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January 16, 1992

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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Arkansas Baptist



Vol. 91, No. 2

January 16, 1992



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Conflict in the family can be a most destructive force if it is allowed to fester and develop unchecked. Or, it can be used to develop the family relationship to a deeper, more meaningful level if worked through in a creative way.

10 Conway First lost to fire

Conway First Church, a historic landmark was gutted by fire in the early morning hours of Saturday, Jan. 4. The structure, first dedicated in 1910, was valued at approximately \$1.5 million, had undergone a \$90,000 renovation in the summer of 1991.

12 Two administrators step down

The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's two top administrators for work in Europe have stepped down, saying they can no longer represent the agency because of what they term the trustees' "global agenda" to enforce theological orthodoxy overseas. Isam Ballenger, vice-president for Europe, the Middle East and North Africa and G. Keith Parker, area director for Europe announced their early retirement effective May 31 and July 1, respectively.

15 Householder announces retirement

Lloyd Householder, assistant vice president for communication at the Baptist Sunday School Board, has announced his retirement, effective Feb. 1. Householder, 62, a 32-year employee of the board, also is chief of the Sunday School Board bureau of Baptist Press.

COOPERATIVE PROGRAM INFORMATION **HOT LINE**

Toll-Free Telephone Number (800) 722-9407
January 2 through March 31, 1992
9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Monday - Friday
Stewardship Commission, SBC

Cover story

SBC Christian Life Commission photo



Let us reason together

Race Relations Sunday, Feb. 9, emphasized Isaiah 1:18, "Come now, let us reason together," as strategy to achieve a community formed from many parts.

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Purpose of worship

J. EVERETT SNEED

There are many who, by their actions, say they have no need for worship. Some who claim to be Christians say, "I can worship just as well at home watching TV." Or "I can worship God just as well fishing as I can at church." Both the Bible and practical experience refute the validity of these statements. The fact is that public worship is essential for the well being of any Christian.

The writer of Hebrews admonishes, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhort one another: so much the more, as you see the day approaching" (He. 10:25). Obviously, there are some to whom the author of the book of Hebrews was writing who had abandoned the habit of worshipping together. These people considered themselves to be Christians, yet they no longer met with God's people on God's day.

There are three reasons which could cause a person to abandon public worship. The first may be fear. He might be ashamed for people with whom he lives and works to see him joining with other Christians in worship. His loyalty to Christ might be so weak that he cannot withstand the jeers and laughter of friends. Even if the sermon is poor and the worship experience inadequate, attending church still gives the person the best opportunity to show men that he is on God's side.

A person might fail to attend worship because he deems himself superior to others in the church. He might be in a church where the social status of the membership has come down. Since there is the influence of "common people" he might no longer attend. We must remember that there is no such thing as a "common" man in the sight of God. Christ died for all men.

Finally, he may believe that he does not need the church. As bad as social snobbery is, spiritual snobbery and foolishness is far worse. There is no person who can live a victorious life without the corporate worship experience. In worship, we not only receive the blessings of God, we can also contribute our lives to him.

The impact of worship is illustrated by an experience told by D.L. Moody, who attempted to persuade a leading citizen of Chicago to accept Christ. They were seated in the man's parlor. The man insisted that



he could be just as good as any Christian outside of the church as in it. Moody made no response but stepped to the fireplace, took the tongs, picked up a blazing coal from the fire and set it off by its side. In silence the two men watched it smolder and go out. "I see," said the man.

Every Christian needs the fellowship which is available in the corporate worship experience. The word "fellowship" carries with it the idea of "partnership." The partnership is a two way relationship with God and with one's fellow Christians.

Worship made a difference in the life of the prophet Isaiah. During worship God revealed to him God's position and person. When Isaiah saw God as he really is, he saw his own need for God and received cleansing. After finding a right relationship with God, Isaiah was ready to volunteer for the task which God had for him. It is likely that Isaiah would never have become the prophet that God needed him to be apart from this worship experience.

Worship, also, is important to encourage one another. If we are to accomplish what God would have us to do, it is essential that there be comrades in the church who will provide inspiration and hope when things seem to be dragging. Individuals with this type of positive attitude can mean much in the life of a church.

Many are defeated in Christian life because they have abandon the assembling, where they can't see the shining examples of dedicated men and women who hold fast to their faith and live their lives in the splendor and courage of Christ himself. Corporate worship allows for individuals to have opportunities to know what God is doing in the lives of others.

An essential of public worship is the experience of "proclaiming of the word of God." It is necessary for Christians to hear the ageless message God provides for them. As one hears, believes and depends on the word of God, he prepares for the problems which confront him in day by day living. Corporate worship provides for this experience.

Our motivation for Christian service is found in the inspiration of worship. We have yet to see a great supporter of missions and evangelism who fails to participate regularly in public worship. Much of a Christian's strength will always be found in the corporate worship experience.

The final appeal for the necessity of corporate worship is found in the phrase, "As you see the day approaching." Obviously, the writer of Hebrews is referring to the second coming of Christ. He is reminding his readers that everyone will ultimately be evaluated for his service on earth. The lost man will be eternally separated because of his failure to accept Christ. The saved individual will be rewarded for his service or lack of service during his earthly life.

We find purpose through the ministry of Christ, which is discovered in worship. Christ said, "... But whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister" (Mt. 20:27). In public worship we can discover how to minister and, thus, give true greatness to our lives.

Arkansas Baptist

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DON MOORE

You'll Be Glad To Know



What is most urgent as we move into this new year? Who is to say? Jesus said, "Men ought always to pray and not faint." Real prayer warriors in the Bible are usually reported as praying "day and night." Often fasting and tears were associated with their praying. This may be our most urgent need.

For many years the Sunday School Board, our mission boards, WMU and Brotherhood have been trying to get Southern Baptists to pray. Bold Mission Thrust has had a prayer strategy. We have worked three years enlisting and promoting the Bold Mission Prayer Thrust in our associations and churches.

Yet another call has come. Morris Chapman, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, has called for the formation of the "Watchman National Prayer Alert." It is based on Isaiah 62:6-7. It calls for a church to agree to take an assigned hour each week to pray for revival and spiritual awakening in the world. The church will enlist the people to pray as groups or as individuals at the church or at home during that hour. The local church leader will have received a call from the church who has the hour preceding their hour, and at the close of the hour will call the church which will take the following hour. A monthly publication will make known special requests, answers to prayer, inspirational teachings and guidance in prayer.

Our infinite God is accessed through prayer. His Son urged us to pray. The options, he said, were to "pray or faint." He prayed. He committed the Holy Spirit to help us pray. His cleansing sacrifice opened the way for us to approach almighty God. A mass movement of prayer is needed by our world.

If there is to be a revival of true Christian faith, it will come in answer to prayer. Will it be yours or someone else's? I urge you and your church to enlist now in Watchman National Prayer Alert or the Bold Mission Prayer Thrust. Please write me at P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203 for more information.

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

RACE RELATIONS SUNDAY FEB. 9

Let us reason together

"Come now, let us reason together"
(Is. 1:18).

The browning of America is well under way.

Demographic studies show that 40 percent of elementary and secondary school children in New York State are members of an ethnic minority. Fifty-one percent of the school children in California trace their heritage to African, Asian or Hispanic roots. In one California city, more people with the last name of Nguyen are listed in the telephone book than people with the name Jones. Today, one of four Americans is nonwhite.

Early in the 21st century, American will be far less white. A child born in 1992 will grow up in a nation landscaped with all the varieties of ethnic and racial groups within God's human garden.

What will be our national response to these surging demographic trends?

One possible answer is that the present resurgence of racism will intensify. Racial and ethnic supremacy groups will multiply. Neighborhood walls will go up. Parents will flee with their school-age children into cultural ghettos. Churches will remain bastions of one racial group or another.

A second possible answer is that ethnic and racial groups will, for the most part, peacefully coexist with occasional outbursts of hostility.

The third possibility is that the nation will take to heart the creed on its currency. The Latin phrase, *E Pluribus Unum*, "one formed from many," is an uplifting vision.

Christians can play a vital role in achieving the third response. We confess that God is our creator (Ge. 1), that Christ has broken down the wall of hostility that divides us (Ep. 2:13-16), that the gospel is for all nations (Mt. 28: 19-20), that God shows no partiality (Acts 10:24-25) and that the early church was composed of a host of ethnic and racial groups (Acts 2). Our faith provides the framework for interracial, interethnic and intercultural interaction.

Isaiah 1:18 brings into sharp focus what we need to do to achieve such an ambitious goal. Isaiah offers us a two-part strategy. First, we must "come . . . together." We need to begin meeting together in forums, at churches and on playgrounds. Association must replace isolation.

Second, we must "reason together." The word "reason" means to correct one another. Indeed, we Christians, from different heritages and experiences, must sit down with one another and thoroughly

discuss our differences. Mutual instruction can uncover misunderstandings, shatter prejudice, expose unwarranted fears and lead to broad avenues of agreement. Dialogue is always better than either monologue or separation within the body of Christ.

On Race Relations Sunday 1992, view Isaiah 1:18 as a strategy to achieve a community formed from many. Let us not just worship together. Let us come together in Christ and talk about our fears and hopes. Let us learn from, and about, each other. Let us model the love of Christ in our love for each other.

(This theme interpretation was produced by the SBC Christian Life Commission.)

Classifieds

Indianapolis Convention Packages—Airfare/Little Rock, hotel accommodations, transfers, shuttle, breakfasts. Sunday to Thursday; from \$270/person. Christian Travelers 1-800-624-2947. 1/30

For Sale—1982 Ford bus, 22 passenger, excellent condition. Priced to sell. 982-1519. 1/30

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Wanted—Part-time minister to children. Send resume to: First Baptist Church, Personnel Committee, P.O. Box 525, Clarksville, AR 72830. 1/16

For Sale—1964 Suburban flexible 49 passenger bus. Has a rebuilt Detroit engine; safety brakes, new upholstery. Contact Bob Shelton, Alma First Baptist Church, 501-632-2020. 1/16

Classified ads must be submitted in writing to the ABN office no less than 10 days prior to the date of publication desired. A check or money order in the proper amount, figured at 90 cents per word, must be included. Multiple insertions of the same ad must be paid for in advance. The ABN reserves the right to reject any ad because of unsuitable subject matter. Classified ads will be inserted on a space-available basis. No endorsement by the ABN is implied.

Letters to the Editor

How we do it?

Recently our church was commended by our state convention for being the highest in percentage giving for churches over 1,000 in membership. This is indeed a great honor for us.

Our church gives 30 percent of our undesignated receipts to the Cooperative Program, and five percent to our association. We will give a combined total of \$230,000 during 1991. This, we would agree, is a considerable amount, but the church did this despite a \$422,000 remodeling effort we entered into 17 months ago, and we only owe \$50,000 toward this endeavor. We also called a full-time youth minister and hired an administrative secretary, which have added a strain to the budget, but we have been able to meet our commitment to mission giving.

Want to know how we do it? First, a commitment was made many years ago by our people to give "generously" of their budget to the mission efforts of our convention. I would not be so naive as to believe that every person in our church agrees with the amount we give, but even though they disagree, they still support what the majority has decided is God's will for our church. Second, our people understand what "generous" means. During 1991 we have had many needs: \$10,000 for asbestos removal, the acquisition of additional parking needs, \$4,000 to remodel our choir facilities, and \$1,500 for the or-

chestra to perform during our Christmas pageant. All of these needs were met by people who "gave" to see these things accomplished. Our people see generosity almost every week in our church.

I am writing this letter, not only to commend our church, but to encourage all the other churches in our convention to give "generously" to our mission efforts. With Russia and Europe opening up to the Gospel, money is greatly needed to fund the proposed efforts to evangelize these areas, and without our support, Southern Baptists will not be a factor in evangelizing the world. I guess I would close by saying this, "If we can do it, so can you!"—**David Newberry, Crossett**

Ruschlikon's reputation

I am an Arkansas pastor. I love missions. My church gives to the Cooperative Program. I believe that God has called me to missions. I have no axe to grind. I would, however, like to report what I have seen and heard.

Recently, I went on a mission trip to Romania. I stayed in the home of a godly Romanian Baptist pastor in Bucharest. Without telling him my opinion, I asked him what he thought of the seminary in Ruschlikon. He said that he thought it was a rotten school due to its liberalism. I told him that we had been helping the seminary financially, and he was aghast. I then told him that the Board was defunding the seminary. He threw his hands up in the air, and said, "Praise the Lord."

I learned first-hand that we will not lose our credibility with every European Baptist by defunding Ruschlikon. In fact, given the school's reputation I got the idea that continuing to fund it would be more detrimental!

I know that the fraternal relationship with the Baptist Unions in Europe are indeed important. However, it would be a more biblical attitude to say to European Baptists that we love them too much to continue to support any institution that is a source of academic poison. When Paul saw Peter's hypocrisy (Ga. 2:11ff), his response was governed more by a desire to protect the gospel than to protect their relationship; and it seems that God in his grace preserved both (2 P. 3:15). Let us pray that whatever the Board decides, it will be based upon the fear of the Lord and not the fear of man.—**Preston Pearce, Batesville**

Looking Ahead

January

- 16 Baptist Joint Committee, Baptist Building, Little Rock
- 16-17 Minister/Mate Marriage Enrichment Retreat, Mountain Home First Church (DT)
- 16-17 Minister/Mate Marriage Enrichment Retreat, Hot Springs First Church, Hot Springs (DT)
- 17 Baptist Building Banquet (Ad)
- 17-18 Minister/Mate Marriage Enrichment Retreat, El Dorado Immanuel Church (DT)
- 17-18 Minister/Mate Marriage Enrichment Retreat, Little Rock Parkway Place Church (DT)
- 18 CP Supporter Training, Brinkley First Church (Ad)
- 19 Sanctity of Human Life Sunday (SBC)
- 23-24 Burnout: Managing Self in Ministry, Camp Paron, Paron (CLS)
- 26 Baptist Men's Day (SBC)
- 27 Baptist Doctrine Study Preview, Little Rock Geyer Springs First Church (DT)
- 27-28 State Evangelism Conference, Little Rock Geyer Springs First Church (Ev)
- 28 State Bi-Vocational Pastors' and Wives Dinner, Little Rock Geyer Springs First Church (CLS)
- 29-31 BSU Director's Conference, St. John's Seminary, Little Rock (BSU)

February

- 2 Associational Hymn Sings (M)
- 2 Baptist World Alliance Sunday (SBC)
- 4 State SMC Committee Meeting, Baptist Building, Little Rock (Ad)
- 4-5 At Home Days (Ad)
- 6 National and SBC Fellowships, North Little Rock St. Peter's Baptist Church (NB)
- 7 Associational Dialogue Session, Batesville First Church (Ad)

Abbreviations:

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

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Solving family conflict

Second in a three-part series on family relationships

by Larry Henderson
Special to the Arkansas Baptist

In a recent conversation with a police officer, I asked what he thought the toughest part of his job was. He responded by listing several things he did not like about the work to include dealing with drunken drivers, highway deaths, hit and run accidents, etc. When I asked what he feared the most, he quickly answered that the family disturbance call was the most stressful.

When a family is experiencing conflict, anyone who attempts to intervene is stepping into harm's way. The policeman informed me that more law officers are hurt in family disturbance calls than in any other type of police duty. Often they find themselves being attacked by family members when the police attempt to arrest the person creating the disturbance.

As you listen to any newscast on radio or television, it is rare that you do not hear a report of at least one person being shot or stabbed per broadcast. What is going on in our society? Are we becoming a nation of people who settle all disagreements with violence? What can a Christian do to resolve conflict before it gets out of hand and results in a violent act?

The first family in the Bible experienced violence and the death of a young man at the hands of his brother. The Cain and Abel story shows us that family conflict is not a new trend. Reading the life of David illustrates how families experience conflict in a variety of ways. David's own son, Absalom, is a good example of a family member who thought violence was the answer to his own needs.

Conflict in the family can be a most destructive force if it is allowed to fester and develop unchecked. Or, it can be used to develop the family relationship to a deeper, more meaningful level if worked through in a creative way. It is important to take a look at some of the potential areas of conflict within a family. Then we will review methods for handling it in a positive manner.

Communication is often a source for conflict. A family member may become offended when spoken to in a certain manner. The intent of what is said is important. Sometimes, the voice tone used can create hard feelings. The message, to whom it is directed, and how it is stated are all important. Many conflicts can arise over misunderstandings that come from these sources.



Simple conflict resolution techniques can allow each family member's integrity to remain intact.

Varied role expectations may cause conflict within the family. The husband or wife may have certain ideas of what their spouse ought to be. Maybe these roles have never been discussed. It could be they have been raised as issues of concern but have never been resolved. This is sure to cause conflict until the matter is discussed and resolved.

Usually roles are more important to men than women. Young boys are taught to be assertive and not give in to someone else's demands while young girls are often taught to give in and be "nice."

Sexual concerns are sources of conflict. Teenagers being involved in sexual behavior causes family tensions to rise. An unfaithful spouse's behavior can bring a disease into a relationship that could be fatal to a faithful marriage partner.

Money is always a potential source of conflict. The priorities of the family and who sets them are important. The organization of money and the type of budget to be used can be difficult to resolve.

In-law problems can create much tension in the life of a family. Failure to break ties with a father and mother and living too close to relatives can be sources of problems. Interference of relatives into the child rearing efforts of a family can have disastrous results for everyone involved. Problems can also arise when one family does not accept the spouse chosen by their family member.

Children can create conflict in a family. Children do not cement a marriage and the couple who believes that are headed for trouble. Children do not promote stability in marriage but they may lengthen it. They add new burdens and stresses. If the marriage is not solid when children arrive, conflict can be a result.

One marriage counselor noted that the highest divorce rate he saw was when couples were three years into marriage. The second highest divorce rate he noticed was three years after the last child left home.

With all these potential sources of conflict, what are we supposed to do to have good, solid Christian homes? The Bible gives us some specific information about handling emotions and conflict situations.

Anger is often a great source of conflict in the family. Ephesians 4: 20-32 gives very specific instructions on how to handle anger. Be angry, sin not, don't let the sun go down on your anger, don't give the devil an opportunity, and don't grieve the Holy Spirit of God is excellent advice. Matthew (18: 15-17) tells us to attempt to talk over conflicts with others. If that doesn't work, continue to work to resolve it but get help from others.

In *Psychodynamics of Family Life*, Nathan Ackerman identifies at least four ways that families deal with conflict. First, some families just disorganize and disintegrate. Second,

some families act out by scape-goating individuals or physical illnesses appear. Third, some families contain the conflict but do not resolve it. They keep it out of the public view while attempting to work on it or they just deny it exists. This usually does not work for long. Fourth, families may confront the conflict and work out a solution. This means that individuals may have to change personally, but they are willing to do so.

In successful family conflict resolution common factors are present. There is a sense of give and take on the part of all persons involved. All persons are sensitive to the emotional needs of other family members. Everyone's self image is supported. Attention is given by everyone concerned to methods that will reduce anxiety for each other.

George Bach, in *The Intimate Enemy*, deals with conflict in marriage. His observations apply to family life as well. He notes that "dirty fighting" is often used by a spouse. The four methods of dirty fighting are as follows: (1) The Cold War Approach is

where couples refuse to argue or have a relationship. (2) The Sniper War is where one person waits until the other is out in the open and then takes a shot. Public ridicule often disguised as humor is a deadly attack. Snipers tend to get angry when someone fires back.

(3) The Propaganda War is where name calling, mud-slinging, and the game of "bring up the past" are all used to humiliate a partner. (4) The Atomic War is where each person tries to drop a larger emotional bomb than the other. Escalation is usually characteristic of this type fighting. Both parties suffer from the fallout.

Bach identifies six rules for "fair fighting" that we can use to enhance family relationships and deal positively with conflict. (1) Get the problem out in the open. Discuss it and do not avoid it. (2) Stay on the subject. It is not appropriate to bring up several other unresolved issues at the same time. (3) Fight the problem, but not the person. This is not easy because the problem may be hard to define while the person is standing in front of you. (4) Stick to the facts, not opinions. (5)

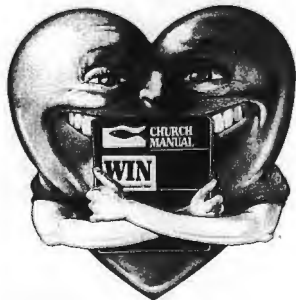
When a problem seems too difficult to resolve, get a referee—a trained person—to help. (6) Clarify solutions. Get all persons involved to identify the solutions and agree to them.

When these simple steps are followed it can allow family conflicts to be resolved. They allow the integrity of everyone to remain intact. Mutual respect is gained and the family is a place of comfort and support.

God gave us the institution of the family for protection, growth, care, support, education, love, and community. As we learn to handle family conflict wisely and appropriately, we're moving in the direction of God's plan for our lives.

Larry Henderson, D.Min., is a pastoral counselor who deals with marriage, family and individual needs and is on the allied staff at Rivendell Psychiatric Hospital. He is endorsed by the SBC Home Mission Board for his counseling work and as a chaplain in the Army National Guard. He also works with the ACTS television series "Just Kids."

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People

A.B. Hicks is serving as interim pastor of Reynolds Memorial Church, Little Rock.

Ross Woodbury is serving as pastor of First Church of Smackover.

Kea Blackwood, who has been serving as interim pastor of First Church of Marvell, is serving as pastor.

Bryan Webb is serving as pastor of First Church of Centerton.

R.V. Haygood has resigned as pastor of First Church of Garfield.

Al Fowler is serving as pastor of First Church of Pea Ridge.

Tommy Poplin is serving as pastor of Hickory Creek Church, Springdale.

Ed F. McDonald is serving as interim pastor of Lakeshore Drive Church in Little Rock.

Troy Gramling, pastor of Mount Zion Church, Paragould, was ordained to the ministry Dec. 1.

Buz Brown is serving as pastor of Pleasant Valley Church, Shirley.

Eugene Ryan is serving as pastor of Scotland Church.

Mr. and Mrs. Mason Bondurant left Jan. 2 to serve for six months as volunteers in West Africa. Bondurant, who has been serving as interim pastor of Indianhead Lake Church in North Little Rock, will serve as pastor of International Baptist Church in Dakar, Senegal, while Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Taylor of Arkansas are furloughing. The Bondurants may be contacted by writing Mission Baptiste, SBC, BP 8417 Koff, Dakar Senegal, West Africa.

Ron Stone has joined the staff of Matthews Memorial Church in Pine Bluff as music and youth director.

Sharon Groves has joined the staff of Nettleton Church in Jonesboro as director of preschool ministries.

Richard Wentz has joined the staff of First Church in White Hall as minister of music and youth.

Milton L. Wilson resigned Dec. 15 as pastor of Temple Church of Crosett, following more than seven years of service. He and his family have moved to Jonesboro.

Dennis Betts is serving as pastor of Buie Church, Prattsville.

Eddie Elrod is serving as pastor of Calvary Chapel, Central Association.

Jennifer Madlock has joined the staff of Hilldale Church in Central Association as part-time youth director. A native of Hope, she is a freshman at Ouachita Baptist University.

Church Lamar is serving as youth director at North Main Church, Sheridan.

Briefly

Magnet Cover First Southern Church has purchased property that includes a two-bedroom house which the church will use for youth Sunday School activities. They also have purchased a 15-passenger bus for outreach ministries.

Pleasant Hill Church at Bauxite has voted to give leadership to the church-type activities at Dixonville Baptist Center, including Sunday School, vacation Bible school, and baptisms.

Crosssett Temple Church recently ordained Steve McDaniel and Robert Jones to the deacon ministry.

Photo / Jim Veneman



New Hope Church at Hardy recently celebrated payment of a \$15,000 indebtedness on its educational building. Money for the building, which houses all but two adult Sunday School classes, was borrowed in June 1990 from the ABSC Missions Department Building Loan Fund. The building, erected by the men and women of the church, was first used on Easter Sunday 1990. Pictured are (left to right) Pastor Lendol Jackson, Russell Bassham, Bill Davenport, Jim Smith, Jerred Bassham, and N.L. Harvey.



The officers of the Arkansas Evangelism Association held a meeting during the annual Evangelism Workshop at Camp Paron on Dec. 12. Pictured are Tom Cox, president of the association; Shelby Blittle, vice-president; Paul McClung, advisor to the association and associate director of the ABSC Evangelism Department; and Clarence Shell, ABSC Evangelism Department. Not pictured is Johnny Jackson, secretary/treasurer of the Evangelism Association.

Fayetteville Ridgeview Church will conduct a commissioning service Jan. 26 for an Arkansas mission team that will leave Los Angeles, Calif., along with 52 other team members on Feb. 5 for Bangalore, India. Jason Lee, a Southern Baptist missionary at the Baptist Hospital in Bangalore, will be speaker. Arkansans commissioned will be Mr. and Mrs. Tom Cox of Mountainburg, Ted Duke of Fayetteville, Roy Biswell of Winslow, and Kathy Brown of Van Buren.

Friendship Church in Conway held a revival Dec. 15-18, led by Evangelist William Blackburn of Fort Smith and Music Director Johnny Harp of Conway. Pastor Gary Thomas reported 56 professions of faith, 44 rededications, and 31 baptisms.

Rogers Immanuel Church is sponsoring a new ministry, "Restoring the Wounded Soul," a support group for women who are survivors of childhood sexual, emotional or physical abuse.

Dardanelle First Church ordained Steve Harrington, Gary Moore, and Dee McCormick to the deacon ministry Dec. 15. Jesse Reed, retired ABCS Evangelism director, was speaker. Robert Parsley is pastor.

Blytheville First Church ordained John Roden Jr. to the deacon ministry Jan. 5.

Sugarloaf Church celebrated its debt retirement with a noteburning service Jan. 5. Jack Ramsey, ABCS Church Extension director, was speaker. Also on Jan. 5 Kyle Blanton was ordained to the ministry with David Miller, director of Little Red River Association, delivering the ordination message. Bill Williams presented special music.

Geyer Springs First Church in Little Rock will host Steve Green in concert on Jan. 21 at 7 p.m. For more information, call the church at 565-3474.

Arkansas NOBTS alumni elect officers

Arkansas alumni of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary recently elected Kenneth Blackwell of El Dorado, as president; Jerry Mixon of Hot Springs, as president-elect; and Bob Stagg of Arkadelphia, as secretary of their state NOBTS Alumni Association.

Correction

The photo caption on page 8 in the Dec. 19, 1991 ABN should have reported the location of Mount Zion Church as between Greenwood and Hackett on county road 51. The ABN regrets the error.

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Historic Conway First Church was destroyed by fire Jan. 4.

Conway First lost to fire

Conway First Church, a historic landmark, was gutted by fire in the early morning hours of Saturday, Jan. 4. The next day, the congregation already was meeting to worship, showing the spirit of the church that was started in 1871.

The fire, determined to be caused by "superheating" of either the heating system or the baptistry, consumed all of the main sanctuary building. Even though the fire department arrived almost immediately, the building was a total loss due to an explosion, possibly a "backdraft," which escalated the destruction. The structure, first dedicated in 1910, was valued at approximately \$1.5 million, and had undergone a \$90,000 renovation in the summer of 1991. The education building

suffered only water damage, and Sunday School was held on the premises.

Church members, meeting in nearby Central Baptist College, although grieved over the loss of the historic structure, tried to look to the future. "We're trying to look at this as an open door; a chance to do something different and new," Pastor Dale Wicker Jr. said. In the worship service, Wicker said, "We praised God and we are thankful for what the building meant to us and to our city, but also we are grateful for the future. No one was injured; it is just a building, not a clubhouse. We're not a club, we're a church. We're going to be stronger and better than ever and likely will be able to focus attention better on our purpose and mission than ever before."

What people will miss the most about the old structure, Wicker commented, are the six large beautiful stained glass windows, and a series of smaller stained glass pieces, that are irreplaceable. Even though adequately covered by insurance, the church also lost all of its television equipment.

Building plans for the future are as yet undetermined, Wicker said, as the church's "master plan" had called for some changes in function for the structure. "We are in a better position than a lot of churches are when this kind of thing happens, because we had a group of people who had already been thinking about it, working on it, praying about it, and examining our needs."

Wicker also expressed gratitude to the fire department and Central Baptist College, a Missionary Baptist institution, for its graciousness in allowing the use of its facilities. He felt like the spirit of the church was shown by the fact several decisions were made the day after the fire, while the congregation was worshipping in the college auditorium.

Bunch observes 50th anniversary

Carl Bunch observed the 50th anniversary of his ordination to the ministry Dec. 21 when the Caddo River Association, where he serves as director of missions, presented him with a commemorative plaque.

Bunch was ordained to the ministry by Brinkley's Chapel Church of Osceola and his brother, Roy Bunch, was ordained by Well's Chapel Church in the same service.

Bunch has spent almost 38 years in Baptist associational work, including 10 years with the Caddo River Association, Mount Ida, and more than 27 years with Mount Zion Association, Jonesboro.

He and his wife, Alice, have six children.

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STATE EVANGELISM CONFERENCE

Building God's Family

by Clarence Shell

Director, ARBC Evangelism Dept.

The State Evangelism Conference will build its program around the theme, "Building God's Family." We will be considering the foundation and the structure of this family. The conference will meet on Jan. 27-28 at 1:30 p.m. with the Geyer Springs First Church, Little Rock. The five session themes will be: "Building the Home Family," "Building God's Church Family," "Building the Arkansas Baptist Family," "Building the Family of Friends," and "Building the Southern Baptist Convention Family."

We have several out-of-state program personnel who are outstanding speakers. Stephen Olford, president of Encounter Ministries, from Memphis, Tenn., will speak on the following subjects: "Home: God's Basic Ordained Institution," "Building Upon the Word of God," and a message of his choosing. Joel Gregory, pastor of First Church, Dallas, will speak three times. Gregory will speak Monday evening on "The Evangelistic Church" and will share two other messages of his choosing. Jimmy Draper, president of the Sunday School Board, Nashville, Tenn., will share the closing message on Monday afternoon, "The Sunday School Committed to Evangelizing the Family." Ron Barker, Home Mission Board, Atlanta, Ga., will speak on "Building Witnessing Relationships" and "The Witness of the Lalt." Henry Webb, Sunday School Board, Nashville, Tenn., will do the doctrinal study for the Discipleship Training at 4:30 Monday afternoon. He also will be speaking on "Closing the Evangelistic Back Door" in the main conference. Wayne Bristow, director of evangelism in Oklahoma, will speak on "The Commitment of the Pastor to Evangelism" and share a message of his own choosing. Mor-

ris Chapman, president of the Southern Baptist Convention and pastor of First Church, Wichita Falls, Texas, will share the closing message of the Evangelism Conference on Tuesday evening.

There will be several features that contribute to the success of the Evangelism Conference. Madeline Jones, a Christian concert artist and composer from Longview, Texas, will be featured in our special music. Madeline will be singing in each of the sessions and share with a concert on Monday evening.

The vocational evangelists of Arkansas, under the leadership of their president, Tom Cox, will be sharing in a banquet at 5:30 p.m. Monday. L. B. Jordan, director of Church Leadership Support, will be meeting in a Bivocational Fellowship with bivocational pastors at the close of the message on Tuesday afternoon. The officers of this group will be introduced and all bivocational pastors and wives recognized at the beginning of the session on Tuesday evening. There will be a recognition and expression of appreciation of the top 25 churches in baptisms, both in ratio and number in the Tuesday evening session.

We have several outstanding in-state speakers who will contribute to the conference. Jim McDaniel, pastor of First Church, Brinkley, will be speaking on "Evangelizing to the Second and Third Generations." Mark Tolbert, pastor of Wynne Church, will speak on "The Invitation." Jimmy Barrentine, director of Missions Department, will speak on "Building Upon Missions." Rick Caldwell, well known youth communicator and member of Geyer Springs First Church, will speak on "Evangelizing the Youth."

One of our high moments consistently in our Evangelism Conference is during testimony time. Pam Veteto, pastor's wife at Gravel Ridge First Church, will share a testimony on "God's Grace is Sufficient." Billy Blackmon, pastor of the Greater St. Paul Church in Hot Springs, will share a testimony on the "Lay Evangelism School." Glen McGriff, director of Crisis Support, will share a testimony on his "Personal Journey."

We are assured of having an outstanding music program under the leadership of Lester McCullough, director of the Church Music Department. The following groups and musicians will be featured in special music: "The Morning Glories" of First Church, Benton; Clarence Hill, evangelistic singer, Hot Springs; The All State Youth Choir; Geyer Springs First Church Choir; Sandra Hitt, Arkadelphia; Richard Wentz, White Hall; Stephen Edds, First Church, Sheridan; The MasterSingers and Singing Women. Accompanists are Jeff Bennett and Cindy Spicer.



Olford



Gregory

Acteens panel chosen

Four teenage girls have been selected to serve on the 1991-92 Arkansas Acteens Advisory Panel. The panelists will be available to speak at associational and local church Acteens activities. Also, the panelists will help plan the statewide Acteens Encounter program and speak at the Arkansas WMU Annual Meeting.

Chosen by the state Acteens Committee were Nelah Albaugh of Hot Springs Second Church, Angela Galucki of Cabot Second Church, Wendy Hoag of Batesville West

Church and Jessica Thompson of Gurdon Beech Street Church. Selected as alternate was Monica Thompson of Searcy Temple Church.

Acteens is the missions organization of Woman's Missionary Union for girls in grades 7-12. There are 2,000 girls involved in Acteens organizations in Arkansas and more than 100,000 in Acteens nationwide. Acteens seeks to help girls grow spiritually through Bible study, prayer, witnessing and "hands on" missions experiences.



Albaugh



Galucki



Hoag



Thompson

FOREIGN MISSION BOARD

Two administrators step down

by Robert O'Brien
SBC Foreign Mission Board

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's two top administrators for work in Europe have stepped down, saying they can no longer represent the agency because of what they term the trustees' "global agenda" to enforce theological orthodoxy overseas.

Isam Ballenger, vice president for Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, and G. Keith Parker, area director for Europe, announced their early retirement effective May 31 and July 1, respectively. Ballenger, 56, and Parker, 55, said at a Jan. 7 news conference they have made no decisions about future plans, although they will weigh possible options.

FMB President R. Keith Parks praised the two veterans of foreign missions for their integrity and commitment to missions and said "losing them, at this crucial time of opportunity... is an incalculable loss" to missions.

Ballenger said "the events of October and December 1991, brought clearly into focus the chasm between the trustees and me." He referred to votes Oct. 9 and Dec. 11 by FMB trustees to defund \$365,000 promised to the 1992 budget of the Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland.

Both men indicated later the Ruschlikon votes, which touched off widespread con-

troversy in Europe and the United States, represented the "last straw" in their growing dissatisfaction with the trustees' philosophy of foreign missions.

However, both said they would not go so far as to discourage interested Southern Baptists from seeking missionary appointment. They suggested missionary candidates continue with the process until they see they cannot do so.

But they made their own disagreements with trustees clear, while noting appreciation for some trustees' approach to missions.

"With the (majority of) trustees... the situation has changed slowly but drastically over the last months, so that working with any sense of missiological purpose or personal integrity has become impossible," said Parker, a 23-year veteran of missions.

Trustees are shifting to using money and power as a method to control Baptist bodies overseas and to enforce theological orthodoxy and are ignoring the diversity and autonomy of European Baptists, he

charged.

"Granted, it was appropriately said no one will be forced to agree with us, but to get our money they must agree on the 'basics,'" Parker said. "What does that do, however, to those many tiny, poor unions who need our help and to their individual churches who may be told they must agree locally to whatever we Americans prescribe as 'basic' so they can get out of debt or build a church building? Is this the way to do missions? Is this trust?"

The trust between Southern Baptists and Europeans, built over many years, "is being destroyed and will profoundly affect mission outreach and ongoing work within Europe for generations," he said. "The urgent appeal of the European (Baptist) leaders was to talk about partnership as (being) built on trust, not about money. That point seemed to be missed totally (by the trustees) in putting conditions of control on the offered restoring of money."

He also claimed the previous stance of trustees to serve all Southern Baptists is "being radically changed" to an approach that indicates "only 'inerrantists' should hold staff positions and be appointed as missionaries."

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Convention Uniform

The song of the vineyard

by Carroll Evans, First Church, Hughes

Basic passage: Isaiah 5:1-7

Focal passage: Isaiah 5:7

Central truth: Justice and righteousness characterize the standard of behavior which God always expects from his people.

This song of unrequited love has been called a parable and an allegory. It has characteristics of both, but I prefer to see it as a "Trojan horse" parable where the speaker hides his true intent until the end.

Isaiah may have sung this parable at one of the harvest festivals in Jerusalem. He sings about a friend who had a very fertile vineyard which he carefully cultivated and protected. He had planted the very best vines from the valley of Sorek, renowned for its sweet red grapes, but instead it produced sour wild grapes.

He calls on the people to serve as judge and jury: "what more could have been done for my vineyard . . . (v. 4). They are asked to pronounce judgment upon themselves, for in verse 7 Isaiah declares the meaning of the parable: the owner is the Lord and Israel is the vineyard. Israel is indicted for her failure to respond to God's nurture. The perversion of justice and the absence of righteousness is the burden of the Lord's complaint.

This theme of Israel as a chosen vine which is afterwards rejected is a frequently repeated theme in Scripture (Jr. 2:21; Ex. 15:1-8; Ps. 80:8-18).

In order to understand the standard of justice and righteousness God looks for in his people, Isaiah 5:8-23 should be studied. The six woes pronounced upon Judah reflect the carefree luxury of the time. Property was a major problem. Most of it was owned by a few rich landlords, while it was worked by a great host of peasants. This problem was intensified by the fact that many small farms had been stolen from the poor by illegal land-grabbing activities of the rich. The problem was further exacerbated by the goddess debauchery of the wealthy upper class and their mockery at, and perversion of, the truth. God's judgment fell on Judah for six sins: covetousness (vv. 8-10), carousing (vv. 11-12), mocking God (vv. 18-19), moral depravity (v. 20), conceit (v. 21), and bravado and bribery (vv. 22-23) God had looked for righteousness, but all he found was violence, bloodshed, and oppression.

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Life and Work

Giving God glory

by Stephen G. Hatfield, Baring Cross Church, North Little Rock

Basic passage: Matthew 5:2-16

Focal passage: Matthew 5:3-12

Central truth: Jesus taught us how to relate to God and others.

The next three lessons are based on one of the most significant passages within the Bible: the Sermon on the Mount (Mt. 5-7). As Jesus taught the multitude on the mountain side in Galilee (Mt. 5:1), he described the characteristics of kingdom citizens (Mt. 5:3-12). In these verses, commonly known as the Beatitudes, Jesus clearly presented the way of life which God honors.

Each verse begins with "Blessed are," followed by a description of godly behavior. Some translations use the expression, "Happy are." Do not confuse the "blessing" which God gives to those who obey him with temporary "happiness." God's blessing does not depend on outward circumstances; it is grounded in his faithfulness and providence.

The first four Beatitudes (Mt. 5:3-6) deal with our relationship to God. We bring glory to God when we realize our own spiritual poverty (Mt. 5:3). We honor and bring glory to him when we grieve and mourn over our own sin as well as when we mourn over the loss of loved ones (Mt. 5:4). To be meek (Mt. 5:5) does not mean to be weak. The term is best understood as strength under control. To hunger and thirst after righteousness means to desire, more than anything else, for God's will to be done (Mt. 5:6).

The last five Beatitudes (Mt. 5:7-11) deal with our relationship with others. The merciful (Mt. 5:7) are those who forgive because they know that God has forgiven them. The pure in heart (Mt. 5:8) will see God because they serve him with single minded devotion. Those who promote peace (Mt. 5:9) will receive one of the highest blessings of all: sonship. The last two Beatitudes (Mt. 5:10-12) build upon one another. Some Christians will suffer hardship and ridicule for his sake. But the only kingdom which will last forever belongs to them. The admonition to rejoice and be glad (Mt. 5:12) in such times is possible because Christians recognize that God is in control of their lives.

With God's power in us, we can live like Jesus taught us to live. We will receive God's blessing and bring glory to his name.

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Bible Book

The war on children

by Rex Holt, Central Church, Jonesboro

Basic passage: Genesis 1:28a; Deuteronomy 18:10a; Psalm 139:13-15; Matthew 18:10, 14; Matthew 19:14-15

Focal passage: Matthew 19:14-15

Central truth: We need to learn to love children as Jesus loves children.

"But Jesus said, Suffer little children and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 19:14).

The first 16 years and 11 months of our marriage was childless. The doctors had done everything in their power but our situation was beyond human help. A group of African Christians began on Feb. 6, 1980, to pray for us to have a child. Every service from February to September of 1980 that request was raised to the Father, "Give our pastor and his wife a baby." On May 15, 1981, God answered that prayer and John was born. The Africans gave him his middle name "Mawuli" meaning "God is alive." Since then the Lord has given two daughters Sarah Kafui (Praise Him) and Rebekah Mawumenyo (God is Good). How we love these children that God has given. In order to remove the curse of abortion I believe an important first step is to turn the hearts of fathers to their children. Parents must love and desire children as Jesus loves them. God's first command, "Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth" (Ge. 1:28a) has not been revoked.

Humanistic solutions to our social ills run counter to the heart of our Lord. Children are seen as burdens to be aborted rather than blessings to be accepted. If the fruit of the womb is really God's reward (Ps. 127:3) then many in our society are closing their hearts to God's special blessings. The widespread practice of abortion, permanent sterilization, child abuse and child pornography reveal our society's disdain for children. Children were constantly brought to Jesus so that he might put his hands on them and bless them. The disciples saw them as an inconvenience and interruption. Jesus rebuked the disciples and revealed his deep love for children by giving them his time, his touch and his teaching.

May we love children as Jesus loves children. Then like slavery, abortion will become an inhumane practice of the past.

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LESSONS FOR LIVING

Convention Uniform

A lesson in praying

by Carroll Evans, First Church, Hughes

Basic passage: Matthew 6:7-15

Focal passage: Matthew 6:7-15

Central truth: Prayer should be humble before God and man. It should be concise and simple, centering on God's glory and then addressing human need.

There is nothing unique about the so-called "Lord's Prayer." It was customary for rabbis to teach their disciples how to pray. So the request of Jesus' disciples was quite in line with the practice of the day and the prayer itself bears many similarities to other known rabbinical models. In many ways Jesus was a typical Jewish rabbi who grew out of Jewish soil and was basically Jewish in his approach to teaching.

The lesson begins with a curious admonition concerning the long prayers and repetitious phrases of the Gentiles. "Vain repetition" (v. 7) carries the idea of empty or set phrases, and refers to a type of magic called theurgy which was involved in much of the pagan praying in ancient times.

Jesus said, "Don't pray this way. It is vain and empty." The gist of Jesus' teaching on prayer is that God is not impressed by our long prayers and our repetition of stock phrases. If we are really sincere in our piety, we will serve God without the outward show and the fanfare of play-actors.

The model prayer is easily outlined. It contains three petitions concerning God and three concerning human need, followed by a doxology, undoubtedly added by the early church to fill out the prayer for liturgical use in worship services. This is the consensus of scholarship since the latter part of verse 13 does not occur in the oldest and best manuscripts of the Greek New Testament. It is, however, scriptural, since it is based on David's prayer found in 1 Chronicles 29:11.

The three petitions concerning God's glory involve his name, his kingdom, and his will (vv. 9-10). Man's needs are addressed in verses 11-13 where we are taught to pray for our daily necessities, forgiveness for our sins, and for God's guidance and protection.

On the matter of asking forgiveness, Jesus reminds us that we should never ask God for something we are unwilling to give ourselves. It is simply impossible for an un-forgiving heart to receive forgiveness (vv. 14-15).

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Life and Work

Worry or trust?

by Stephen G. Hatfield, Baring Cross Church, North Little Rock

Basic passage: Matthew 6:25-34

Focal passage: Matthew 6:33-34

Central truth: We can overcome anxiety by placing our trust in God.

Many Christians live lives filled with frustration and anxiety. Jesus taught his followers that living with anxiety and worry, on one hand, or knowing the peace of a stable relationship with God, on the other hand, was a matter of choice. Jesus provided the cure for anxiety: putting first things first.

How can we apply the truths of this passage to our lives? What did Jesus mean when he spoke the words of Matthew 6:25-34? He did not condemn work or suggest that we should be idle and lazy concerning the future. He did condemn anxiety and the lack of faith that comes with fretting over the details of everyday life. Jesus did not condemn money or possessions in this passage. He did warn about the love of such things. When we make money and things our god, then we will be anxious, for one day such things will prove inadequate. Jesus asserted that anxiety would not lengthen one's life, but might actually shorten it (Mt. 6:27).

Jesus taught that we sin when we worry over food, clothing, and even the future. The illustration of the lilies of the field reminds us that God is able to care for all of his creation (Mt. 6:28-31).

Perhaps the most familiar verse of the entire Sermon on the Mount is Matthew 6:33. The word "seek" literally means to "keep on seeking." Putting first things first is a daily choice. When God gave the Ten Commandments to Moses, the first commandment asserted that there were to be no other gods, but God alone (Ex. 20:3).

Many of us think that as long as God is number one, then we are pleasing him and he will bless our lives. But, the meaning of this Old Testament verse does not allow for an ordering of priorities. If God is number one, then that means something else is number two and so on. God does not want to be number one; he desires to be the only priority in our lives. God wants us to leave our anxieties and worries behind. The key to consistent living is choosing to make God's will, not number one on our list, but the only desire of our hearts.

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Bible Book

A non-prophet church

by Rex Holt, Central Church, Jonesboro

Basic passage: Amos 7:1-3, 8-17a

Focal passage: Amos 7:8-17a

Central truth: Leaders must be fervent in their praying and courageous in their convictions.

The lesson today contrasts Amaziah, the spineless puppet priest of Bethel, and Amos the true prophet, of God. Amaziah didn't appreciate at all the plumbline preaching of this country prophet.

Amos had invaded the secure sanctuary of Bethel where Amaziah was priest and Jeroboam II worshipped. Amos preached against materialism, luxury, drinking, bribery, extortion, superficial religion and immorality. The heat was turned up a notch when Amos saw the vision of the plumbline and predicted the destruction of Israel and the death of Jeroboam.

The fierce preaching of the inspired prophet was too much for Amaziah. He reported to the King immediately, "The land is not able to endure his words. Go back home! Preach in Judah but not here. This is the King's church." Thus it was that a faithful prophet was silenced by a hireling priest who sought position and prestige above truth.

Is the church today becoming a non-prophet organization? Are prophets being despised and silenced and ignored? In this passage we find some telling symptoms of a non-prophet church.

(1) The church becomes a non-prophet organization when leaders are lethargic (Am. 7:1-3). Amos was a prophet of passion. He was blunt, direct, courageous and dynamic. He was a man of fervent prayer. He prayed for the people and the Lord repented (Am. 7:3). When preachers stop praying the pulpit loses its power.

(2) The church becomes a non-prophet organization when compromise replaces conviction (Am. 7:8-17). Amaziah was a man of compromise; Amos a man of conviction. The encounter of Amaziah and Amos is classic. The priest had the backing of the King. The prophet had a bold sense of God's backing.

The church must stand true to her calling and convictions. Compromised convictions lead to chaos.

We need to capture the spirit of Luther and the Reformation's leaders, "Here I stand, I can do no other, God help me."

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Householder announces retirement

NASHVILLE (BP)—Lloyd Householder, assistant vice president for communications at the Baptist Sunday School Board, has announced his retirement, effective Feb. 1.

Householder, 62, and a 32-year employee of the board, also is chief of the Sunday School Board bureau of Baptist Press.

"My decision to take early retirement has not come easily," said Householder. "I have been most blessed in my opportunities for many forms of service here in helping the churches and in telling the story of the Sunday School Board. Working with some of God's choicest people has been among the

top rewards. But I know it is time to move on. My prayer is that I will have useful and fulfilling years ahead."

Sunday School Board President Jimmy Draper, who since becoming president in August 1991 has worked with Householder, said his first five months at the board have been greatly eased because of the "skilled and dedicated work of Lloyd Householder. He has done a splendid job in arranging for the many details of the transition in the executive leadership here at the BSSB, and I am deeply grateful. We owe a debt of gratitude to this outstanding Christian journalist. All of us here at the BSSB will join together in praying for him in these days

that lie ahead."

Householder, a native of Tennessee, joined the board in 1960 as church-related vocations counselor. He became manager of the training union department (now discipleship training) in 1968 and assumed his present position in 1977.

Executive Committee search narrows

NASHVILLE (BP)—Southern Baptist Convention President Morris Chapman is the leading candidate to succeed Harold C. Bennett as president/treasurer of the SBC Executive Committee, according to sources close to the search committee.

However, Julian Motley, a pastor from Durham, N.C., and chairman of the Executive Committee's search committee, said a final decision is not expected until later this month. Asked by Baptist Press if Chapman is the committee's choice, Motley said the committee has looked at a number of people but is not ready to make a decision public.

"It is my hope, by the end of the month, we will be able to officially identify the recommendation of the committee," Motley said. The 10-member search committee will make a recommendation to the Feb. 17-19 regular meeting of the Executive Committee.

However, several Executive Committee members, who do not want to be identified, have said Chapman will be the committee's recommendation. Motley said he has been called by a number of reporters regarding the speculation but would neither confirm nor deny the report.

Bennett announced at an Executive Committee meeting in Atlanta in June he would retire Oct. 1, 1992. He would continue as a consultant until Oct. 1, 1993. Bennett, 67, has held the executive position since 1979, only the fourth person to hold that position.

The president/treasurer of the Executive Committee heads a small staff but, as chief executive, helps guide the committee which distributes funds received from state conventions and churches to 19 various SBC agencies and entities. For the 1991-92 budget year the committee expects to distribute more than \$140 million in Cooperative Program funds.

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DIGEST

N.C. gives direct to Ruschlikon

European missionaries on 'hold'

RUSCHLIKON, Switzerland (BP)—North Carolina became the first Southern Baptist state convention to allocate funds directly to the Baptist Theological Seminary at Ruschlikon, according to European Baptist Press Service.

EBPS said Ed Vick, second vice president of the North Carolina Baptist Convention, presented the seminary a check Dec. 21 for \$28,750, the first payment on \$30,000 promised to the international seminary by North Carolina Baptists at their annual meeting last November.

North Carolina Baptists, one of 10 state Baptist conventions to pass actions on the international seminary, approved two motions. One set aside the \$30,000. The other asked the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board to rescind a 35-28 vote on Oct. 9 by its trustees to defund \$365,000 promised to the seminary's 1992 budget. On Dec. 11, the trustees voted 54-27 to take no further action on the seminary matter.

Meanwhile, Keith Parker, the FMB's area director for Europe, said in a letter to more than 290 missionaries in Europe that he has put a "temporary hold" on all missionary personnel requests for Europe after February "so we can renegotiate with each (European Baptist) union about its desires."

Leaders of many of the 33 Baptist unions in the 750,000-member European Baptist Federation have expressed alarm over the defunding action and indicated it could rupture future relationships. Leaders of the Baptist Union of Romania, however, expressed support for it.

It is likely, according to EBPS, the Ruschlikon matter will be discussed by leaders of the European Baptist Federation when they meet Jan. 26-29 in Dorfweil, Germany, for a previously scheduled consultation on the role of Baptist churches in Europe.

Karl-Heinz Walter, the federation's general secretary, said each union will decide for itself what future relationship to have with the FMB and its missionaries.

Vick, a layman from Raleigh, N.C., said the \$30,000 North Carolina Baptist gift, which would have gone originally to the FMB, comes from an "optional budget" set up by the North Carolina convention for churches who are unhappy with Southern Baptist Convention leadership, according to EBPS.

Besides North Carolina, nine other state conventions passed motions or resolutions in their annual meetings asking either the FMB rescind or give further consideration to its action.

Only Virginia and North Carolina specifically voted funds for the seminary. Virginia voted to give \$100,000 to the seminary out of 1992 funds unless the FMB rescinded its action. Virginia Baptist officials said the money, which otherwise would have gone undesignated directly from Virginia to the FMB's budget, now will be designated for the Ruschlikon seminary through the FMB.

In Texas, the executive board of Baptist General Convention urged on Dec. 3 the FMB restore the defunded amount. It asked its administrative committee to explore the possibility of finding funds to send to the seminary in case the decision to defund it was not overturned. The executive board meets again March 10.

December CP falls behind

NASHVILLE (BP)—The SBC Cooperative Program received 5.51 percent less in December 1991 compared to the same month last year, according to Harold C. Bennett, Executive Committee President/Treasurer.

The Executive Committee received \$10,575,202 in December which was \$617,005 less than the amount received in December 1990. For the SBC budget year, October through December, the total received was 2.46 percent less than the first quarter of the 1990-91 budget year: \$33,472,910 compared to \$34,315,488.

The 1991-92 monthly basic operating budget requirement for the SBC is \$11,725,856.

Designated gifts were also down, by 4.80 percent, for the month compared to a year ago: \$3,113,555 vs. \$3,270,528. For the year-to-date, designated gifts were nearly the same compared to a year ago: \$6,885,997 to \$6,887,196 or a .02 percent decrease.



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