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Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

1-14-1993

January 14, 1993

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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Arkansas Baptist State Convention, "January 14, 1993" (1993). *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine, 1990-1994*. 37.

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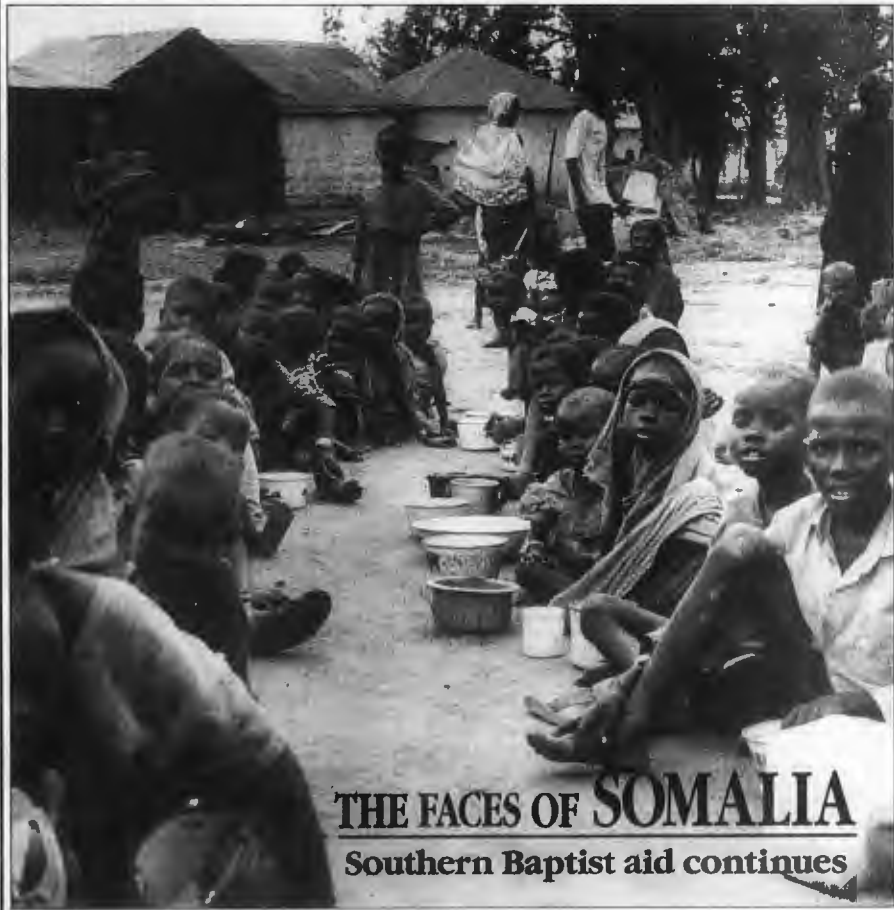
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ARKANSAS BAPTIST



Volume 92, Number 1

January 14, 1993



THE FACES OF SOMALIA
Southern Baptist aid continues

Arkansas native ministers to skiers on Utah slopes

By Sarah Zimmerman

3BC Home Mission Board

PARK CITY, UTAH — Arkansas Baptists who venture to Park City, Utah, for a snow skiing vacation this winter can find a reminder of home under the ski lift.

Arkansas native Kevin Sigsby leads a worship service at 1 p.m. on Sunday at the resort's slopes.

Services typically include choruses and a brief devotion. The home missionary doesn't take an offering or give a formal invitation, but he does encourage people to talk with him after the service.

One couple who attended a worship service last year had lived in Park City four months but had not attended any area church, Sigsby said. He developed a relationship with them, and within a year they made professions of faith in Jesus Christ.

Reaching the unchurched

Reaching unchurched people, such as that couple, is the prime motivation for resort missions, Sigsby noted.

As Sigsby began his second season at Park City in December, he made a point to put his name badge on the collar of his ski jacket. The badge identifies him as "ski chaplain."

Virtually everyone, from skiers standing in line for the lift to employees selling hot chocolate, asks him what a ski chaplain does. Some assume he gives last rites to injured skiers.

Sigsby assures them his job is to help people live, not die. Their reaction is typically cordial, which Sigsby says indicates a

tolerance of a variety of religious beliefs, not necessarily an endorsement of his work.

One of Sigsby's goals for the ministry at Park City is for resort employees to regularly attend the worship service. He would also like to begin a discipleship group among the employees.

Sigsby's emphasis on evangelism, ministry and discipleship stems from his Arkansas upbringing, he said.

When he was 14, his mother died from a stroke. Churches in the northeast Arkansas town of Rector, including First Baptist where his family worshipped, "rallied around our family," Sigsby recalled. "They said, 'We love you and care about you as God's people.'"

That experience taught Sigsby that churches are to demonstrate God's love.

In college, Sigsby was involved in the Baptist Student Union at Arkansas State University in Jonesboro. "Through the BSU I heard a lot of speakers who enlarded my concept of God — what He was doing and different ways to serve Him."

It was largely through the influence of Benny Clark, former BSU director at Arkansas State, that Sigsby became aware of the need for resort missions and the opportunities in Utah.

Sigsby moved to Salt Lake City in 1980 and worked as a volunteer for two years before attending Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif. After seminary he served as volunteer Baptist Student Union director for the University of Utah in Salt Lake City before being appointed as a missionary in 1991.

Cover Story



The faces of Somalia 13

Somali children wait for a few ladles of unimix, a high-nutrition compound of ground beans, rice, soy beans, oil and water provided with Southern Baptist relief funds.

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Next issue: Jan. 28

Arkansas Baptist

(USPS 008021)

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The Arkansas Baptist (ISSN 1040-6056) is published bi-weekly by the Arkansas Baptist News Magazine, Inc., 601-A W. Capitol, Little Rock, AR 72201. Subscription rates are \$8.95 per year (individual) \$6.56 per year (Every Resident Family Plan), \$7.08 per year (Group Plan). Second Class Postage Paid at Little Rock, AR. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Arkansas Baptist, P.O. 552, Little Rock, AR 72203; telephone 501-376-4791.

Member of the Southern Baptist Press Association Volume 92 • Number 1

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Greg Kirksey, Benton, president; Nelson Wilhelm, Fort Smith; Lane Strother, Mountain Home; Bert Thomas, Searcy; Rick Hyde, Murfreesboro; Curt Hodges, Jonesboro; Lucie C. Hagins, Fordyce; Cliff Palmer, Rogers; and Brenda Bruce, Newark.

Joy Explo message hits home

More than 200 young people register public decisions

By Mark Kelly

Special to the Arkansas Baptist

A record number of youth and adults packed the Hot Springs Convention Center on Dec. 28-29 for Arkansas Baptists' annual Joy Explo Youth Evangelism Conference.

More than twice as many youth registered professions of faith compared to previous years, said Randy Brantley, youth evangelism director for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

Seventy-five teenagers committed their lives to personal faith in Jesus Christ during the two-day event, which drew 3,800 youth and their adult sponsors. Another 121 teenagers rededicated their lives and fourteen made commitments to church vocations.

The meeting featured two sermons each from evangelists Kelly Green of Mobile, Ala., and Rodney Gage of Dallas, Texas. Singer and song writer Babbie Mason of Atlanta delivered three concerts.

Mack and Shayla Blake of Ruston, La., energized the youth with upbeat worship sessions. Vocalist Michelle Gage, also of Dallas, brought three solo performances.

The 70-voice All State Youth Choir sang five selections under the leadership of Larry Grayson of Baring Cross Church, North Little Rock. Youth soloists were Sarah Stanley of Warren First Church and Dana Liles of Jonesboro Central Church.

The 51-member All State Band opened the Tuesday morning session with six selections. Bob Stivils of Jesselville led the orchestra.

The teenagers also enjoyed the tight harmonies of "3 for 1," a vocal group composed of Mary Kathryn Knight of Bryant First Southern Church, Rebecca Cunningham of West Memphis First Church, and Kelli Harris of Little Rock Life Line Church.

Closed-circuit coverage

Music videos from popular Christian performers opened each session. A crew from KBSC-TV, the ACTS affiliate in Texarkana, provided closed-circuit coverage of the sessions that included a roving hand-held minicam.

A seminar on campus evangelism also was offered. The workshop focused on the rights of students to organize Christian clubs on their high school campuses and how to develop such organizations into effective witnessing tools.

Photo / Mark Kelly



Singer/song writer Babbie Mason performed three concerts during Joy Explo. The annual youth evangelism conference attracted more than 3,800 participants from across Arkansas.

In the opening session Monday afternoon, Rodney Gage reminded the young people that Christians have the greatest power in the universe living in their hearts. The radical change Jesus makes in a person's heart means no Christian can keep on sinning and not be bothered by it, he said.

Teens look for meaning and purpose in booze, drugs and sex, but only a relationship with Jesus brings fulfillment, Gage said. God will change and cleanse anyone who "sells out" to Jesus, he promised.

On Monday evening, Kelly Green suggested that it was Pontius Pilate, not Jesus, who was on trial when the mob brought Jesus before him. Green said Pilate faced the same decision every person faces: What would he do with Jesus?

Pilate tried to remain neutral and push the decision off on others, Green pointed out. He challenged the teenagers to take a bold stand for Jesus.

Tuesday morning, Green warned his listeners that no one can be a casual follower of Jesus. Each person must know that a high price will be paid for living like

Jesus, he said. He called on the students to be willing to pay that price and to know that Jesus is worth it.

In the closing message Tuesday morning, Gage preached from Luke 16 on the certainty of hell. Gage cited a *Newsweek* poll that found 58 percent of Americans believe in the reality of hell, but only 6 percent believe they are going there.

Teens can be good persons and active in church, but if they've never given their lives to Christ, they can expect to spend eternity separated from God and all their Christian family and friends, Gage said. He urged Christian young people to see hell's reality and get burdened for their lost friends.

Misty Pottridge, a member of Haven Heights Church in Fort Smith, made a profession of faith on Monday. It was her fourth Joy Explo conference.

"I grew up in church and thought I had been saved," she said. "I was good at doing works and being in the middle of the youth group."

"But I had been living a double life. At church I was Little Miss Perfect, but when I'd go to school, I'd hang out with the crowd and do whatever they did. I just blew God off."

When she heard Rodney Gage say that a Christian can't live like the world and not be disturbed about it, Misty said she knew she needed to stop pretending and give her life to Christ.

A burden for others

After accepting the Lord, "I got a burden for my family and friends," she said. That evening, she talked and prayed with Misty Rinels, another member of the Haven Heights youth group. In the closing session Tuesday, the two of them walked forward together as her friend also made a profession of faith.

Daronda Spicer, a counselor from Haven Heights, said she was attending Joy Explo for the seventh year.

"This meets a need in my life," she said. "It's a time that really helps me grow as a Christian."

Spicer said she remembers having "a hunger in my heart to know God" when she was younger, and said she wished she'd had something like Joy Explo to help her.

"I've got a real burden for all the needs in the world," she said. "But if we can start with the ones closest to us, then they will go out and reach others."

YOU'LL BE GLAD TO KNOW



By DON MOORE
ABS-C Executive Director

I can't think of a better way to begin the new year than to be reminded that we become like whatever our mind attaches itself to. This may be either good or bad. The frightening consequence of entertainment filled with violence and sexual promiscuity is that you produce a society filled with all kinds of attacks upon persons and property. These range from murder, theft, robbery and rape to arson, abortion, adultery, spouse abuse, child abuse and sexual harassment. This is what we bargain for when we let our minds be filled with such trash. The humanistic, secularistic, hedonistic seed sown over the past 25 years is bearing a crop that society and its government can neither control nor offset.

The reverse of this negative reality is found in Philippians 4:8. The Holy Spirit guided Paul to challenge us to "think on things...true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and things of a good report." Great and powerful Christians have their minds on things that fit into these categories. The battle for the mind is a battle for the soul, the body and the destiny of every individual. We will not be able to change the effect of that upon which our mind dwells. But we can change that upon which it dwells.

Early in this new year we need to get our minds fixed on reaching lost people in our communities. Our State Evangelism Conference is designed to help us get our minds on track early in the year. We will be so blessed by the singing of the Alan Celoria family and the preaching of God's messengers. I hope you can join us for this rich experience January 25 and 26 at First Baptist Church, Little Rock.

Our fleshly mind finds a way to rationalize, compromise and otherwise excuse ourselves from the rigorous demands of grace. The spiritual mind hungers for God, for His truth to be made known, and for the lost to be brought into His kingdom. The carnal mind will never decide the time is right to "seek and save that which is lost."

WANDA ROCKETT

Woman's Viewpoint

SINGLE ONE: an oxymoron or not?



When you hear the term single, or one, what's your perception? Contradictory term? In today's society, the vast majority view single, as defined by Webster: one only; individual; solitary or unmarried. From a Christian perspective, I view single as a status only, assured that I'm a child of God, therefore, never alone. With all the earthly pressures encountered today, that assurance gives me an inner peace. As a single adult, I feel constantly challenged to develop a full and meaningful lifestyle and to become a whole person, committed to following Christ and I like challenges!

As I read the Scriptures, I note an expansion of single, or singleness as freedom from duplicity. This state is addressed in the following Scriptures: Ephesians 6:5 - With fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart as unto Christ; Colossians 3:22 - But in singleness of heart fearing God; and Acts 2:46 - With gladness and singleness of heart. I interpret that as God desires to be the number one priority in our lives.

It's factual that single adults make up a large - and growing - part of America's population. Many of us are

single, not by accident, but by choice. Genesis 2:18 states, "It is not good for man to be alone. I will make a helper comparable to him." For those of us "single by choice," how many times have you heard that inevitable question from inquiring minds, "Not married, yet?" As a contented single, my response has been that I'm single until the Lord elects otherwise. In addition, I've been encouraged by one of the lessons taught by Nancy Morton, one of our Sunday School teachers, on relationships to reflect whether you can do more in the service of the Lord as two instead of one. If not, it's my belief that the Lord desires me in His service in the singleness of heart.

The single life continues to offer me many opportunities to share my personal relationship with God, recognizing that although I may fail Him, He will never fail me nor leave me alone. Yes, I believe you'll agree that SINGLE ONE is an oxymoron in the Christian life.

Wanda Rockett, who is single, is a fire claim superintendent with State Farm Insurance in Little Rock. She is a member of Immanuel Church where she is active in the single adult ministry, sanctuary choir and teaches Acteens.

Personal perspectives

"Size is not an appropriate New Testament measure of the worth and value of a local congregation.... We need both rural and town churches in order to effectively congregationalize our state."

- Tommy Goode, ABS-C Church and Community Ministries director

"If Jesus is the head of the church, He is going to have something to say to the church about what to do and that would be the greatest revival that could come to the churches of Arkansas."

- Don Moore, ABS-C executive director

"I've got a burden for all the needs in the world. But if we can start with the ones closest to us, then they will go out and reach others."

- Daronda Spicer, Joy Explo counselor, Haven Heights Church, Fort Smith

Compassion vs. condemnation

Jan. 17 is Southern Baptists' annual Sanctity of Human Life Sunday; Jan. 20 will mark the inauguration of Bill Clinton as president of the United States; and Jan. 22 is the 20th anniversary of the landmark Roe vs. Wade abortion rights case. All three events have direct ties to the pro-life/pro-choice debate in our nation.

During the two decades since the U.S. Supreme Court established a woman's right to have an abortion, millions of abortions have been performed throughout the nation. Current estimates indicate more than 1.5 million women a year choose to have their unborn babies aborted. Although the high court has upheld some abortion restrictions in recent years, the essential core of Roe vs. Wade remains intact.

The recent presidential election offered clear-cut choices concerning the issue of abortion. The Republican platform stated: "We believe the unborn child has a fundamental individual right to life that cannot be infringed." By contrast, the Democratic platform declared: "Democrats stand behind the right of every woman to choose consistent with Roe vs. Wade, regardless of ability to pay, and support a national law to protect that right."

According to Baptist Press reports, President-elect Clinton has indicated support for the abortion rights Freedom of Choice Act. He also has announced plans to overturn rules preventing the use of federal funds for abortion counseling, referral and promotion in family planning clinics.

Just days prior to Clinton's inauguration and the anniversary of Roe vs. Wade, many Southern Baptist churches will pause to affirm Sanctity of Human Life Sunday. Southern Baptist messengers have never been shy about expressing their views concerning abortion and Arkansas Baptists are no exception.

During the state convention two months ago in Pine Bluff, messengers adopted a resolution stating that "we abhor the taking of innocent, defenseless preborn human lives." The resolution called on Arkansas Baptists to "spare no effort in opposing any federal or state law that will further legitimize infanticide."

Holding annual observances and adopting resolutions is commendable. But the real question is: What do advocates of the sanctity of human life do next? What practical, concrete steps should concerned Christians take in the battle against abortion on demand?

I believe the first key is to personalize the crisis. Pro-life advocates clearly will not put a stop to 1.5 million abortions in the coming year, but we can help make a

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



By TRENNIS HENDERSON

personal difference in individual lives.

One laudable statement in the Democratic platform notes, "The goal of our nation must be to make abortion less necessary." Amen. But how?

Some would say by distributing contraceptives to high school students to ensure "safe sex." Again, Arkansas Baptist messengers have gone on record emphasizing that "God's standards provide the only true safe sex: abstinence outside marriage and fidelity within marriage."

So how do we effectively communicate God's biblical ideal beyond the church walls? We must first pinpoint our target audiences and then deal with them compassionately.

Concerned Christians must be willing to reach out in love to young people who are not yet sexually active, to those who are, and to those whose lives already have been marred by unwanted pregnancies and abortions. We also must affirm those young people who have consciously chosen the biblical course of sexual abstinence before marriage and encourage them to apply positive peer pressure to other young people.

Even among those who are sexually active or have become pregnant, Christian compassion and forgiveness are essential. Our best example is found in Christ's words when the scribes and Pharisees presented an adulterous woman to be judged. "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her," Jesus said. "Woman, where are those thine accusers? Hath no man condemned thee? Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more."

Jesus does not call us to be accusers, but rather agents of compassion.

Among the most compassionate ministries provided by Arkansas Baptists is Promise House, a ministry operated in El Dorado by the Arkansas Baptist Children's Home and Family Ministries. Promise House offers a Christian alternative to abortion by providing food, shelter, education and medical care to single pregnant young

women. Since opening in September 1991, Promise House has aided nine young women. Five babies have been delivered so far, including three who have been placed with adoptive families. The home stands ready to serve others in need.

Comedian Whoopi Goldberg once noted that she would like to get the names and addresses of pro-life advocates so she could deliver unwanted babies to their doorsteps. Not a bad idea. If we are going to be serious in our commitment to the sanctity of human life, we must be willing to back up our words with compassionate action.

That fact was reaffirmed for my family when we received a Christmas letter from relatives who recently adopted a baby girl from a young unwed mother. "I have a deep love for Lilly's birth mother," Suzy wrote. "She unselfishly gave Lilly life at a time when abortion is so accepted by many. She told me she just couldn't turn one mistake into two. She believed God would provide a Christian family for her baby."

Suzy added that Lilly is "our very special gift from God" who has "helped make our lives complete." That wonderful blessing is the direct result of Christian compassion put into action.

Another positive, proactive program being provided by Arkansas Baptists is a Christian sexuality education workshop scheduled for June 28-29 in Little Rock. According to Bob Holley, director of Arkansas Baptists' Discipleship Training department, the workshop is designed to train pastors, church staff members and parents to equip other parents about appropriate Christian sexuality education in the home. Holley said the workshop is "biblically, unapologetically abstinence-based."

Christians concerned about our nation's alarming abortion statistics should take the lead in providing such biblically based abstinence messages to our young people and educating them about the importance of preventing unwanted pregnancies. Addressing the problem of teenage pregnancies will not end America's abortion crisis, but it is a positive first step.

Leave it to others to carry picket signs and pronounce judgment on those who have made regrettable choices. As you observe Sanctity of Human Life Sunday, make a commitment to become personally involved in making a lasting difference in someone's life. As you minister to those in need, remember Jesus' words of compassion, "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more."

A decade of service

Don Moore reflects on 10 years as executive director

By Trennis Henderson
Editor, Arkansas Baptist

Don Moore is a people person. During 40 years of ministry, he has consistently focused on meeting individual, personal needs among people around him.

During a decade as executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, that focus has remained constant. When asked to discuss highlights of his first 10 years as executive director, most of the programs and activities he mentions center around reaching and teaching people about Christ, discipleship, missions and other priorities.

Moore's dedication has not gone unnoticed by fellow Arkansas Baptists. In September 1982, when Moore was unanimously elected executive director by the ABSC Executive Board, search committee chairman Kerry Powell described Moore as "a man God has groomed for the task" who "preaches the word" and "could raise our sights."

Moore, who previously served 12 years as pastor of Grand Avenue Church in Fort Smith, responded, "I am terribly humbled by your confidence," adding that "I believe with all my heart that God is preparing me and has called me to do this."

"I am convinced that God is going to do a great work in the last five years of this century."

During the 1992 Arkansas Baptist State Convention in November, Moore was presented a plaque in recognition of "30 years of faithful and loving ministry as a pastor, leader and servant in Southern Baptist churches and 10 years of visionary leadership and ministry as executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention."

Last month, during a meeting of the ABSC Executive Board, Moore was greeted with a standing ovation in appreciation for his years of ministry among Arkansas Baptists.

Responding in a modest, low-key way, Moore told board members, "There are other people who do the work. Whatever I am is the result of the Lord and others."

Reflecting on his 10th anniversary as executive director, Moore told the *Arkansas Baptist* magazine that one of the

greatest highlights was sponsoring the 1989 Foreign Mission Board commissioning service in Little Rock. "We continue to be blessed from the influence of that, both in the people who are surrendering for missionary service and in the record Arkansas Baptists have of mission support through the Cooperative Program," he pointed out.

He said another missions-related highlight has been the overseas partnerships with Equatorial Brazil and Guatemala. Moore said the two projects "have given more Arkansas Baptists an opportunity for hands-on missions experience."

Along with the tangible results of starting churches, doing construction work, leading training conferences and leading thousands of people in Brazil and Guatemala to faith in Christ, he said the two partnership projects "have expanded the vision of both the people we have gone to help and of our people here."

In addition to foreign missions emphases, Moore said another highlight has been the development of an ongoing church planting plan. Noting that Arkansas Baptists previously had one church for every 1,820 residents with a projection that it could increase to one church for every 2,400 people by the turn of the century, he added, "We have averaged between 25 and 30 new churches each year. Today we have one church for about every 1,600 people. So we have made decided progress in that area."

Moore said other key accomplishments during the past decade have included:

- The successful fund-raising campaign to fund the construction of the new worship center and needed renovations at Arkansas Baptist Assembly in Siloam Springs.

- The establishment of the Church Leadership Support Department which provides assistance to pastors, church staff members and their families, with a special emphasis on small membership churches and bivocational pastors. Moore said the department's work "may prove, over the long run, to be one the most significant things that we have done."

- The Missions Advance program which enlisted 100 laypeople to speak in churches on behalf of the Cooperative Program. "We continue to reap benefits from that," Moore affirmed.

- The termination assistance program which provides financial assistance to pas-



During a decade as executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, Don Moore's focus has been constant: equipping to reach and teach about Christ, discipleship and missions.

tors and staff members who experience forced termination.

- A series of programs such as a pastors' retreat, pastor/staff orientation, fellowship visits and "PK" retreats designed to meet specific needs of pastors, staff members and their families.

- Successful efforts to help defeat the establishment of legalized lottery and casinos in the state.

Ten years after leaving the pastorate, Moore said one thing he continues to miss is "the challenge of leading people in ongoing Bible study so that I have the opportunity of seeing them grow as disciples. Most of my preaching opportunities are just one-time experiences so that I never get to see any follow-up to what I try to teach or preach."

Despite that drawback, Moore remains firmly convinced that he is where God has called him to serve. "He did it in such a way on the front end that I could never doubt that I am called here," Moore emphasized. "He continues to manifest Himself in ways that I know this is where I am supposed to be."

Moore remains a pastor in many ways; that is particularly clear as he talks about Arkansas Baptist churches. "I really have

Strategy planning helps affirm the role of the rural church

By Tommy Goode

ABSC Missions Department

I recently visited with pastor Sammy Stewart who is the bivocational pastor of Stanford Baptist Church near Paragould. Stewart was eager to talk about his love for his church. He has been pastor of Stanford Church for 11 years and also earns a living as a farmer in the area.

He rehearsed a trend in the history of the rural church by saying that as the town churches began to grow and offer more and more ministries for children and youth, many of the families began to drive into town and join the town churches. Over the years this has taken a toll on the country church and, in some instances, has left the country church struggling for survival.

In many instances, according to Stewart, the rural church has been left without adequate leadership to carry on the church's ministries. While larger town churches have benefited both numerically and in terms of their leadership strength, this has sometimes been at the expense of country churches.

A call for leadership

Stewart proposed a strategy for asking those people who originally came out of the country churches to join the town churches, whose children are now grown, to consider returning their membership to the country church to provide leadership and the infusion of new ideas and energy.

Some people may question whether we still need rural churches where there are stronger, bigger town churches within commuting distance. The truth is, we need both rural and town churches in order to

effectively congregationalize our state. We need to affirm the value and strategic place of community churches whether they are located in rural communities or urban communities. Size is not an appropriate New Testament measure of the worth and value of a local congregation. As a mission strategy, we cannot afford to allow these lighthouses for the gospel to become darkened.

It is too frequently the case that associations are polarized along lines of big church/small church groupings and interests. It is time that we address the issues of difference, needs and ministry roles which exist in most associations in our state.

A beginning point for dealing in a positive way with these issues is for there to be a forum in the local association where pastors and lay leaders can come together and discuss the uniqueness of their context for ministry, share needs with their sister churches, and look for innovative strategies which will contribute to the total growth of the Kingdom in their associational area. This will call for a response in the best of Baptist tradition through mutual concern, cooperative strategy planning, association organization development, and strength through fellowship.

Association strategy planning is designed to involve associations in a process of understanding their unique context for ministry and missions, and to study each church with a view toward helping each church be on mission in its setting so that all the churches are strengthened and none are neglected.

For more information on association strategy planning as a resource for the local association contact the State Missions Department at 376-4791.

Long-range planning seminar slated

Helping churches to "redeem the dream" will be the focus of the Regional Long-Range Planning Seminar slated for Feb. 8-10 at Park Hill Baptist Church, North Little Rock. The meeting, hosted by the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Church Leadership Department, will begin on Monday, Feb. 8 at 2 p.m. and end on Wednesday, Feb. 10, at noon.

Truman Brown, consultant with the Baptist Sunday School Board, will lead the conference.

According to L.B. Jordan, Church Leadership department director, approximately 70 percent of Arkansas Baptist churches

are plateaued or declining. "This information brings great concern to leaders of our convention here in Arkansas," he said. "Church leaders need to be trained in how to plan for intentional, balanced growth in their church and taught how to implement growth strategies."

Jordan encouraged pastors to bring staff members and long-range planning committee members to the conference.

A materials fee of \$45 should be enclosed with registration. For more information, or to register, contact L.B. Jordan, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203; phone 376-4791, ext. 5148.

hopes that we are going to see a deeper level of spiritual commitment on the part of our church leaders and our churches," Moore remarked. "That has to happen. The challenges to vital Christianity toward the end of this decade are going to be so acute that increased depth of spirituality is essential.

"Some churches are very focused on outreach and growth," Moore continued. "Some are focused on ministering, but the bulk of them are simply focused on maintenance. That focus on maintenance is what results in plateaued and declining churches."

Emphasizing the need for Arkansas Baptists churches "to stick together," Moore urged church members "to determine that the things they undertake as a church are under the clear direction and anointing of the Lord.

"I am convinced that where God finds a church that is willing to get their instructions from Him, if they will obey those instructions, they are going to have the power of Almighty God to help them carry it out. When that happens, that church is going to be so different, their influence is going to be so profound that evangelism will inevitably result.

"If Jesus is the head of the church," Moore continued, "He is going to have something to say to the church about what to do and that would be the greatest revival that could come to the churches of Arkansas."

In addition to the needs among churches, Moore affirmed that Arkansas Baptist churches have made significant accomplishments in key areas. While the Baptist Building staff seeks "to equip the churches," he added that "most of the work is done by the churches, like increases in baptisms and increases in Cooperative Program support." Moore said he is particularly "thrilled" by the growth of Arkansas Baptists' national Cooperative Program gifts to 41.75 percent in recent years.

Noting that "we are privileged to live in the age that up to now has the greatest opportunity for world evangelism," he called on Arkansas Baptists to strengthen efforts to "focus upon getting the gospel to all of the world."

Looking to the future, Moore concluded, "I probably spend more time thinking and praying for God's clear leadership about what to do between 1996 and the year 2000 than anything else.... I am convinced that God is going to do a great work in the last five years of this century and I am honored, if He continues to grant grace for this, that I might be privileged to have a part in planning" Arkansas Baptists' response to God's plans.

Nineteen Arkansans among recent graduates



GARY GREGORY
Doctor of Education
Paragould



DAVID CASSIDY
Doctor of Education
Pine Bluff



Photo Not Available
ROBERT HUTCHINSON
Masters of Arts
in Christian Education
Evening Shade



DANIEL KENNEDY
Boyce Bible School Diploma
in Christian Ministry
Hope



WILLIAM LITES
Doctor of Philosophy
Pine Bluff



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Master of Divinity
Benton



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Master of Theology
Little Rock



JAMES AMONETTE
Master of Arts in
Religious Education
Horatio



JAMES BASS, Jr.
Master of Arts in
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North Little Rock



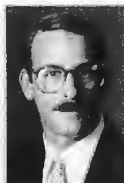
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Arkadelphia



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The pastor of the president

National spotlight on Immanuel Church doesn't alter Horne's message

By Ron Wolfe

Arkansas Democrat-Gazette

The pastor would like to set straight who's in charge of Bill Clinton's church.

"We all recognize it's the Lord's church," said Rex M. Horne Jr., pastor of Immanuel Church, Little Rock.

Immanuel is a 100-year-old landmark of brick and tradition, suddenly known to the nation because it is the home church to the president-elect of the United States, Bill Clinton.

"But that's not the way he puts it," Horne said. "That's not the way our people refer to this church.

"I said early on that what we owe to the governor, as we owe to every other member of the church, is to pray for him."

Immanuel has about 4,300 members, but only one of them happens to be less than a week away from taking over the nation's top office.

Campaign commotion

Clinton's election and campaign for the presidency have placed the church he attends—especially with sign-waving protesters threatening to disrupt the services—in the national spotlight.

Horne, 39, weighs the meaning of all this commotion, pausing for a sip of morning coffee in his quiet office.

"I didn't come here thinking it was possible to experience all that we have," he said. Horne became the 15th pastor of Immanuel in August 1990.

He came to Immanuel Baptist from Crestview Baptist Church in Midland, Texas. He knew the job meant he would be preaching to the governor of Arkansas, and he was about to find out that he and governor don't always agree. What more could happen?

"We have folks visiting (the church) now from all over the world," Horne said. Reporters call for interviews with Clinton's pastor from as far off as Italy and Israel.

Tourists want to know what happens at Bill Clinton's church, and Horne said he is pleased for them to find out.

"If they're coming to the 'governor's church,' they're going to hear Rex Horne preach," he said. Christianity, not politics.

"I don't believe that people, ultimately, are going to be changed by politics or by elections. To think that President Clinton will be able to make everything better for everybody—better than any other president before him—is to expect too much."

Clinton has been a member of Immanuel Church since 1980. Until

recently, he sang in the church choir.

As president-elect, however, it would be "most difficult for him to sing with an entourage of Secret Service agents," Horne said.

"We talk every so often, but I don't meet with him more than I do with anyone else," the pastor said. "He's never asked me to do one thing to advance him politically.

"He's been nothing but supportive of my ministry here," Horne added, "so that makes it easier."

The church didn't need a tourist boom to keep things interesting through its centennial year, 1992. A \$4 million remodeling and expansion project began in March.

Horne is senior pastor of a church that includes six associate pastors, a television ministry, an 18,000-volume library and 25 choirs, handbell ensembles and other musical groups. None of them made headlines to equal the demonstrations outside the church earlier this year.

Starting in July, Immanuel became the target of a three-month series of sidewalk protests, complete with hollering, news cameras, counter-protests, police lines and arrests.

W.N. Otwell and others from "God Said" Ministries of Nacogdoches, Texas, objecting to Clinton's public tolerance toward abortion and homosexuality, demanded that Horne kick Clinton out of the church.

"Not to this day have I had anything in the way of a personal call or correspondence" from Otwell, Horne said.

He concluded that Otwell's concern "was not a personal, spiritual matter so

much as it was a political protest he wanted to make, which he had every right as a citizen to do. But we were not going to turn over our church service for their political protest."

Otwell stayed out. Clinton stayed in. Horne said he doesn't believe in telling church members how to handle their politics. "When I prepare a message, it's never with any particular person in mind, unless it's something I think I need to hear myself," he said.

But the governor "has heard me preach many, many times, so he knows where I stand.... I have long supported the sanctity of all life.

"My view (on homosexuality) is very simple. The Bible clearly teaches that homosexuality as well as many other things are sins in the sight of God."

Opportunity and responsibility

The pastor said he counts as a blessing the national focus that Clinton has brought to Immanuel Church.

"I look on it as a great opportunity and a responsibility, not as a threat or as anything to worry about," he said.

Following Clinton's inauguration, Horne expects there won't be as much interest in Clinton's home church. And the church will have lots happening, anyway.

Meanwhile, "I've asked the members to pray for him every day," Horne said. "And that's what we're going to do."

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Immanuel choir to perform in Washington

The sanctuary choir and brass quintet of Immanuel Church, Little Rock, will participate next week in inaugural ceremonies in honor of President-elect Bill Clinton.

The sanctuary choir, under the direction of Lynn Madden, associate pastor for music/media, will participate in a "praise and worship" service at First Baptist Church of Washington, D.C., on Tuesday evening, Jan. 19. The choir will sing several selections during the worship service including a special arrangement of "Eternal Life" prepared by Derric Johnson, a composer and arranger from Orlando, Fla.

The praise and worship service was

specifically requested by the Clintons and Vice President-elect and Mrs. Gore. Clinton has been a member of the Immanuel sanctuary choir since joining the church in 1980.

In addition to the Clintons and Gores, several members of the cabinet will be in attendance, as well as some senators, representatives and Southern Baptist leaders. Ken Medema also will be featured in the service.

The Immanuel brass quintet, at the request of the Clintons, will play for an ecumenical service on Wednesday morning, Jan. 20. The choir and brass have both participated in Clinton's gubernatorial inaugurations.

Arkansas All Over

MILLIE GILL

Staff changes

Mark Evans has joined the staff of Wynne Church as minister of youth and evangelism. He, his wife, Terri, and their son, Austin, moved to Wynne from Little Rock where they were active members of Markham Street Church.

J.C. Singleton is serving as interim pastor of First Church of Kingsland where he served as pastor from 1979-1981. Singleton, who has served as pastor of churches in Delta Association, has retired to the Kingsland area.

Tom and Kay Cox recently returned from Korea where they took 16 team members to hold evangelistic crusades in eight Baptist churches. The effort resulted in 353 professions of faith and 52 rededications. Cox, who is president of the Arkansas Baptist Evangelists, is staff evangelist at Ridgeview Church, Fayetteville.



Teacher honored - "I enjoyed every moment of my teaching," declared Mrs. Henry Haynes who recently retired from a 60-year Sunday School teaching career at First Church of Hope. Stan Parris, pastor, presented her with a plaque in a special recognition service. Mrs. Haynes, in her teaching tenure, taught all age groups from preschool to adults.

Doug Gathright is serving as interim pastor of Second Church in Pine Bluff. A senior at Ouachita Baptist University, he has been serving as pastor of Unity Church, Arkadelphia. He and his wife, Angelle, are parents of twin daughters, Alisha and Emily.

Schanon Caudle was recently elected and began serving Jan. 1 as associate pastor of Calvary Church of Fort Smith. He previously served the church as youth minister.

Les Frazer is serving as pastor of Southside Church, Lead Hill, coming there from Santa Fe Hills Church in Kansas City, Mo. He also has been pastor of Everton and Lamar churches in Arkansas. A native of Missouri, he is a graduate of Southwest Baptist University, Bolivar, Mo., and Southwest Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Kathy, have two sons, Andrew and Timothy.

Kenneth Threet has retired as pastor of Southside Church, Lead Hill, where he had been serving since 1979. Threet also has served as pastor of other churches in Arkansas, Texas and Missouri. The church held a reception Nov. 29, recognizing his 46 years in the ministry. Since his retirement, he is continuing to live near Lead Hill, his hometown.

Tom Doty of Jonesboro is serving this month as supply pastor for East Side Church in Osceola.

Bryan Parks has resigned as pastor of First Church of Alexander to enroll in New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Mark Sadler began serving Jan. 1 as pastor of Strawfloor Church in Jonesboro. Sadler previously served as pastor of Bowman Church, Lake City.

David Uth is serving as pastor of Immanuel Church of El Dorado. He resigned Dec. 31 as pastor of First Church of Camden to move to El Dorado.

Harold Danley has resigned as pastor of Elaine Church to serve as pastor of Pine Hill Church, Olla, La.

Brad Terry is serving Gravel Hill Church of Benton as youth director. He has been a member of Highland Heights Church in Benton.

Dudley Baxter is serving as interim pastor of Meadowview Church, Sheridan. He is a member of Congo Road Mission.

Les Stanley of Hot Springs is serving as interim minister of music for Piney Church, Hot Springs. He previously served as minister of education for Second Church, Hot Springs.

Mike Smith is serving as pastor of Second Church of Hot Springs. He moved there from Chattanooga, Tenn., where he was serving as minister of evangelism for Central Church.

John H. Parrott of Norman, Okla., will serve on the staff of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary this spring, teaching Biblical Preaching and Practicum in the absence of Craig Skinner, current professor of preaching, who is on sabbatical. Parrott, who served on the seminary staff 1973-79, is a native of Tuckerman and was ordained to the preaching ministry by First Church of Tuckerman. His wife is the former Elizabeth Maddox of Harrisburg.

People

Lee Gibbs of Beebe recently made a commitment to fulltime youth ministry. He is a member of First Church of Beebe where he currently is assisting Doug Stevens, minister of youth, with the church's youth work. Gibbs holds degrees from Arkansas State University at Beebe.

Lillie B. Pennington Day was observed Dec. 27 by Mount Olive Church of Crossett. She was recognized for both her more than 40 years of service as a preschool Sunday School teacher and her 80th birthday.

Bert Miller was recognized Jan. 3 by First Church of Springdale for five years of service as administrator of operations. Miller, who joined the staff Jan. 1, 1988, is responsible to the pastor for finances, the church calendar and facilities. In addition, he serves on the church's executive staff.

Obituary

Iida M. Emmerling of Bee Branch died Dec. 21 at age 60. She was a clerk with the U.S. Postal Service and the wife of Floyd Emmerling, a retired Southern Baptist pastor. Other survivors include a son, David Andrew Emmerling of Tamarac, Fla.; two daughters, Laura Emmerling Thomas of Troy, Mich., and Sherri Emmerling

Photo / Jim Veneman



Music leader honored - Steven Harbour (second from right), music director for Zion Hill Church in Cabot, was honored as an outstanding volunteer church music leader by state and national music leaders in December. The recognition came during annual planning meetings at the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville, Tenn. With Harbour are (from left) Lester McCullough, Arkansas Baptist State Convention church music director; Wesley Forbis, director of the Baptist Sunday School Board's church music ministries department; Martha Harbour; and Glen Ennis, associate in the ABSC church music department.

Andrews of Sherwood; her mother, Emma Whitfield Nantz of North Little Rock; two brothers; two sisters; eight grandchildren; and a great-grandchild.

Bloomer Church of Charleston ordained Willis Michael, Bill Rape and Leon Bedford to the deacon ministry Dec. 6.

Calvary Church in Fort Smith ordained Bob Sickmann and Bob Fletcher to the deacon ministry Dec. 27.

Hatfields celebrate 50th

Lawson and Juanita Gill Hatfield of Malvern, married Dec. 25, 1942 at First Church in North Little Rock, observed their 50th anniversary Christmas Day.

Hatfield, currently serving as interim pastor of First Church in Malvern, served for 25 years as director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Sunday School department and as president of the ABSC 1986-87. He also has served as pastor of churches in Arkansas and Texas, including First Church of Fordyce, Calvary Church of Little Rock and First Church of Malvern.

Mrs. Hatfield retired from a decade of service as a guidance counselor at Henderson Junior High School in Little Rock. She also assisted her husband for 15 years with work at Arkansas Baptist Assembly in Siloam Springs.

The Hatfields are parents of three children, Gracie Hatfield Hilton of Arlington, Texas; Jerry Hatfield of Arlington, Va.; and Stephen Hatfield of North Little Rock. They have eight grandchildren.

1993 deadlines near for student summer missions

ATLANTA (BP)—College students seeking domestic summer mission work through the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board should apply by March 10.

In 1992, 1,496 college students worked in various mission projects, 100 more than the previous year, said Van Simmons, associate director of the HMB's short-term volunteer department.

Despite the increase, however, about 100 requests for summer student missionaries were not filled, he said.

This year, the board is seeking to fill even more requests for student summer missionaries to assist in evangelism, ministry and church planting, he said. "We have not been able to enlist enough students in recent years to fill all the requests from the field."

Without enough students, many missionaries and new churches will lack the assistance they need, he said. "There will be churches and associations that will not be able to have evangelism projects. There will be churches that won't get started."

Student summer missionaries must be Baptist, must have completed their freshman year of college and must be willing to serve for 10 weeks during the summer. Students assigned by the board receive \$60 per week, round-trip transportation and limited insurance.

Those interested in student missions work should contact their state convention's student department or missions department or the Home Mission Board's volunteer division at 1-800-HMB-VOLS.

The Arkansas student summer missionary deadline is approaching even faster. The deadline for submitting applications to Baptist Student Union directors on campus is Jan. 20. The directors will then submit the applications to the state office.

High school juniors and seniors seeking to be Sojourner summer missionaries through the Home Mission Board should apply by March 10.

Sojourners are high school students who have completed their junior or senior year and are willing to work six to 10 weeks during the summer. They receive food, lodging and local transportation while on assignment. Sojourners are responsible for their transportation to and from the site, but assistance is available in some cases.

Anyone wanting more information about Sojourners or mission youth groups can contact the Home Mission Board at 1-800-HMB-VOLS.

Ordinations

Little Rock Second Church ordained David Miller to the gospel ministry Dec. 20. Miller and his wife, Martha, are preparing to return to South America for a new appointment to mission service in Chile. The Millers previously served in Peru in camp ministry and with their new appointment he will serve as a church planter.

Oak Cliff Church in Fort Smith recently ordained Jon Deavers to the gospel ministry. Deavers will be attending the spring session of the campus study program of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary at Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee, Okla.

Old Austin Church of Austin ordained James Eggert to the deacon ministry Nov. 15. The church also approved Calvin Wadley, Roy Williams, Wendell Gibson and Danny Herekamp as yokefellows.

Faith Church of Jenny Lind ordained J.D. Almond and Ronnie Mickle as deacons Nov. 22.

Religious freedom bill among key measures

By Pam Parry

Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (ABP) — A new crop of lawmakers probably will not impede passage of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, say bill proponents who predict the measure is on track for early passage in the 103rd Congress.

RFRA is designed to restore a high level of protection for religious practice that virtually was abandoned by the U.S. Supreme Court in its 1990 Oregon vs. Smith decision.

When Congress convened Jan. 5, one-fourth of the House of Representatives were newcomers. The 110-member freshman class was the largest since 1948. The Senate welcomed 12 freshmen.

The process of introducing newcomers to the need for RFRA could slow down the bill, which has died in the previous two Congresses for lack of time. But President-elect Clinton has voiced his support of the bill, and if his administration makes RFRA a priority, the measure should move quickly, observers say.

In addition to RFRA, the new Congress is likely to address other legislation affecting churches.

School funding plans

One such issue is the public funding of private and religious schools. In the 102nd Congress, the Bush administration pushed an education package that included school choice, a plan to provide parents vouchers to send their children to the public, private or religious schools of their choice.

After months of political battles, the House approved a bill without choice provisions and the Senate approved a measure providing only public school choice. The education bill died when the Senate failed to approve the conference report.

Choice has less chance of advancing in the new Congress, because majorities in both houses of Congress oppose public funding for private purposes and the new administration is on their side.

The new Congress probably will grapple with a tax bill that contains provisions affecting non-profit organizations and their donors.

Such provisions were included in a wide-ranging tax bill (H.R. 11) that Bush vetoed because it contained a tax hike on the very wealthy. Several of the bill's provisions would have encouraged charitable giving by changing tax laws governing non-profit institutions and their donors.

One provision would have made all

Record number of minorities, women elected to serve in new U.S. Congress

WASHINGTON (ABP) — The new U.S. Congress will look more like America, benefiting from the election of a record number of women, African-Americans and Hispanics.

When it convened Jan. 5, the 103rd Congress welcomed 122 new members, with 110 in the House of Representatives and 12 in the Senate.

The new class reflects a diversity of religious affiliations. Fifteen Baptists are among the 110 new House members. No additional Baptists were elected in the Senate.

Within Congress, Baptists represent the third largest group with 62. The two largest groups are Roman Catholics (141) and Methodists (65).

A record 48 women will serve in the House. Women also made significant strides in the Senate, tripling the number in the previous Congress. The election of four new members brings to six the number of women in the Senate. Four decades have passed since more than two women served in the Senate.

Despite gains, women still are not proportionately represented in the legislative branch of government. Women make up more than half of the country's population, but they constitute only

about 10 percent of Congress.

African-Americans and Hispanics made greater gains proportionately. Sixteen blacks are among the new members of the House, with one black elected to the Senate. Carol Moseley Braun, D-Ill., is the first black woman elected to the Senate. The Senate has never had two blacks serving at the same time.

Blacks constitute about 12 percent of the population, and their membership in the House will be about 9 percent.

Hispanics did not fare quite as well. Eight new Hispanics were elected to the House; no Hispanic will be in the Senate. Hispanics hold 4 percent of House seats and make up 9 percent of the total population.

Voters also elected for the first time a Korean-American to serve in the House.

The new freshmen generally are younger and have more political experience going into the job than their incumbent counterparts had when first elected. Despite an election-year emphasis on changing the status quo, nearly 72 percent of House newcomers have held an elected office.

gifts of appreciated property fully deductible on a permanent basis. Appreciated property includes real estate, stocks and tangible items such as collectibles whose value increased after being purchased. A 1986 tax act subjected the appreciated portion of charitable gifts to the alternative minimum tax, causing a decline in large gifts to charitable institutions.

The bill would have repealed the alternative minimum tax on such appreciated property so that all donors would receive a deduction equal to the property's fair market value.

Charitable contributions

Two other provisions would have required more disclosure and substantiation of charitable contributions.

One would bar a taxpayer from deducting any contribution of \$750 or more without a receipt from the charity receiving the donation. Previously, the Bush administration proposed that the charity report taxpayers who gave \$500 annually

to the IRS. The new proposal involved single contributions of \$750 or more and would require only that the taxpayer have the receipt in his possession.

The other provision involved disclosure requirements related to "quid pro quo" contributions, payments made partly as a contribution and partly for goods and services provided by the church or charity.

The provision would require the church or charity to inform the donor that the deductible amount is limited to how much the gift exceeds the value of goods or services provided. The church or charity also would have to provide the donor with a "good faith estimate of the value of such goods or services."

Both disclosure provisions would result in churches dealing exclusively with the donor, not the government.

The measure also dropped proposals to extend beyond 1995 or make permanent the 3 percent floor for itemized tax deductions.

SOMALIA UPDATE

Malnutrition that doesn't kill on its own still opens the door for other diseases to invade weakened bodies. Relief workers fight childhood illness, like measles, as well as providing hunger relief.



THE FACES OF SOMALIA

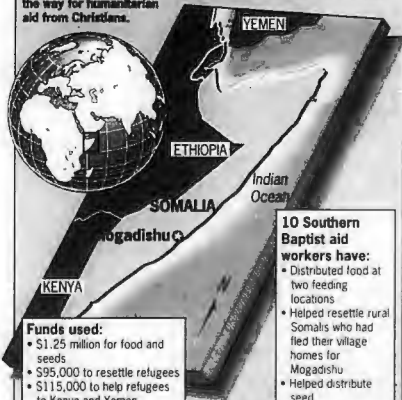
Southern Baptist aid continues



A relief nurse fights to save the life of an infant brought into a rural feeding station. An estimated 70 percent of all Somali children under the age of 5 have died in the current crisis.

Southern Baptists respond to Somali crisis

The Foreign Mission Board needs volunteers to work with Somalis for two to six months. The last Protestant missionaries were forced to leave the African nation in 1979, but recent famine has opened the way for humanitarian aid from Christians.



Funds used:

- \$1.25 million for food and seeds
- \$95,000 to resettle refugees
- \$115,000 to help refugees to Kenya and Yemen

10 Southern Baptist aid workers have:

- Distributed food at two feeding locations
- Helped resettle rural Somalis who had fled their village homes for Mogadishu
- Helped distribute seed

Four Acteens named to advisory panel

Four teenage girls have been selected to serve on Arkansas Baptists' 1992-93 Acteens Advisory Panel. The panelists will be available to speak at associational and local church Acteens activities.

During the summer, applications are sent out statewide, and girls who meet the requirements and are interested complete the application and submit it to the state Acteens office. After checking references, the State Acteens Committee selects four panelists and one alternate.

The four help plan the Acteens Encounter in April and have high visibility during that event. They also speak at the Woman's Missionary Union annual meeting. This year's panelists include:

■ **Leslie Pevytoe** of Benton Salem Church. Leslie is a senior at Bryant High School and is involved in band and Flagline. She is a Queen Regent in Service in Studia and has been in Acteens for five years.

■ **Kristyn Ross** of North Little Rock Park Hill church. Kristyn is a sophomore at Sylvan Hills High School in North Little Rock and is involved in the National Junior Honor Society and the Spanish Club. She is a Queen Regent in Studia and has been in Acteens for three years.

■ **Rochella Werschem** of Central City First Southern Church. She is a junior at the Good Shepherd Academy in Fort Smith



Leslie Pevytoe



Kristyn Ross



Rochella Werschem



Michelle Wright

and is involved in Honor Society and the Spanish Club. She is a Queen Regent in Service in Studia and has been in Acteens for four years.

■ **Michelle Wright** of Little Rock Immanuel Church. Michelle is a sophomore at Parkview Magnet High School in Little Rock and is involved in Advanced Ensemble, Peer Counsel and French Club. She is a Queen Regent in Studia and has been in Acteens for three years.

Stephanie Edwards of Lonoke Church has been selected as an alternate; she is a

sophomore at Lonoke High School.

Angela Lowe, Arkansas Baptist Acteens director, said the visibility of the panel helps promote Acteens statewide. But even more important, she noted, is personal motivation. "When girls see peers of their own age and what they have achieved, it encourages them in a way that a leader never could."

Acteens is the missions organization of Woman's Missionary Union for girls ages 12-17. There are approximately 2,100 girls involved in Acteens in Arkansas.

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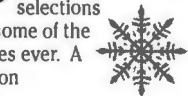
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College, seminary courses offered

Arkansas Baptist ministers and laypeople may receive college or seminary credit through two programs being offered in Little Rock.

Boyce Bible School, an extension of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, is offering college-level courses with classes meeting at Baptist Medical System's Support Center. The next term begins March 5.

Master's level courses from Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, are offered at the Baptist Building. The next courses begin Jan. 25.

For further information contact Lehman Webb, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203-0552 or call 376-4791, ext. 5249.

Ouachita program offers aid to future seminary students

Ouachita Baptist University and more than 15 other Baptist colleges and universities nationwide have signed agreements with four Southern Baptist seminaries to allow qualified students to enter the seminaries with advanced standing to earn the master of divinity degree.

The agreement will enable students from the schools working in coordination with the seminaries to cut up to 18 hours off of the required hours in the schools of theology at the seminaries. Each seminar has different criteria for students to meet before credit is given for the college work.

Seminaries cooperating with the Baptist colleges and universities in promoting the program are Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas;

Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.; New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary; and Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo.

Bill Steeger, chairman of the division of religion and philosophy at Ouachita and the W.O. Vaught Professor of Bible, said the arrangement is a good one for Ouachita students.

"Qualified graduates can now accelerate their graduate program in theological education and are able to capitalize on the many specialties of the seminaries during their master of divinity training," Steeger said. "Our faculty has worked closely with these four seminaries in developing an undergraduate theological education program that will capitalize upon the excellent foundation provided by the 'Biblical Studies-Language' major available at Ouachita."

Bruce Corley, dean of Southwestern's school of theology, said a major advantage of the program is the flexibility it offers students. That flexibility includes allowing students to choose a wider variety of courses to substitute for classes taken in college.

Steeger said the arrangement will allow ministerial students to "receive specialized training, making them more effective ministers for the complex needs of the 21st century."

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Christian clubs growing in Arkansas, Texas

'God is doing a tremendous thing,' notes ABSC's Randy Brantley

By Sarah Zimmerman
SBC Home Mission Board

SALT LAKE CITY (BP)—Christian clubs are mushrooming in secondary schools in Arkansas and Texas, according to Southern Baptist evangelism leaders from those two states.

Randy Brantley, associate director of evangelism for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, said more than 100 of the 459 secondary schools in his state have Christian clubs.

"The Christian club movement is taking off," Brantley said during a national meeting for Southern Baptist coordinators of youth evangelism events. "God is doing a tremendous thing."

Chuck Flowers, youth evangelism associate for the Baptist General Convention of Texas, said at least 500 secondary schools in Texas have active Christian clubs. His goal is for each of the 1,500-plus secondary schools in Texas to have a Christian organization.

Club meetings take different formats because each is student-led. The club at Jonesboro High School meets every Friday before school. An average of 50 people come to the meeting to pray for their non-Christian peers, Brantley said.

The club at J.A. Fair High School in Little Rock meets at 7:15 a.m. The group

usually invites a guest speaker; as many as 45 students attend.

In addition to group meetings, some Christian clubs sponsor special events. The club in Jonesboro enters the homecoming parade and members throw evangelistic tracts and candy from their float.

At Cabot High School, the "Jesus Uniting Students Together" club sponsored a graduation night party in the school gym as an alternative to beer parties students typically attend. "It was a roaring success," Brantley said. "It was well organized and well received."

Regardless of the club's activities, its purpose should be evangelism, directors said.

"We suggest that students adopt a motto about what they're doing to reach their campus for Christ," Brantley said. "Without that as their purpose, they have no purpose."

Dean Finley, youth evangelism specialist for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, said Christian student clubs must maintain their evangelistic zeal. "If they get turned toward themselves, they run out of steam pretty quickly. They must be outward focused."

Both Brantley and Flowers encourage students to form groups of three. Each of the three Christians is challenged to pray for and build relationships with three stu-

dents who are not Christians. The goal is that by the end of the school year, the Christians will have an opportunity to share their faith with the students they have identified.

The three Christian students serve as a soul-winning team, plus they keep each other accountable for maintaining a godly lifestyle.

Occasionally students face opposition in their efforts. Flowers told of a Texas student who noticed that other campus clubs had pennants for their organizations on display in the school cafeteria. At first the student was told the Christian club could not display a pennant, but the student worked with the school's administrators to gain permission to display it.

Christian clubs should comply with school policies and they should be student-led, Flowers said. Schools may be closed to adults from off campus leading the groups but they are not closed to students, he noted.



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William and Clara Pickle

HMB appoints Pickles to Florida

ATLANTA — Arkansas natives William and Clara Pickle recently were appointed to mission service by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

The Pickles will serve in Plantation, Fla. Pickle will be a church planter strategist/catalytic missionary for Gulf Stream Association, and Mrs. Pickle will work in family and church service.

Pickle is a native of Siloam Springs, and

is a graduate of the University of Oklahoma in Norman and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

A former chemist research assistant, Pickle has served as a pastor in Arkansas and Louisiana. From 1974 to 1992, he was a church development consultant for the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in Ecuador.

Mrs. Pickle, a native of Benton, is a former library assistant and secretary. She served with her husband for 18 years in South America.

While in Florida, the Pickles will work among Hispanics and Haitians in a rapidly growing area where there is only one Baptist church for every 30,000 people.

August conference expected to attract 4,000 youth to Africa

HARARE, ZIMBABWE (BP)—An African village will be constructed at the site of the 12th Baptist Youth Conference in Harare, Zimbabwe, Aug. 12-15 to introduce worldwide Baptist youth to Africa and its many different cultures and to challenge the

stereotypes of Africa held by many Western and European young people.

As well as the focus on Africa, the conference, expected to draw more than 4,000 delegates worldwide, will feature music and programming on the conference theme, "Risking All For Christ — Our Only Hope."

Led by international Baptist speakers Tony Campolo of the United States, and Steve Chalke of Great Britain, Baptist young people will be challenged on such topics as "Christian lifestyles in the midst of poverty," "Sexuality and Spirituality" and "Christianity in a changing Africa."

British Baptist leader John Passmore is working with European Baptist youth leaders to arrange Bible study programs that will start with about 300 young people in each group and then break down into smaller groups of 12 people for 90 minutes of family Bible study.

Music will be led by Liz Pass, a Zimbabwean-born Christian musician and resident in South Africa, and Cassandra Jones, youth leader for the National Baptist Convention, USA.

Additional information is available from the Baptist World Alliance, 6733 Curran Street, McLean, VA 22101.

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'World A' needs top FMB's '93 missionary request list

By Mary E. Speidel
SBC Foreign Mission Board

RICHMOND, VA (BP)—Missionaries to the world's unreached people groups head the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's "help wanted" list for 1993.

The list of 38 top requests for missionaries is "almost entirely World A," said Harlan Spurgeon, vice president for mission personnel.

"World A" — so named by mission strategists — encompasses vast regions of the globe where people live and die with little or no knowledge of Jesus Christ. Most of World A's 1.2 billion people live in an area from northern Africa to southeast Asia.

The 1993 priority requests "emphasize much more clearly our commitment to the unreached peoples than any previous list we've ever worked with," added Lewis Myers, board vice president. Myers heads Cooperative Services International, the Southern Baptist organization relating to areas where traditional missionaries do not work. Thirteen openings on the new list are for CSI assignments.

The list also includes requests for missionaries among World A-type peoples living in countries considered traditional mission fields. Priority requests in Nigeria, for example, include workers among the Kanuri and Fulani people there.

Myers said the list reveals two basic

goals: "Accelerate the harvest" and expand efforts among the unreached peoples of the world, "many of whom are quite resistant to the gospel."

The requests are divided into three tiers. Tier I contains 16 of the most urgent global needs.

"We're treating them all as if each is the No. 1 request in the world," explained personnel selection director Lloyd Atkinson. "Tier I has such urgent needs that it's hard to differentiate which one is most important."

Tier I priorities include requests for:

- Workers among unreached peoples in Africa and Asia.
- A church developer in the former Soviet republic of Belarus.
- A church planter in Albania.
- A religious education consultant in Bulgaria.

■ An agriculturist and several church planters for Bangladesh, a request that topped last year's list but went unfilled.

The overall list includes additional openings in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, some representing "emerging mission fields and needs we didn't have the opportunity to address before," Spurgeon said. They include a church planter in Kyrgyzstan, a church developer in Russia and a student and youth worker in Hungary.

Nineteen priority requests call for missionaries to work in church planting, general evangelism and church development. Two seek missionaries to work in church planting and health care in Nepal (one requests a physician whose spouse is a church planter; the other asks for a dentist and church planter team). A church planter/English teacher is needed in Cambodia. Needs for church planters in Angola, Macao, Sri Lanka and Uganda also made the list.

Other key requests call for a worker to coordinate evangelism among the Vietnamese and several evangelists in the Middle East.

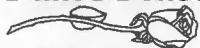
Last year the Foreign Mission Board filled less than half of its 33 priority requests. Several remain on the 1993 list.

Many unfilled openings, said Atkinson, include jobs in church planting, general evangelism and church development. They encompass such areas as theological education, student ministries, women's ministries and religious education.

The priority requests are used in the missionary selection process. "We try to keep these top requests before people," Spurgeon said. But he added that missionary candidates are free to consider any of the hundreds of other requests on file at the Foreign Mission Board.

Individuals interested in additional information about missionary service may contact Faith Bryan at the board's initial contact desk. Call toll-free at 800-999-2889, ext. 635, or write the Foreign Mission Board, P.O. Box 6767, Richmond, VA 23230-0767.

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One missionary, one way -- and 8,000 kids

(BP) photo / Linda Gaddis

By Linda Gaddis

Baptist Press

SANYATI, ZIMBABWE (BP)—When you have 8,000 students and one missionary, there's only one way to succeed.

Make that "One Way."

Gayla Corley leads "One Way Clubs" in 15 public primary schools near Sanyati Baptist Hospital in Zimbabwe as part of the government's "general content" curriculum.

Every other week the student bodies of all the schools attend Corley's Bible class, where the Southern Baptist missionary teaches and shares her Christian faith any way she chooses. Often teachers listen, too. Some even take notes and test the pupils on the lessons.

A lesson may begin with reciting the club's theme, John 14:6, and singing "One Way," a song specially written for the clubs by Robby Chitofu, son of a local Baptist pastor.

Then Corley uses an object lesson to illustrate a Bible truth. One week she called up the school's "head boy" (the top ap-



Southern Baptist missionary Gayla Corley (right) has 8,000 students in her biweekly Bible classes held in Sanyati, Zimbabwe.

pointed student officer) and wrapped twine once around his hand. She challenged him to break it. Of course he easily snapped the string. Next she wrapped it several times around his arms and again he broke free. Finally she wrapped the cord around his body until he could hardly

move—or get loose. Comparing the twine to bad habits and sin, she used a pair of scissors as a symbol of the power of Jesus to defeat sin.

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SBC losing one church for every two starts

By David Winfrey

SBC Home Mission Board

ATLANTA (BP)—For every two churches started in the Southern Baptist Convention, another disbands, reverts to mission status or for some other reason ceases to be a church, according to a study by the Home Mission Board.

"We have to start 2.2 churches to achieve a net gain of one," said Richie Stanley, author of the study and HMB associate director of planning and services research.

The finding is significant to Southern Baptists' Bold Mission Thrust goal of 50,000 churches and church-type missions by the year 2000, said Larry Lewis, HMB president.

"If we could close that back door, we could take a giant step toward reaching our goal," he said.

The study found Southern Baptists averaged 430 church starts annually during the last 19 years. At the same time, an average of 233 churches were removed from association rolls each year for a net annual gain of 197.

For insight into what happens to these churches, Stanley studied the 223 churches removed in 1989 from the SBC list of churches, as kept by the Baptist Sunday School Board.

Associational directors of missions reported 132 ceased to exist as churches. Another 62 still existed, but as non-Southern Baptist churches. Twenty-two were misreported, directors of missions noted.

No responses were received in seven cases.

Of those that ceased being a church, 106 disbands, 18 reverted to mission status and eight merged with other congregations.

Dwindling membership was cited by directors of missions as the greatest cause for churches that disbands, reverted or merged, the report states.

Problems with the pastor, lack of lay leadership and financial difficulties were each cited by directors of missions in at least 30 percent of the cases.

While some rural areas may no longer have the population to support several

churches, Lewis said he fears many of the disbanded churches were in urban areas "where the community has changed but the congregation has not changed to effectively minister to and reach the community."

Churches willing to integrate their congregation or support multiple congregations in one building could continue to be viable, he said.

Directors of missions responded in at least half the cases that nothing else could have been done to prevent the congregation from disbanding or leaving the Southern Baptist Convention.



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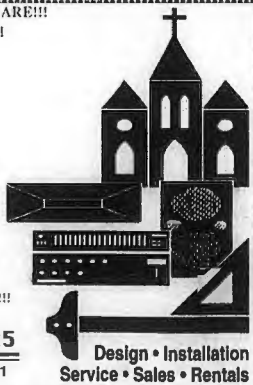
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The Historical Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention in its newly-released pamphlet series, "Understanding Southern Baptists" describes this complex panorama by looking at Southern Baptist history.

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Organized?" "Who Are Southern Baptist Ministers?" "How Do Southern Baptists Worship?" "How Do Southern Baptists Tell the Story?" "How Do Southern Baptists Meet Human Needs?" "How Do Southern Baptists Respond to a Changing World?" and "Why Do Southern Baptists Believe in Religious Liberty?"

These questions are more crucial than ever as Southern Baptists look toward the 21st century. Technological advances continue to shrink geographic distances and speed communications. Political and economic instability worldwide have created new depths of human needs and new opportunities to tell the story of Christ. The Historical Commission hopes through these pamphlets to help persons under-



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stand Southern Baptists and to let the Southern Baptist heritage challenge them to a deeper faith and ministry today.

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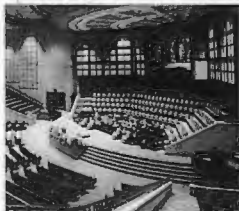
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Convention Uniform

Saints in secular society

By Sam Whitlow, Harmony Church,
El Dorado

Basic passage: I Corinthians 1:1-2, 13

Focal passage: I Corinthians 1:1-2, 13

Central truth: We are one in Christ, therefore saints, let's act like it.

The Carnality: These Corinthian Christians had begun to mimic the unbelieving world. They were corrupt, carnal, compromising and critical and the church had become divided, defiled and disgraced. Paul calls them "men of flesh" (3:1), "babes in Christ" (3:1) and "still fleshly" (3:3).

The Commission: (1:1). Paul was "called" or commissioned by God, he didn't just volunteer. As Paul persecuted Christians, God intervened in a most dramatic way (Acts 9:14, 15-16). Paul was set apart from his mother's womb (Gal. 1:15). Paul was an apostle who was a divinely chosen man to be the vehicle of divinely inspired truth. Sosthenes is not a co-author, he is called a brother, not an apostle. Paul will use the pronoun "I" not "we" as he begins to write.

The City: (1:2a). Corinth was a major trade center which brought thousands of people there, an entertainment center and the fountainhead of immorality in the Roman Empire. The name of the city comes from the Greek verb which means to be immoral.

The Called Out Ones: (1:2b). They are in Christ Jesus which means they are in union with Christ and points to the essence of their salvation. As a result of this union, they are said to be sanctified. The word means to be set apart and is the same root word as holy and saint. God has called them out of a secular society into a sacred society to represent Him. Not only has He called them, but all those who know Christ everywhere. It is a high, holy and heavenly calling - may we act like a saint and not an aint.

Christ's Desire: (1:13). Paul's desire as well as Christ's desire is that we be one in Christ. Our loyalty must be to Christ and no human leader. Why? There is only one Christ. He is to be fully shared by all Christians. There is only one cross. Only one person died a death that brings salvation to men and that is Christ. There is only one baptism. The word "in" found in the words "in the name of Paul" is literally into and, therefore, speaks of union and fellowship and allegiance. So Paul is saying, "I don't want your loyalty, Jesus alone deserves it."

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Life and Work

Intercessory prayer

By C.A. Johnson, First Church, Paragould
Basic passage: Genesis 13:12; 18:1-33;
19:1-38

Focal passage: Genesis 13:12; 18:17-20,
23-26; 19:39

Central truth: Intercession is a privilege, responsibility and duty of a believer.

We are actually sinning against God if we do not pray for others (1 Sam. 12:23). Intercessory prayer is showing spiritual interest in others. Our Christian life will never really be strong until we make intercession a prominent part of our lives.

The angel's announcement concerning Sodom led Abraham to intercede for the city. As he began his pleading, he drew near to God. When we address ourselves to the duty of prayer, we should be reminded that we are drawing near to God. We should be filled with reverence of Him as we pray.

Abraham no doubt hated the wickedness of the Sodomites, yet he prayed earnestly for them. We must remember that sin is to be hated, but sinners are to be loved and prayed for.

We would do well to look at some of the characteristics of Abraham's intercessions and pattern our own pleas after them. He prayed with great faith—beginning with a prayer that the righteous might be spared. Then he expanded this into a plea that all might be spared for the sake of the righteous.

Abraham prayed with great humility (v. 27). Whenever we draw near to God, we must reverently acknowledge the vast difference between us and God.

He prayed with great love. As bad as Sodom was, he thought there were some good people in it. It behooves us to hope the best of the worst places.

There was boldness in his pleadings. He was troubled by the fact that the destruction of Sodom would involve destruction of the righteous with the wicked. He told God about it. Problems that are brought to God will either be solved or He will give grace to wait for the solution.

Abraham was rewarded with divine encouragement when God promised him that if he found 10 righteous people He would spare the city. God's people need to realize the power of intercessory prayer.

We can only intercede as we abide in close fellowship with God (John 15:7). When these conditions are fulfilled, the Lord's words become true, "Ask, and ye shall receive" (John 16:24).

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Bible Book

A fervent call to worship

By George O'Neal, Bella Vista Church
Basic passage: Psalm 36, 100, 127
Focal passage: Psalm 100

Central truth: To hear the call of God to worship Him is to celebrate who He is and what He has done.

The Psalmist issues a joyous and universal invitation to worship and praise the Lord. That call is ringing out as clearly today as it ever has that God desires to restore His people to biblical worship.

I. A Call to Celebrate, verses 1-2. The exhortation is for peoples of every nation to joyfully praise the God of heaven. To be vocal and celebratory about the Lord is appropriate worship. One of the expressions of our joy can come in singing to Him. God must love music since He is the creator of it. Another expression of worship is in service, not just isolated acts of service, but a total commitment to minister to the Lord and for the Lord with a glad heart.

II. A Call to Confess, verse 3. Confession does not always refer to sin. It can also be a vehicle of affirming who God is. The confession is that God is our creator and the only true God. It is to acknowledge accountability to Him and the privilege of being a member of His family.

III. A Call to Contribute, verse 4. What are appropriate offerings to bring to God as we come to worship Him? One is the gift of thanksgiving. That is how the worshipper is to "enter his gates." But as we move into His courts of His presence, the approach is praise to the Lord. Thanksgiving and praise are gifts to be made regardless of one's feelings. They are acts of our will.

IV. A Call to Confirm, verse 5. A believer who had gone through a number of disappointments and sorrows was asked, "How are things going today?" She responded, "Life is tough, but God is good." Especially in trying times the child of God does well to exalt the Lord for His goodness, for His mercies which are fresh every day, and for His enduring truth. What God has promised was true for our forefathers, is true for us and will be true for our children and grandchildren.

The worshipping heart declares God to be first in his mind's attention and his heart's affection and invites others to celebrate with him. All of this is in anticipation of gathering at God's throne where all of His people will worship Him forever.

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Convention Uniform

Walk the worthy walk

By Sam Whitlow, Harmony Church, El Dorado

Basic passage: Ephesians 4

Focal passage: Ephesians 4

Central truth: The worthy walk is being like Jesus.

Paul has been telling us for three chapters all that it means to be "in Christ" and the natural response to this is to walk for Him and with Him and to make our practice match our position in Christ.

The Christian walk preserves unity: (4:1-6). Paul calls us to the worthy walk in verse 1, then in verses 2-3, he lists the characteristics of the walk so we might impact the world: lowliness (humility); meekness (not retaliating); long-suffering (not giving up); forbearing one another in love (loving when it is hard to love); endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (one bond that holds us together - unity and peace which comes from love).

He then gives us the cause for the worthy walk which is one body (the church being the body of Christ); one Spirit (source of our unity); one hope (destiny); one Lord (Christ, the head of the body); one faith (truth); one baptism (water); one God (Climax of the Trinity).

The worthy walk promotes usefulness: (7:16). A diversity of gifts when used properly will promote usefulness and unity. When Christ was on earth, His presence was limited to one body, but when He returned to heaven, He sent Himself back in the body of every Christian. On the cross, Christ won the eternal victory. He also gave to the church men to minister, apostles, prophets, evangelists, teaching pastors. All were given to equip the saints to do the work of the ministry, promote unity, knowledge and fellowship of Christ, Christlikeness, sound doctrine and evangelism.

The worthy walk prevents unholiness: (vs. 17-32). Paul contrasts the old life with the new life in Christ. He says the former life is characterized by being self-centered (v. 17b), stupid (v. 18), shameless (v. 19), sinful minded (v. 19b). The new life, Paul says, is characterized by being Savior-centered (v. 20), smart - knowing the truth (v. 21), sensitive to sin (v. 22), Spirit-minded (v. 23). He then says put off the old - lying, anger, stealing - and put on the new - truth, righteous anger, sharing and virtues - so the world will know whose we are.

Life and Work

The simplicity of faith

By C.A. Johnson, First Church, Paragould

Basic passage: Genesis 21-22

Focal passage: Genesis 21:1-8; 22:1-19

Central truth: If we exercise faith, God will encourage it.

Abraham lived in close fellowship with God, ready for His new revelations and responsive to His calls. Even in this terrible hour, he was still looking up to God and resting with unshaken confidence in His goodness which had never deceived or forsaken him.

There was no hesitation, no reluctance, no doubt in Abraham's mind at this point. He "made haste, and delayed not" to keep God's commandment. He still trusted in the Lord as implicitly as when he first abandoned his father's land to follow the Lord's leading. He did not presume to question the wisdom of God. He simply rested in God's faithfulness and love; being confident that He would reconcile all difficulties in the end. The words of his obedience are the words of Job: "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."

If we exercise faith, God will encourage it. Those who are willing to part with anything for God shall have it made up to them with unspeakable advantage. Abraham had but one son, and was willing to part with him in obedience to God. God said, "I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven (Gen. 22:17).

God's demand is, "Son give me thine heart (Prov. 23:26). It is not our intellect, our talents, our money, but our heart God first asks for. When we have responded to God's requirement, He lays His hand on something near and dear to us to prove the genuineness of our response. God requires truth in the inward parts and not merely on the lips. Thus He dealt with Abraham.

"The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him" (Ps. 25:14). When we abide in Him, He abides in us, our faith will grow strong, our love will grow deep, and our hopes will grow high. Then we "stagger not through unbelief" (Rom. 4:20).

The best evidence of our fearing God is our being willing to serve and honor Him with that which is dearest to us, and yet be willing to part with all of it for Him.

It is only by passing through trials that we learn of God's grace, His faithfulness, His sufficiency. May the Lord grant us more of that power of faith which takes every blessing which God gives us, and give back to Him in the spirit of worship.

Bible Book

The way to forgiveness

By George O'Neal, Bella Vista Church

Basic passage: Psalm 42, 51, 123

Focal passage: Psalm 51

Central truth: Confession of sin out of a broken and contrite heart brings forgiveness and cleansing.

Approximately a year after David's moral failure, having committed adultery and murder, God sent the prophet Nathan to confront the king with his sin. Surely David's tears were hardly dry when he wrote out his experience of repentance and spiritual restoration.

I. A Plea for Mercy, verses 1-2. True conviction of sin struck David's heart and he cast himself on his only ground for hope - the mercy and love of God. He uses three words to portray the depth of his guilt and shame. One is "transgressions" which means a stepping across or rebellion against God's law. Another is "iniquity" which speaks of the perversity of his heart. The third word is "sin" which refers to his missing the mark or falling short of God's standard. David asks that God refrain from giving him death.

II. A Prerequisite for Cleansing, verses 3-6. With honesty and candor David took personal responsibility for his sins, agreeing with God that he was rebellious. Over and over again David uses the first personal pronoun, refusing to place blame on anyone else. Such an honest confession is required to experience God's forgiveness (see I John 1:9).

III. A Petition for Purity, verses 7-12. David knew that behind his outward sinful acts was an impure heart. He had tolerated lust and violence as well as living the lie of his cover-up. God probed that corruption in David and he cried for God to purify his life. He wanted the Lord to become his priest and to cleanse him with the sprinkling of blood from a branch of hyssop as prescribed in the Levitical law.

IV. A Pledge of Service, verses 13-17. Having poured out the anguish of his soul in repentance, David now gives evidence of receiving the forgiveness he desired. He now is ready to pass on the truths of God he has learned firsthand.

V. A Prayer for Jerusalem, verses 18-19. Since David had freshly experienced the blessing of God's mercy, he wanted to build again the walls of righteousness which sin had broken down in his city.

Subscriber Services

The Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine offers subscription plans at three rates:

Every Resident Family Plan gives churches a premium rate when they send the Newsmagazine to all their resident households. Resident families are calculated to be at least one-fourth of the church's Sunday School enrollment. Churches who send only to members who receive a subscription do not qualify for this lower rate of \$6.36 per year for each subscription.

A Group Plan (formerly called the

NEWS DIGEST

Cooperative Program gifts up in December by 3 percent

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program receipts for December were up 3.14 percent over the same month a year ago, according to Morris H. Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the SBC Executive Committee.

December CP receipts totaled \$10,906,778 compared to December 1991 of \$10,575,202. For the fiscal year first quarter, CP gifts are nearly even with those in the same time period in 1991-92: \$33,471,798 compared to \$33,472,910, or a difference of \$1,111.

Designated gifts for the first quarter were up 9.98 percent over the same time period in the previous fiscal year: \$7,573,443 compared to \$6,885,997. The December designated gifts were \$3,088,574 compared to December 1991 of \$3,113,55 or 0.8 percent difference.

Clergy ethics gets lowest public-approval rating ever

PRINCETON, NJ (ABP)—Americans' confidence in the clergy has hit the lowest level on record, the Gallup Organization reports.

While clergy still rank second among a field of 13 professions when rated for ethics and honesty, only 15 percent of the public give clergy a "very high" rating and 39 percent give them a "high" rating.

A third of the public consider the ethical standards and honesty of clergy to be average, while 7 percent rate clergy "low" and 2 percent consider them "very low."

These findings are from recent surveys of American adults ages 18 and older by the Gallup Organization. Other professions listed include pharmacists, physicians, college teachers, dentists, engineers, police officers, funeral directors, journalists, bankers, lawyers, Congressmen and car salesmen.

Pharmacists come out on top of the list, with 66 percent of the public rating them either "very high" or "high." Members of the clergy rank second, with a combined favorable rating of 54 percent.

Public confidence in the clergy has declined from the high of a 67 percent favorable rating in 1985, according to "Emerging Trends," newsletter of the Princeton Religion Research Center. Gallup polls consistently placed clergy at the top of the list for ethical standards and honesty until 1988.

Recession doesn't keep Americans from giving

WASHINGTON (ABP)—Giving and volunteering are still pervasive activities for Americans, despite economic hard times, according to a new survey.

And, the survey said, religious affiliation has a direct impact on giving. People who identify themselves as religious and who regularly attend church are the most generous donors of money and time.

The biennial survey on giving and volunteering was conducted by the Gallup Organization for Independent Sector, a non-profit coalition with more than 800 member groups.

Despite the current recession, only a small number of respondents stopped or limited their giving, the survey noted. Seventy-two percent of American households surveyed reported making contributions in 1991, compared to 75 percent in 1989. The average household contribution of \$899 was down slightly from \$978 in 1989.

Fifty-one percent of the respondents volunteered in 1991, dropping slightly from 54 percent in 1989. Volunteers gave approximately 20.5 billion hours in 1991.

Eighty-seven percent of respondents reported a religious affiliation, while 11 percent reported none. Nearly 75 percent of respondents with a religious affiliation reported contributing 2.3 percent of their average household income. Fifty-three percent with a religious affiliation reported volunteering 4.2 hours a week.

Bryson named consultant at Sunday School Board

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—Harold T. Bryson, chairman of pastoral ministries at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, will become a consultant for preaching-worship at the Baptist Sunday School Board Jan. 15.

Bryson joined New Orleans Seminary in 1976 where he was the J.D. Grey Professor of Preaching. He has written several Convention Press books on preaching, Bible study and evangelism.

Bryson is a graduate of New Orleans Seminary with bachelor of divinity, master of theology and doctor of theology degrees. He earned a bachelor of arts degree from Mississippi College. Before joining the faculty of New Orleans Seminary, Bryson was pastor of several Mississippi churches.

Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine, Inc.
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