct needs, distinct problems, a person who requires our particular understanding and empathy.

"Sharing a bowl of popcorn in a friend's dorm room, joining a spontaneous game of Frisbee or chatting with a professor during a leisurely walk across campus are activities that simply don't fit into the commuter's time frame. Because commuters have less time to spend on the campus,

they adjust more slowly and sometimes never really experience the intensity of the college community at all.

"Unless we conscientiously put ourselves in the commuter's place, we have no understanding of just how singular, how isolating, the commuting experience can be."

Student ministers must develop an awareness of commuter students and take a second step of affiliation, Baggett said. By becoming aware of commuter students and paying attention to their special needs, student ministers can find ways to make them feel a part of the college community.

Kentucky Editor Sanford Dies

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)—Jack D. Sanford, editor of Kentucky Baptists' weekly newspaper, the *Western Recorder*, died in Louisville May 24 following heart failure. He had not complained of illness before his seizure.

Sanford, 63, became editor of the *Western Recorder* July 1, 1984.

A native of Cincinnati, Ohio, he was educated at Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, Tenn., and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

His pastoral experience took him to three states: Tennessee, Kentucky, and Illinois.

Active in denominational life, Sanford had been an associational moderator, president of associational pastors' conferences, a director of the *Western Recorder*, member of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's executive board and chairman of its executive committee, first vice president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention and a trustee of Carson-Newman College.

He had served with the U.S. Navy Seabees and had been a chaplain in the Kentucky Air National Guard. At the time of his death, he was a part-time professor at Boyce Bible School.

He is survived by his wife, the former Margaret Reeves; sons, Michael W. of Florence, Ky., and Jack S. of Butler, Ky.; mother, Emma Sanford of Florence; brother, Robert E. of Dayton, Ohio; and eight grandchildren.

Memorials may be made to the permanent endowment fund of the *Western Recorder* and may be sent to the Kentucky Baptist Foundation.

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Journey Becomes Quest

by Jim Burton
Brotherhood Commission photo

LEXINGTON, Ky. (BP)—A journey that began more than 20 years ago in Florida has become a quest in Kentucky for Don and Nora Lee Putnam.

The Putnams kept a steady course through the years. A stop in New Jersey tested their will and defined their call before they landed in the Bluegrass State.

They didn't journey for money or fame. Instead, they sought their identity in Christ.

And what they found has brought satisfaction that exceeds silver and gold. They found through the church renewal journey that God has equipped them for ministry with society's displaced people.

"God puts certain things in certain people's hearts," Mrs. Putnam said. "We believe people need a safe place to become whatever they can become."

The seeds of compassion were planted in Florida and nurtured by their pastor, George Ballantine.

"Ballantine made Christ real to us," Putnam said. "Christ became incarnate to us. Then renewal came along and allowed us to experience what was happening."

"Renewal said it was OK to be laypeople and be ministers. We could have a sense of call and not have to go to seminary. It's a way of life. It's a way of truth."

The spiritual growth through church renewal, a program emphasis of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission and Home Mission Board, brought them to the point that they would even consider moving their family.

"We would have never moved from south Florida to New Jersey until after a renewal experience in discipleship," said Mrs. Putnam. "You can't just laugh off things. They should be prayed about and taken seriously."

He first worked for RCA in Trenton, N.J. Their personal ministry centered around church renewal, serving as volunteer consultants for the Northeast. As they opened their hearts to others through church renewal, they felt led to open their home.

The Putnams made their home a refuge for people who needed a place. Most were juvenile delinquents. Some were addicted



The Richeys and Putnams at Quest Farm

to drugs. A few were paroled criminals.

Their pastor in New Jersey, Carl Gustafson, made ministry to young people in trouble a priority for the church. It affirmed the Putnams calling to ministry.

"We were simply a part of the ministry that Carl brought into the church," Putnam said.

Several relationships formed from their New Jersey ministry have had particular significance for them. A son-in-law once stayed in their home. And they have a 23-year-old son with multiple handicaps that they adopted when he was seven.

When the Putnams were faced with a company move to northern New Jersey in 1975, they opted instead to move to Kentucky when they learned about cleftRock, a retreat center near Lexington.

As staff members at cleftRock, the Putnams led retreats and consulted with churches in renewal. Their personal ministry to displaced people continued as they served as foster parents.

CleftRock originally was designed to be a multifaceted ministry center, Putnam said. Keeping foster children was a part of that strategy. But when the cleftRock administration chose to de-emphasize the foster home ministry, the Putnams resigned.

After serving at cleftRock six years, the Putnams returned to private business in Lexington, Ky., and joined Trinity Baptist Church. There they found another couple

with similar interests in handicapped ministries.

Joe and June Richey saw a need among mentally handicapped children. With their pastor's support, Richey started a Sunday school class for them at Trinity Baptist.

Mrs. Richey was a special education teacher in the public schools. Together, their commitment to the mentally handicapped grew.

"I think all of us have different niches in life," Richey said. "I felt comfortable around the retarded person."

Through the years, their understanding of the capabilities and limitations of mentally handicapped people grew.

"They were capable of doing work but there was no work for them," Richey said.

As the Richeys struggled over how to address the problems of the mentally handicapped, they met the Putnams. Together they dreamed of a place for mentally handicapped people that allowed them to develop their potential.

With the support of Trinity Baptist, Quest Farm was founded in 1984.

"We feel like everyone should have the privilege of reaching for their own star," Mrs. Richey said. "Some stars are not as high as others," her husband added.

Quest Farm, located north of Lexington near Georgetown, Ky., accepts trainable mentally handicapped men and women and calls them farmers. Each farmer has daily responsibilities, including gardening.

When the final residence is built, the farm will have 18 permanent farmers.

In addition, Quest Farm eventually will offer short-term care for mentally handicapped persons while their families are on vacation.

"I had a real desire to make a contribution," Richey said. "I think that a person is obligated if he is able to leave something of himself before he dies instead of just taking."

And the journey continues.



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Overcoming Life's Battles

by Dennis W. Swanberg, Second Church, Hot Springs

Basic passage: Joshua 6:1-4, 15-21

Focal passage: Joshua 6:2

Central truth: God enables his faithful followers to overcome life's battles with victory.

Jericho was a pivotal guardian fortress between the lower Jordan valley and the central hill country of Canaan. Jericho, one of the oldest cities of the world, was important to the Israelites and their success. It had to be secured before any steps could be taken in their conquest of God's Promised Land.

The strategy (6:1-4). In these verses we have the battle plan described for us in detail. These are the advance instructions as to how the people of God were to proceed. The Lord had already revealed to Joshua that he had given him Jericho, its leaders, and soldiers. God told Joshua, and he tells us what he wants done as we encounter the various battles of life. We have our victory in him. His strategy is revealed to us through his Word; therefore, we, like Joshua and the people of God, simply go forward with his strategy.

The same strategic series started (6:8-14). The Bible tells us that the procession around the city was headed by a group of armed men. Seven priests followed them sounding their shophars. Then comes the Ark of the Covenant, as always, carried by four priests.

Then, there was a rear guard followed by a host of God's people. The people were faithful to all this activity of marching around the city. They were not to shout or to speak until the seventh day. I do not know if we, as Baptists, could be quiet for that length of time. But finally, the seventh day came. The people got up that morning and began with a series of climactic marches. The result was the beginning of victory. God is always ready to bless his people if they will but trust him.

The strategy brings shouts of victory (6:15-27). The deafening silence gave way to the sanctified shouts, the walls began to crumble, and the people of God secured the city. We are not perfect; we do not live in an ideal world, but God is actively involved in working out his plan and purpose in our lives and in our world. How much more we have in Christ as we experience his victory in life's battles!

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Life and Work

Marks of Servanthood

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

Basic passage: Judges 6:11-18, 21

Focal passage: Judges 6:14-18, 21

Central truth: Usefulness in God's kingdom depends on our yieldedness, not our human strength or credentials.

The Israelites in Gideon's day were in a desperate plight. They forsook God for the gods of the Amorites, and God withdrew his protection and provision from Israel. The people fled to the crevices of rock in the mountains for safety. Food was almost nonexistent. The Midianites made life painful and shameful.

Gideon was God's man of the hour. Perhaps the reason God chose him was to teach us that God uses weak, poor instruments in providentially caring for his people. Gideon's question, "But Lord, how can I save Israel?" is germane to my feelings. Gideon felt inadequate to serve in the position the angel was calling him to. As a Christian and a minister, I often feel inadequate.

No person's family pedigree, social standing, wealth, occupation, education, or physique qualifies him or her for service to God. Paul touched on this truth in I Corinthians 1:26-27 where he writes, "Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong."

When victories come to God's servants, it is not by the servants' strength or wisdom, but by the hand of God!

Gideon's humility and truthfulness, his industriousness, and his willingness could well serve as reminders to all that would serve God. Knowing his lack of what was necessary to conquest and victory over the marauding Midianites, Gideon sought assurance from the Lord (v. 18). Assurance was given (v. 21).

In John's gospel, Jesus taught his disciples, and teaches us, that as the branch draws its life, strength, and fruitfulness from the vine itself, so we derive all we need from our union with him. Not only do we not have to trust in our own strength and wisdom, we must not do so. Humility and yieldedness make for usefulness.

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Bible Book

The Power of a Testimony

by Dianne Swaim, Immanuel Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: Acts 26:2-3, 12-19, 27-29, 32

Focal passage: Acts 26:12-19, 27-29

Central truth: Christians need to be able at any given moment to make a clear statement of what God has done in their life.

Maybe it is the word "testimony" that scares us off sometimes. Christians seem to stiffen and retreat when the question comes to them, "Would you give your testimony?" Maybe we should change our terminology and borrow from the world's venacular: "Would you give your biography?" Most people enjoy a good biography. We have them from presidents to CEO's to famous actors. But, you might say, biographies are just the life experiences and chronicles of a person. A testimony is an attestation to something greater, to God. For the Christian, there should be no difference!

For Paul, his biography and his testimony were inextricably linked together. His experiences before his salvation experience gave even more credence to the life-changing hand of God. And, in Paul's testimony, we have a perfect example of a converted man—Paul was changed forever in a moment's confrontation with Jesus!

In today's scripture, Paul gives his testimony. From it we can derive some important essentials in our own spoken testimony. First, briefly described his condition before conversion. He did not brag on his previous sinful condition, he simply acknowledged it.

Secondly, he very clearly and concisely told what happened. Of course, in Paul's case the story was truly miraculous. In our case, it may be less striking. But let us never forget that confrontation with Jesus Christ is never insignificant.

One of the most effective elements of Paul's testimony is his statement of God's purpose for his conversion. Let us never forget that God saves us with a purpose that we will glorify him. Paul states in verses 16-18 what God had called him to do. How sad that a multitude of Christians today do not even know what God has called them to do. That segment of our testimony is as important as the salvation experience. We should fervently seek God's intention for us and pursue that end.

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Seminary Transfer at Hand

by Art Toalston
SBC Foreign Mission Board

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—Transfer of Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland, to European hands has generated "great anticipation and excitement" among European Baptists.

Dale Cain, addressing trustees of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board May 24, gave his assessment of reaction to their decision to transfer ownership of the seminary to European Baptists. Cain, of Lubbock, Texas, is chairman of the trustees' Europe, Middle East and North Africa committee.

"Over and over, people say, 'Thank you for putting this into our trust,' and 'We are going to carry this fully to fruition,'" Cain said.

Trustees also appointed 23 new missionaries during their May meeting in Richmond, Va., and scheduled a discussion of the missionary appointment process for their Aug. 7-9 meeting.

Isam Ballenger, the mission board's vice president for Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, said European Baptists are "keeping faith with the recommendations" trustees tied to transfer of the seminary.

A ceremony to symbolically turn the keys to the institution over to the European Baptist Federation was to be held May 28, Ballenger reported. The federation encompasses 26 Baptist bodies, known as unions, in Western and Eastern Europe.

FMB trustees voted last October to transfer ownership of the property to European Baptists and attached 10 recommendations to the federation and seminary officials.

Ballenger said steps to implement a number of the recommendations will be taken when 60 European Baptist leaders gather at the Ruschlikon seminary for a May 28-31 consultation.

One of the recommendations calls for a seminary charter. A proposed charter will be considered during the consultation, along with a set of bylaws, Ballenger told trustees.

Among other recommendations are broadened European representation on the seminary's governing body and increased funding from Baptists on the continent. Those topics also will be discussed, Ballenger said.

The European Baptist Federation Council is expected to take up the FMB trustees' recommendation that the seminary executive board "consider the possibility for a written statement of European Baptist principles. . . which may give expression to the seminary's biblical commitment and to which seminary teachers would

subscribe," Ballenger noted.

The transfer of property, the trustees noted in their October recommendations, is in keeping with "our goal of indigenization." The Foreign Mission Board regularly turns over Baptist institutions to conventions or unions able to operate and support them.

The transfer responds "to the expressed desire of the European Baptist Federation to accept responsibility for the seminary," trustees stated.

Cain, in an interview after the meeting, said he traveled in West Germany, Austria and Switzerland from late April through mid-May and "found nothing but very positive response" among numerous European Baptist leaders, and laypeople.

"I personally believe this is the most positive thing we have done to enhance the missions emphasis in Europe in a long, long time," Cain said.

"The Europeans feel that we're trusting them with something of value. When you trust someone, that person tends to respect that trust."



The Pullens



The Smiths



The Gladens

Three Couples Appointed

RICHMOND, Va.—Three couples with Arkansas connections were among the 23 people named missionaries by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board May 23 at Salem Baptist Church in Richmond, Va.

Gerald B. and Penelope Pullen will live in Kenya, where he will be working as agriculture director of the Brackenhurst Baptist International Conference Center.

Born in Croix Chapeau, France, Pullen is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Gerald C. Pullen of Fort Lauderdale, Fla. He is a graduate of Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind., and University of Georgia in Athens.

Born in Little Rock, Mrs. Pullen, the former Penelope Taylor, is the daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Orville Taylor of Clearwater Beach, Fla., former Southern Baptist missionaries to Nigeria. She is a graduate of Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, Tenn., and the University of Georgia. She is a school psychologist.

Thomas and Margaret Smith will live in the Philippines, where he will be starting and developing churches and they will be involved in a variety of outreach ministries.

Since 1983 he has been pastor of First Church, Bentonville, and chaplain of the Arkansas Air National Guard in Fort Smith. Born in Little Rock, he is the son of Mr. and

Mrs. John Smith of Missouri City, Texas. He grew up in Lonoke, and is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

Born in Hazen, Mrs. Smith, the former Margaret Bruce, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Bill Bruce of Hickory Plains. She also lived in Carlisle while growing up. She is a graduate of Arkansas Community College in Harrison and has been a teller at the bank of Bentonville.

The Smiths have three children: John Thomas, James William, and Joshua Aaron. Both of these couples will go to Rockville, Va., in August for a seven-week orientation before leaving for the field.

Van and Ruth Gladen were reappointed to Mexico where he will start and develop churches. They were Southern Baptist missionaries to Mexico for 28 years before they resigned in 1985.

A native of Texas, Gladen is a graduate of Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Texas, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth.

Born in Lepanto, Ark., Mrs. Gladen, the former Ruth Franks, is a graduate of Union University in Jackson, Tenn.

The Gladens, who have four grown children, will return to Mexico in June.

Cooperation Affirmed

by Art Tolston

SBC Foreign Mission Board

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board trustees adopted a resolution May 24 reaffirming their conventions' longstanding commitment to cooperative missions but also recognizing the autonomy of Baptist churches to engage in their own missions endeavors.

The resolution was prompted by trustee Paige Patterson's negotiations for an evangelical school in Belgium and criticism of the possible purchase from board President R. Keith Parks and several European Baptist leaders.

Patterson is president of Criswell College, an arm of First Baptist Church of Dallas. He was elected by the Southern Baptist Convention as a Foreign Mission Board trustee last June.

Patterson and Parks, acknowledging the difference in their views on missions, outlined their concerns during the trustees' meeting at the agency's headquarters in Richmond, Va.

"We have disagreed, no question about that," Patterson said. Even so, he added, "We have been able to talk together as Christian gentlemen about it."

Negotiations between Criswell College and the financially troubled Belgian Center for Biblical Education near Brussels remain "open-ended," Patterson told trustees. An agreement to purchase the school is "highly unlikely as of this moment," he stated. "(It) always has been unlikely."

He has not yet raised the \$2 million necessary to purchase the school and fund

its operation for one year and a \$3 million endowment to undergird the school for the future, he said.

The trustees' resolution, drafted by Chairman C. Mark Corts of Winston-Salem, N.C., and passed on a unanimous voice vote, affirms Southern Baptists' cooperative approach to missions and a belief in church autonomy shared by a range of Baptist groups.

"If a seeming conflict of interest occurs between these two principles," the resolution adds, "the current board accepts the responsibility for resolving such conflict."

In an interview after the meeting, Corts said he believes a trustee would be in a conflict of interest if "a competing loyalty to another organization or another cause" impaired his or her ability "to make sound financial or policy decisions in the best interests of Southern Baptists and foreign missions."

Patterson has not evidenced that problem, Corts said, but acknowledged, "It could appear to some people to be a conflict of interest."

"I think he has the right" to explore purchasing the school, Corts said, "and to find ways to give assistance to European Baptists and evangelicals."

Patterson, in an interview, said he is pleased with the resolution. To him, a conflict of interest is proceeding with an action contrary to the will of a majority of the trustees.

Last year, at one point in the board's study of financial problems of the international Baptist Theological Seminary in

Ruschlikon, Switzerland, purchase of the Belgian school facility had been considered as one alternative.

Patterson told trustees he was first approached by officials at the Belgian school three and one-half years ago and has been in periodic negotiations ever since. He suspended talks when he became aware of the board's options, he said, noting he agreed to resume them when trustees voted to transfer ownership of the Ruschlikon property to the European Baptist Federation.

In seeking a balance between the principles of cooperation and autonomy, the resolution assures "our mission partners... of our commitment to a cooperative approach" to missions, while also upholding "the autonomy of local churches in mission enterprise and encouraging them to work in consultation as appropriate."

Criswell College's primary concern is not owning the Belgian school but keeping open a "strategically important evangelical witness in Europe," Patterson told trustees.

Parks, in his comments, said a spirit of cooperation among autonomous churches "birthed us and has held us together," and "God has blessed us to become the strongest denomination mission effort yet in the world. Every other group envies our cooperative effort."

"We who are entrusted with that cooperative effort, I feel, must do everything we can to communicate very clearly to Southern Baptists, to the missionaries, to the Baptist partners with whom we work in Europe or anywhere else that we are committed to that cooperative effort."

But when a trustee, staff member or missionary "begins to emphasize the independent approach, institutionalizing a venture on the mission field that is outside the bounds of what we've defined as our cooperative mission effort, I think that creates confusion," Parks said. "I think it has the possibility of weakening our effort."

Parks' disagreement with Patterson "does not have anything to do with personal feelings toward each other," Parks said. "We have had nothing but cordial conversation," even at times "joking and laughing together and enjoying the stimulation of the discussion."

"This disagreement has nothing to do with the controversy in the convention," Parks continued. "This disagreement has nothing to do with whether either one of us is interested in evangelizing Europe. We both are." Rather, it involves differing emphases on "two valid Baptist concepts, basic principles," he said.

Co-Workers Can Return

PANAMA CITY (BP)—Southern Baptist missionaries in Panama, after meeting in late May to assess the national situation, have advised co-workers currently out of the country to return.

"As missionaries, we must be prepared to make necessary adjustments to working in a more tense environment," said mission Chairman Jackie Cooper. "We do not see an immediate solution to the current crisis."

But conditions in places where missionaries work continued have returned to normalcy, with the exception of several areas where they have been advised not to return for a time, he said.

Violence and tension following the disputed May 7 presidential election, later nullified by the government, included the

harassment of some Americans. Several missionaries relocated near the United States-protected Canal Zone, and six other missionaries and volunteers temporarily left the country. Three missionaries were on vacation out of the country at the time, and a new volunteer was advised to remain in the United States until further notice.

In light of the return to relative calm, Cooper said: "The mission feels all missionaries can return to the field. Future ministry conditions may need to be evaluated on the field."

Cooper did not say how soon a postponed partnership effort with Georgia Baptist could resume. Some Georgians had been scheduled to work in Panamanian churches in May.

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New Meaning in Burma

by Robert O'Brien
 SBC Foreign Mission Board

PHILADELPHIA (BP)—The pages of history rustled and burst into life when diminutive, graying U Maung Maung Han strode to the pulpit of Philadelphia's First Baptist Church.

Han had traveled from Burma to address Baptist Jubilee, which convened this spring to celebrate a decision made at the church in 1814. Thirty-three Baptists, from Gander, Newfoundland, to Charleston, S.C., voted during three days in May of that year to launch the first Baptist denomination in North America and support its first missionaries, Ann and Adoniram Judson, in Burma.

Words about history often inspire nothing more than a yawn, especially the prose of 1814, which declared that Baptists had formed "the General Missionary Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States for Foreign Missions," later called the Triennial Convention, for the purpose "of diffusing Evangelical Light throughout the Benighted regions of the Earth."

But Han's words seemed to melt the barriers of time and prose and transport 500 Baptist Jubilee participants to the side of a small stream in 19th century Burma that symbolizes the beginning of his spiritual future—and of the future of Baptist world missions, listeners noted.

It was a stream in Moulmein near the later site of the Judson Boys High School, where Adoniram Judson baptized Han's great-grandparents.

"I am a fourth-generation Baptist," said Han, a pastor and Baptist denominational leader in Burma. "My great-grandparents were among the first persons baptized by Judson. Now I stand before you representing 1 million Burmese Baptists who owe their spiritual lives to you."

As Han talked, participants from 10 nations reflected on what happened when the delegates met in Philadelphia, May 18-20, 1814, to hear Luther Rice challenge them to support the Judsons.

Judson spent seven years in Burma before he baptized his first convert, and that was only the beginning of his difficulties. But his tenacity got results in Burma.

The Baptist decision to take the message of Jesus Christ to the world also has borne fruit. Today missionaries of Baptist denominations which grew out of the Triennial Convention, including American Baptists and Southern Baptists, work in more than 100 nations, and more than 35 million Baptists in 141 conventions and unions are affiliated with the Baptist World

Alliance. Representatives of at least a dozen Baptist bodies attended the Jubilee.

Jubilee participants mingled with missionaries from several Baptist bodies, heard a battery of speakers, experienced a roll call of nations where Baptists work in the world, and closed with a "Covenant of Salt" service and a candlelight procession from the church to Philadelphia's historic Rittenhouse Square.

Speakers from several Baptist denominations urged participants to link their Baptist memories with their modern-day hope to proclaim the message of Jesus Christ to more than 1.3 billion unevangelized people in the world today.

"The missionary impulse which brought Baptists together 175 years ago must be remembered, rekindled, restored," said William H. Gray III, U.S. congressman from Philadelphia and pastor of Bright Hope Baptist Church.

"From memory springs hope, and in this place we are brought together by that gospel of hope," said Gray, who succeeded his father and grandfather as pastor of the black Baptist congregation.

"We have seen its power. We have experienced it in our lives. We are determined to share it with others."

George W. Peck, president of Andover Newton Theological School; Ray Bakke, senior urban consultant with Lausanne Associates from Chicago; and John Sundquist, executive director-elect of the Board of International Ministries of the American Baptist Churches, urged Baptists everywhere to follow the Judsons' example and cross new missions frontiers.

"If Judson were alive today, he would be taking us in electrifying directions," said Bakke, who outlined a list of missions frontiers in the modern world, including the frontiers of "Asianization and urbanization."

"Judson went to Asia, and today Asia is coming to us," Bakke said. "The whole world is Asianizing and urbanizing." He added, noting the Judsons' son came home to minister in New York City.

"The Judson legacy spans Asianization and urbanization and challenges Baptists to serve on these and other crucial modern frontiers of missions."

Illuminated by the light of 500 candles, William D. Thompson, co-pastor of the church, renewed the challenge for Baptists to press forward, linking memory of past deeds with hope for future possibilities.

"Let us tonight who taste the salt and carry the light join our sisters and brothers in Christ all over the world in telling everyone that they can find abundant, eternal life in Jesus Christ," he said.

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