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### January 28, 1993

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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# ARKANSAS BAPTIST



Volume 92, Number 2

January 28, 1993

## COVER STORY

### **Observe Race Relations Day**

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### **State CP gifts top \$15 million**

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### **WMU expands ministry base**

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### **Arkansas Acteen on national panel**

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### **Simmons retires from Southern**

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# Arkansas Baptists' 1992 CP contributions top \$15 million

Arkansas Baptists contributed a record \$15.02 million through the Cooperative Program in 1992, according to Arkansas Baptist State Convention financial records. The 1992 total is 6.99 percent above the previous year's gifts and 2.71 percent above the 1992 CP goal of \$14,624,000.

The 1992 contributions mark the second time in three years that Arkansas Baptist gifts have exceeded the budget goal. In 1990, CP gifts topped the goal by less than \$6,000. Prior to that, the convention failed to reach the budget goal for eight consecutive years. 1991 receipts fell \$21,000 short of the budget goal.

ABSC executive director Don Moore expressed guarded optimism about the positive financial report. Voicing appreciation for Arkansas Baptists' efforts, he cautioned that there are still many unmet ministry needs in Arkansas and around the world.

Moore noted that 41.75 percent of the budgeted funds will be channeled to SBC causes while the remaining 58.25 percent will be used for Arkansas Baptist ministries.

"The overage will be placed in a Cooperative Program reserve fund to be drawn on in years when there may be a shortfall," Moore explained. "Currently, the shortfall over the last several years has depleted the Cooperative Program reserves so that this will be the first monies available in trying to rebuild a reserve to support Cooperative Program causes.

"Let us begin to feel that all of the basic needs are being adequately funded, we need to remember the unanswered requests" such as pastoral aid for small

congregations, grants and loans for small and new churches, and ongoing needs in home and foreign missions, Moore said.

"Meeting our budget is not so much a statement of meeting needs as it is of careful planning," he added. "We owe a great debt of gratitude to our pastors, deacons and particularly our missions organizations in our local churches for seeing to it that our churches do not become self-centered and short-sighted in their focus of ministry. As Jesus said, the field is the world.

"Unless there is ongoing efforts to educate and motivate our people about world missions causes, we can very quickly and easily see a reversal of what we hope is a trend that has been set this year."

In addition to the Cooperative Program gifts, Arkansas Baptists exceeded their 1992 goals for foreign, home and state missions offerings.

1992 gifts to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions totaled \$3,086,199, an increase of 6.8 percent over the previous year and 10.2 percent over the 1992 goal of \$2.8 million.

Gifts to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for home missions were \$1,123,794, an increase of 10.2 percent over 1991 and 12.3 percent over the 1992 goal of \$1 million.

Gifts to the Dixie Jackson State Missions Offering totaled \$636,236, an increase of 4.8 percent over the previous year and 2.6 percent over the goal of \$620,000.

Arkansas Baptists also contributed more than \$193,000 to hunger relief efforts during the year.

## Cover Story

CLC photo



## Race Relations 8

Southern Baptists will observe Race Relations Sunday on Feb. 14. Jack Kwok, director of Arkansas Baptists' cooperative ministries with National Baptists, urges Christians to move beyond traditional race relations and embrace the concept of racial righteousness.

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Next issue: Feb. 11

# Arkansas Baptist

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# Hope Migrant Mission Center marks milestone

*After 20 years of service, significant needs and ministry opportunities continue*

By Colleen Backus

Arkansas Baptist

Hope, Ark., has been in the national spotlight in recent days. But beyond the political hoopla, other significant events have taken place away from the glare of television lights and curious tourists. One such event was the recent ministry milestone marked by the Hope Migrant Mission Center.

Bob Gross, the center's first director, supervised the construction of the center and framed its mission for 19 years. Paul Rhoaten, a long-time Southern Baptist missionary to Uruguay, came in 1991 at the end of the migrant season to build on the groundwork Gross had laid and guide the center's future. The center recently marked its 20th anniversary of service.

What most people do not realize, Rhoaten noted, is that the center is one of three migrant centers in the area: the other two are run by the government. The Farm Labor Center is a rest stop for migrants travelling from south Texas to northern states. The Education Center meets needs related to children.

Tommy Goode, Arkansas Baptist state supervisor for the ministry, put it this way. "The Labor Center ministers to the body, the Education Center ministers to the mind, and the Mission Center ministers to the spirit."

The mission center currently operates from March 1 to Dec. 1, but the peak season starts in May and runs through September. The Labor Center, which is open 24 hours a day and provides trailers and apartments for 12 hours of rest, serves approximately 25,000 workers and their families a year. The mission center makes contact with nearly 6,000 of those individuals.

The day-to-day operation consists of morning cleanup, replenishing literature, straightening the clothing ministry area and sacking up new health kits. The center moves into full swing in the late afternoon and operates until 9 or 10 p.m. During that time, visitors are asked to register, and are asked if they have a Bible. If they do not, a Spanish or English New Testament or Bible is given to them. They can then take advantage of the center's

other areas, such as the clothing ministry, or children's game and recreation area. In the evening, a worship service is conducted, often by volunteers.

In addition to the support of Southwest Baptist Association and many local churches, groups from throughout the state come on a volunteer basis to help with the heavy summer season. During an

hours the center is open to aid migrants who have spent the allotted 12 hours at the Labor Center, but are not yet ready to get on the road. He believes that with increased hours, he can reach many more migrants.

More adult volunteers would help ease the load before youth mission groups can come in May and after they leave in August. A summer missionary works at the center during the summer, but also has to leave after 10 weeks to return to college.



*Paul Rhoaten, an 18-year Southern Baptist missionary to Uruguay, has brought his skills to direct the work of the Migrant Mission Center in Hope.*

interim period before Rhoaten became director, volunteers and a summer missionary, Monica Munoz, were able to keep the work going.

## Future dreams

Rhoaten's goals for the center range from the small to the ambitious. He wants to decorate the center to look more Hispanic, so it will feel more like home to the migrants, who are primarily Texans of Mexican descent. Spending 18 years in South America, his exposure to Latin language and culture is a definite plus for the center.

Rhoaten would like to increase the

## Dreams realized

"The need for this ministry is as great or greater than the day it opened because we have an ever-increasing number of migrant farm workers coming up through Hope," Goode explained. "So the need to provide clothes, health kits and spiritual ministry grows proportionately to the numbers of farm workers who come through."

An affirmation of that commitment is the center's recently developed follow-up correspondence. The center networks with a contact in the destination state as well as a church in the home area if an individual has made a profession of faith in Christ.

Rhoaten is writing some curriculum in addition to the Bibles available, and publishes a yearly newsletter in English and Spanish to keep visitors and supporters aware of the center's ongoing work.

One of the biggest dreams has very recently been realized: the purchase of the property on which the Migrant Mission center stands. The five-acre highway frontal property was partially donated — a third each from cousins One Cornelius and Henry Hayes — and the final third was purchased from another relative by the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. Rhoaten said acquisition of the land provides future security for the ministry.

"More migrants are staying in Arkansas and working than ever before," Goode pointed out. "So the Migrant Mission Center there becomes a mission link-up with us for developing ongoing ministries to migrants in the state."

## YOU'LL BE GLAD TO KNOW



By DON MOORE  
ABS Executive Director

Because our Baptist people have been faithful in their tithes and offerings, and because the churches have been faithful to share their tithes and offerings with the other Baptists in trying to fulfill the Great Commission, we are able to report to you that we have reached our Cooperative Program budget in Arkansas in 1992. God is to be praised for this achievement. He made it possible.

This is significant because of all of the ministries throughout the world that are supported by the Cooperative Program. Most state conventions are not seeing this kind of support. It is significant also because it is only the second time in 10 years that we have reached the budget. While we are filled with gratitude, we must not assume that there are not crucial needs yet to be met. What we do as individuals and churches in the future is not left to guesswork or personal choice. God has said we are to "give as He has given." If God blesses us with more, He expects us to give more. We will need to continue to show our gratitude and concern by continuing to be good stewards in the future. Surely you know that blessings come to God's people who are faithful stewards.

Now, to a need. No need is greater than for God's people to pray. "For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil" (1 Pet. 3:12).

While our president, our schools, our elderly, our young and our servicemen need our prayers, I want to suggest to you that no one needs our prayers more than those who lead our churches, our pastors.

A 1991 survey revealed that 80 percent of our pastors said that the ministry had been detrimental to their families' well-being; 75 percent reported significant stress; 90 percent said they were not adequately trained for their job; 70 percent said they had a lower self-image now than when they started; and 70 percent said they did not have anyone they consider a close friend. Isn't that enough to make us pray?

WILLIAM H. SUTTON

## The President's Corner

### Unchanging truth



Truth is an elusive subject. We constantly seek it in all endeavors of life only to learn that our methods of finding it are not very reliable.

In a democracy we trust the majority to be correct. In the law we say the verdict is the truth. In monitoring our personal conduct and guiding our families we are inclined to adopt what is socially acceptable for our time as our standard. It is easy from there to presume that a widely accepted standard is satisfactory to God.

That has never been true. To the contrary, the larger the number who are mistaken as to what is acceptable to God, the graver the danger in every respect.

We are suffering in this country on a scale previously undreamed of because of our failure to recognize God's absolute truths in the matter of sexual purity. We see the awful results of

AIDS, teenage pregnancies and abortion. With few exceptions, all are direct results of plain violations of God's commandments.

There is grave danger that we have not yet seen. Of people who knew God but failed to glorify Him as God, Paul wrote: "Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie" (Rom. 1:24-25).

Southern Baptists must live and teach God's great truths of sexual purity. We must do so even if none shall go with us. It doesn't matter. It will still be the truth of God.

Buddy Sutton, a Little Rock attorney and active member of Immanuel Church, Little Rock, is president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

## Personal Perspectives

"We must do what America does best: offer opportunity to all and demand more responsibility from all."

—Bill Clinton, 42nd president of the United States

"Let us resolve to do more than merely protest that which is reprehensible; let's provide for that which is redemptive.... Let us be known not so much for tearing down the arguments of the abortionists, but for building up the lives of the mothers faced with difficult situations."

—Mike Huckabee, Arkansas "March for Life" speaker

"Our decisions first and foremost have been for the sake of lost souls around the world—souls who can't wait until we resolve our denominational controversy."

—Dellanna O'Brien, national Woman's Missionary Union executive director

"Our purpose, tasks and plans have not changed nor has our relationship to Arkansas Baptist churches.... We are reaffirming our support to Southern Baptist missions and that has not changed."

—Julia Ketter, Arkansas Woman's Missionary Union director

# Build bridges, not walls

After more than 200 years, America's experiment with democracy continues to function surprisingly well. Sen. Wendell Ford, chairman of the presidential inaugural committee, described last week's "peaceful and orderly transfer of power" as a "remarkable tribute to the genius of the Constitution and the enduring strength of our political system and our proud national heritage."

Despite our system's inherent flaws and frustrations, majority rule "of the people, by the people and for the people" remains the best way to operate a free and fair society. Regardless of one's political preferences, in a world where government transition often includes riots, tanks and bloodshed, it is reassuring to witness our nation's "peaceful and orderly transfer of power."

Yet political realities force difficult decisions for many citizens. Moral dilemmas facing our nation generate heated debates, particularly concerning the issues of abortion and homosexual rights. Messengers to at least a dozen state Baptist conventions, including Arkansas, took clear stands last fall against our new president's public stands on those issues.

It is essential for concerned Baptists and others to share biblical perspectives affirming the sanctity of human life and opposing the sin of homosexuality. One of the strengths of democracy is the right of every citizen to express personal convictions and strive to effect public policy changes.

Yet we also must seek to build bridges to the new administration in order for the voices of evangelical Christianity to be heard. And we must not limit our views to pressing moral issues. The economy, the budget deficit, health care, international issues and countless other subjects deserve our interest and input as well.

While Operation Rescue founder Randall Terry labeled President Clinton a "neo-pagan" in a pre-election mallout, most Southern Baptist leaders have chosen to take the higher road.

"I would hope that Mr. Clinton will look to evangelical Christians for counsel and for guidance," Southern Baptist Convention president Ed Young said following the election. "We certainly will be people who will pray and who historically have supported and believed in our system." Ac-

## STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR

By TRENNIS HENDERSON



knowledging disagreement "on many moral issues," Young added that he believes Southern Baptists will support the new president "in every way possible."

Arkansas Baptists have voiced a similar view, pledging to pray for Clinton while urging him to "endorse the biblical principles of the sanctity of human life, the biblical plea for sexual purity, the biblical precepts of sacred morality."

Arkansas Baptists also have called on President Clinton and Vice President Gore "to firmly rely upon the wisdom of God...for the direction needed to carry out their responsibilities." For their part, the Clintons and Gores took time away from the glitz and glamor of inauguration week festivities to participate in three worship services, including an inaugural eve service at historic First Baptist Church of

Washington. Former President Jimmy Carter, former congresswoman Barbara Jordan, composer Ken Medema and the sanctuary choir of Immanuel Church, Little Rock, were among the program participants at the gathering which attracted several hundred Baptists from across the nation. The late-night service was deliberately held away from the glare of television cameras and curious tourists in order to maintain a reverent, worshipful atmosphere.

In addition to such events, many other Baptist leaders have joined the effort to build bridges rather than walls. Three-time SBC president Adrian Rogers was among a group of 15 ministers who met privately with Clinton a week before his inauguration to discuss issues of concern. Evangelist Billy Graham prayed during the inauguration for God to provide President Clinton "the wisdom You have promised to those who ask, and the strength You alone can give." In a page 9 article this week, Baptist Sunday School Board president Jimmy Draper reaffirms Christians' "biblical obligation" to pray for our nation's new leaders.

That is as it should be. As Christians, we must trust God's instruction to "be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God" (Rom. 13:1). Titus 3:1 and I Peter 2:13-14 offer similar instructions while I Timothy 2:1-2 calls on Christians to offer "supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks...for all that are in authority."

God's instructions are clear which means our response should be equally clear. We are not called to agree with every action of our new administration but we are called to pray for those in authority. As we build bridges of prayer rather than walls of alienation, we gain the privilege of putting God's commands into action.

"Let us not be weary in well doing," President Clinton urged the nation last week. Surely Arkansas Baptists will be among those who will take the lead in demonstrating what Christian well doing is all about. Maintain your convictions and let your voice be heard, yet become a bridge-builder through prayer for President Clinton, Vice President Gore and the future of our nation.



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# Woman's Missionary Union leaders approve plan to enlarge ministry base

BIRMINGHAM, AL (BP)—The executive board of Woman's Missionary Union took action Jan. 10 to enlarge its base of operations, no longer to work exclusively with Southern Baptist Convention entities.

Declaring "WMU is at a crossroad," executive director Dellanna W. O'Brien said the action frees up the 104-year-old organization, opens opportunities and "puts us in sync with today's woman."

Carolyn Miller, national WMU president from Huntsville, Ala., likened the action to a "giant leap, a giant step, a giant direction" in mission awareness involvement.

Following the proposals of a special committee, appointed by Miller in January 1992, the executive board took the first two days of its annual board meeting in Birmingham and Shocco Springs, Ala., to shape the final plan. Divided into three sections — a vision statement, core values and recommendations — the action will allow WMU to work with a variety of evangelical groups, including the Coop-

erative Baptist Fellowship. The CBF is a group of moderate Southern Baptists who are critical of the direction and conservative leadership of the SBC.

However, O'Brien and Miller, meeting with media following the final vote, said WMU would not promote the CBF's global missions offering and CBF's missionaries will not appear in the widely-used WMU Prayer Calendar which lists only SBC-related career missionaries.

## Convention relationship

Both leaders said they hoped to continue the relationship with SBC entities, including the promotion of the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for home missions, critical to the financing of Foreign Mission Board and Home Mission Board missionary activity.

Noting WMU is an auxiliary of the SBC, and auxiliary means "helper," O'Brien said she was unsure what SBC leadership would do following the WMU action. The two

leaders said WMU is interpreting SBC as "Southern Baptist churches."

There was virtually no opposition to the final plan adopted by the executive board, which is composed of state convention WMU presidents, with state WMU executive directors invited by Miller to participate in the vote.

The action was the culmination of a year's work by the special committee which interviewed numerous Southern Baptist groups and entities. O'Brien credited membership support in prayer, "the fellowship of the Holy Spirit" and "a wonderful fellowship (of members) for helping make the needed changes."

According to Morris H. Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee, SBC leaders need "a clarification" from the WMU so the SBC can study "the decisions which we now are facing as a convention."

Chapman said he is saddened by the WMU decision, having "expressed hope to the WMU leadership that nothing would change in the organizational relationship between the SBC and the WMU."

Among other SBC leaders, FMB trustee chairman John Jackson said he already has put a dialogue session with WMU leaders on the agenda for the FMB trustee meeting in February. "I think we will need that to clarify and alleviate any misperceptions there might be" as a result of WMU board action during the week, he said.

Jackson told the WMU board he wants to see a continuation and a strengthening of the WMU-FMB relationship — not a deterioration.

Although that relationship has been "damaged some," he said, "Just because it has been damaged doesn't mean you should keep jabbing the wound. Our desire is to heal any damaged relationships and to heal the wounds."

"We trust that as we look forward... that five years from now we will look back and say that had we not joined together in a cooperative spirit, we would be very far apart. I think there are great things ahead."

Home Mission Board president Larry Lewis said, "I was not present for the meeting and do not know the full details nor the interpretation of the recommendations made by the long-range planning committee. I intend to discuss this further with Dr. O'Brien and her staff."

"I certainly affirm not only the right, but the responsibility of WMU to work with all Southern Baptist churches includ-

## Arkansas WMU work remains unchanged

Woman's Missionary Union work "will continue as it always has in Arkansas," according to Julia Ketterer, state WMU department director.

Writing to Arkansas WMU leaders following the recent action of the national WMU executive board, Ketterer emphasized, "Our purpose, tasks and plans have not changed nor has our relationship to Arkansas Baptist churches....We are still the same missions organization that existed prior to the meeting."

Although press reports have emphasized the impact of WMU's action on its relationship to the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, Ketterer told the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*, "Whether we would align with CBF wasn't discussed period. We did not 'endorse' any Southern Baptist group; we embraced all Southern Baptists."

"The committee was appointed to look at the future of WMU and launching missions education for the 21st century," Ketterer continued. "Our concern was to get more people involved in missions."

"Baptists can't win the world by themselves," she pointed out. "We want

to join with other Christians who are trying to spread the gospel. If we can help other evangelicals with materials, that's exciting. The Sunday School Board is already doing that."

While the WMU action "does open the door to CBF," Ketterer said, "The broader aspect is so much more than CBF. We serve all the Baptist churches in Arkansas. If they are Southern Baptist churches, our program statement says to serve them."

Emphasizing that "we did not vote to promote any other offerings except the Cooperative Program, Lottie Moon and Annie Armstrong," Ketterer added, "We are reaffirming our support to Southern Baptist missions and that has not changed."

"We haven't changed the way we relate to Southern Baptist churches," agreed state WMU president Marjorie Grober. "These statements were necessary for WMU to be able to look to the future."

"We did have a year of concentrated prayer by the committee and the rest of us," Grober explained. "We felt like we were in the Lord's will in the things we decided. There was a spirit of unity."

ing those affiliated with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship," Lewis said. "However, I question the wisdom of any SBC agency or auxiliary identifying in a supportive way with any schismatic group that has set itself against SBC leaders and agencies or has established competitive agencies.

"I appeal to WMU to service all Southern Baptist churches but continue their historic stance supporting and promoting missions exclusively through the Home Mission Board and the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention," Lewis said.

He said he has not yet heard anything in the recommendations that would exclude the HMB from working with WMU on the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering.

James Williams, Brotherhood Commission president, said he hopes the men's organization will be able to continue relating to WMU, though the WMU executive board's actions "may introduce new dimensions into our joint deliberations and relationships. We will need to see how these recommendations work themselves out in the churches and denomination before we know how WMU and Brotherhood will work together to involve Southern Baptists in missions."

Williams, meanwhile, commended WMU leaders "for their willingness to deal with future directions and affirm that our focus will continue to be on encouraging every Southern Baptist believer to be involved in sharing the gospel of Christ with everybody, everywhere."

### 'For the sake of souls'

According to O'Brien, "What we have done here this week is not for ourselves alone. Our decisions first and foremost have been for the sake of lost souls around the world — souls who can't wait until we resolve our denominational controversy. Souls that await the telling of the Good News," she said.

The actions also have been done "for the sake of WMU," O'Brien said. "No organization of believers can survive without a renewed vision — nor should it. God has permitted us to experience the joy of being 'on mission' for Him. He has shaken us up and caused us to see the greater purpose for which we should strive."

Most of all, though, the WMU actions have been done "for Christ's sake," O'Brien said. "Nothing we do has any meaning or value unless it magnifies and glorifies the Father," she said. "He has been gracious to move in our hearts, giving us the courage for which we have so fervently prayed."

The recent decisions did not come easily, O'Brien reflected. "For some time, our convention has been immersed in a con-

## Vision Statement

Woman's Missionary Union exists to enable churches and believers to participate in introducing all persons in the world to Jesus Christ.

### Core Values

- **Priesthood of the Believer:** We affirm and uphold the priesthood of the believer, while accepting the responsibilities and privileges inherent therein.
- **God's Call to Mission:** We acknowledge God's call to every believer to carry the good news of Jesus Christ to all the world.
- **Prayer for Missions:** We embrace the privilege and responsibility of prayer for missionaries and missions needs.
- **Giftedness of Women:** We recognize, emphasize and affirm the giftedness of women and girls in Christian endeavors.
- **Social and Moral Issues:** We acknowledge the biblical mandate to respond to social and moral issues with actions as modeled by Jesus Christ and with a message of His redemptive plan.
- **Development of Leaders:** We acknowledge and accept the responsibility for developing mission leaders.
- **Partnership with Christians Around the World:** We covenant to partner with Christians around the world, as individually and corporately we multiply each other's efforts to lead a lost world to Christ.
- **Diverse Organizational Models:** We pledge to provide diverse, flexible organizational models through which persons may participate in the global missions effort.

### Recommendations

Honoring the perspective of history, recognizing the practicality of the present, and committing to the expansion of missions into the future, Woman's Missionary Union affirms the support of Southern Baptist global missions through prayer, the Cooperative Program, the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions, and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for home missions.

We also affirm the right of individuals, churches and state conventions to choose other plans for cooperative missions giving.

Further, we affirm the missionaries and pledge to strengthen our support of them.

In response to change in our world and our desire to be a visionary force in global missions, we recommend that Woman's Missionary Union:

- **Recommit ourselves to missions, the reason we exist, and relate to others who share our commitment.**
- **Provide prayer support and produce resources for Southern Baptist groups involved in missions, at their request.**
- **Produce and market generic missions education resources for other evangelical groups.**
- **Promote and facilitate effective volunteerism in response to missions needs.**
- **Identify one social issue each year for specific intervention through national projects.**
- **Accept contributions to be used for WMU and related missions needs.**

trovsky which seems not to be resolved," she said. "For years, WMU as a whole has remained free of this conflict. While we have the same theological diversity in our organizations that is found in the SBC, with both strong conservatives and strong moderates and everything in between, it has not mattered.

"Because our eyes have been focused on Jesus and our hearts directed toward winning the world to Christ, we have refused to be distracted by this dissension," she said.

Unfortunately, she said, during the year there have been events that involved WMU "in spite of our reluctance to be a part."

WMU leaders have been grieved to see

the polarization of the Southern Baptist denomination, O'Brien said. "Surely, surely, it is possible for one entity in our convention to embrace them all! Are we not weary of the taking of sides? Can we not rid ourselves of politics? Is there no possibility for one entity to relate to all — conservatives, moderates, undeclared and confused?"

WMU is "raising the flag of missions high and inviting: 'If you believe in God's command to go and teach and make disciples, then go with us. Give total allegiance to missions — not to people, not to agencies, not to discreet groups — but to all expressions of Southern Baptist missions.'"



# Racial righteousness

*Biblical justice and morality are vital to successful racial interaction*

By Jack Kwok

ABC Cooperative Ministries

One of the greatest struggles in the 20th century has been that of race relations. The struggle has transcended national boundaries. It has been globally widespread and racially inclusive. No nation or race has escaped the effects of racism.

Racism remains a challenge for Christianity as well. Its acceptance and application stand diametrically opposed to the biblical revelation.

Opposition to racism in many instances has focused upon human relationships: race relations. While this is very helpful, it suffers from some inadequacies. The introduction of racial righteousness offers additional material for the struggle. This term supplies direction, intent, purpose and standard.

As a term, "race relations" is somewhat inadequate in establishing direction, intent, purpose and standard. The term functions better in description than it does in prescription. It provides information on the status rather than instruction toward the goal.

The term identifies the subject matter: relationship or interaction among various races or between two particular races. Yet, additional qualifiers are needed to indicate the nature or extent of these interactions.

Race relations exist whenever racial interaction occurs. These relations may be viewed basically as being either good or bad. In fact, it is possible for the same racial interaction event to be viewed as being good and bad at the same time. The perspective of the individual participants would account for this seeming contradiction.

Moreover, when no relationship is said to exist, the situation can be described accurately as one of bad race relations. The racial interaction would be one of hostile confrontation or avoidance.

Far too often race relations are deemed



to be good due to the lack of open hostility: crises, turmoil or strife. However, the absence of open conflict does not necessarily constitute good race relations. Members of one race may consider the relations to be good, even very good, while members of another race may be suffering in silence.

Thus, the term "race relations" can be ambiguous. At best, it describes the status of racial interaction. It does not denote a standard for racial interaction. For all its assets, it possesses some inadequacies.

The introduction of a biblical term will assist the term "race relations." "Righteousness" denotes the biblical concepts of justice and morality. Thus, racial righteousness determines a standard for racial interaction.

Justice is the standard for attitude, belief, conviction, doctrine and principle. It is the unchangeable standard for what is

right. Justice is absolute for all people and all time.

With regard to race, justice is the standard for the right view of all races, that is, racial ideology. Racism contends that one, some or most races are inherently superior to others, and one, some or most are inferior to others. Racial righteousness declares that all races are inherently equal in value. Therefore, the biblical revelation of racial righteousness denounces racism. As a doctrine, racism is heresy.

Consequently, the biblical revelation of racial righteousness judges racism as a practice to be sinful and wrong. This judgment issues from the morality aspect of righteousness.

Since righteousness requires an absolute standard for principle: justice, it requires also an absolute standard for practice: morality. Righteous morality is the standard for action, behavior, conduct, deportment and practice. As with justice, it is absolute for all people and all time.

Biblical righteousness requires a morality that treats members of all races with dignity, courtesy and equality. Racism, prejudice, paternalism and patronism are excluded from the morality of racial righteousness.

Racial righteousness declares a standard for attitude and action, belief and behavior, conviction and conduct, doctrine and deportment, principle and practice. It designates a goal from which strategies can be formed and by which progress can be measured.

Racial righteousness does more than describe good race relations; it demands godly race relations. It demands repentance and confession of sin. Racial righteousness provides information, instruction, implementation and inspiration in the struggle of race relations.

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# Clinton begins service as 42nd president

By Tom Strode

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON (BP)—William Jefferson Clinton, taking office as the 42nd president of the United States and the third Southern Baptist to govern from the White House, pronounced the beginning of a "new season of American renewal" which would require sacrifice from the country's citizens.

The "urgent question of our time is whether we can make change our friend and not our enemy," Clinton said in his Jan. 20 inaugural speech. The economy, crime and the plight of children indicate "we have not made change our friend," Clinton said.

"We know we have to face hard truths and take strong steps, but we have not done so," the former governor of Arkansas said. "Instead, we have drifted.

"There is nothing wrong with America that cannot be cured by what is right with America," said Clinton, a member of Immanuel Church in Little Rock.

## Graham offers invocation

While the new president called for Americans to embrace change, evangelist Billy Graham requested in an inaugural prayer a change of heart produced by God.

Americans "cannot say that we are a righteous people, for we are not," Graham said in his invocation. "We have sinned against you. We have sown to the wind and are now reaping a whirlwind of crime, drug abuse, racism, immorality and social injustice. We need to repent of our sins and turn by faith to you."

Graham, like Clinton, is a member of a Southern Baptist church, First Baptist in Dallas.

Clinton, who first joined a Southern Baptist church as a child in Hot Springs, became the first Democrat since Jimmy Carter to serve as president. Carter, who attended the ceremony with his wife, Rosalynn, also is a Southern Baptist. Harry Truman was a Southern Baptist, too. The only other president identified as a Baptist was Warren Harding, who was not Southern Baptist.

The new vice president, Al Gore, also is a Southern Baptist. He and his family are members of Mount Vernon Baptist Church in Arlington, Va.

Clinton and Gore's support for abortion and homosexual rights has brought clear opposition from many of their fellow church members. At least 11 state Southern Baptist conventions passed resolutions in fall meetings expressing disagreement with their positions.

While largely avoiding discussion of precise policies, Clinton's 14-minute address before about 250,000 persons on the west side of the U.S. Capitol called on Americans to change the country and to serve others. On a winter day, the new president said, the nation's citizens "have forced the spring."

"Thomas Jefferson believed that to preserve the very foundations of our nation, we would need dramatic change from time to time," Clinton said. "Well, my fellow Americans, this is our time. Let us embrace it."

As America stands on the verge of the 21st century, he said, "let us begin anew with energy and hope, with faith and

discipline, and let us work until our work is done.

"The Scripture says, 'And let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not,'" Clinton said.

"From this joyful mountaintop of celebration, we hear a call to service in the valley. We have heard the trumpet. We have changed the guard. And now, each in our own way and with God's help, we must answer the call."

## Opportunity and responsibility

Echoing frequent campaign themes, Clinton called for investing in people, cutting the debt and not expecting something in return.

"We must do what America does best: offer opportunity to all and demand more responsibility from all," he said.

"It is time to break the bad habit of expecting something for nothing, from our government or from each other."

In his invocation, Graham thanked God "for the moral and spiritual foundation" of the country and prayed for Clinton and Gore, "whom you have permitted to take leadership at this critical time in our nation's history."

"Help them always to see the office to which they have been elected as a sacred trust from you," Graham prayed. May the new president "know that he is never really alone, but that the eternal God can be his refuge, and he can turn to you in every circumstance. Give him the wisdom you have promised to those who ask and the strength you alone can give."

He also asked "that the memory of this event always remind us to pray for our leaders."

# Draper encourages prayer for nations's new leaders

By Linda Lawson

Baptist Sunday School Board

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—Southern Baptists who voted for Bill Clinton and those who opposed him now have a shared biblical obligation to pray for the nation's 42nd president, James T. Draper Jr. said.

Draper, president of the Baptist Sunday School Board, writing in his monthly column in the February issue of *Facts and Trends*, noted President Bill Clinton and Vice President Albert Gore Jr. are both members of Southern Baptist churches.

"Doubtless, Southern Baptists split in their vote for the presidency just as the nation as a whole did. There have been

and continue to be many areas of concern each of us has about the future of our country and the approach that is taken to leadership and governing. That is nothing new. Politics has always been a diverse matter and has resulted in many different opinions," Draper said.

"However, there is one truth that transcends all of the differences of this election: God is still God and He still governs the affairs of men," he added.

"So what should be our response to this election of two fellow Southern Baptists to the highest elected positions in this land?" Draper asked. "There are some who strongly support President Clinton and Vice President Gore. Others are

strongly critical and hostile. So, what shall we do? Shall we complain and condemn if we disagree with them? Shall we praise and support if we agree?"

Citing 1 Timothy 2:1-4, Draper said the Bible "instructs us to pray for those in positions of leadership and authority."

Also, he said Christians are to include the personal needs of leaders in their prayers and to pray from a sense of reverence and worship for God.

"We are admonished in these verses to pray for all in authority," Draper continued. "The reason is not just for their benefit, but that we may have lives that are free from outward disturbances, political agitation and persecution."

# Divided Supreme Court ruling reverses decision against abortion clinic blockades

By Larry Chesser

Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (ABP) — A provision of an 1871 civil-rights law cannot be used by federal courts to bar blockades at abortion clinics, a splintered U.S. Supreme Court ruled Jan. 13.

The post-Civil War legislation — popularly known as the Ku Klux Klan Act — empowered federal courts to protect the civil rights of individuals and classes threatened by mob violence.

A majority opinion written by Justice Antonin Scalia and joined by four other members of the court reversed lower rulings that women seeking an abortion constitute a class of persons protected under the 1871 law. The lower courts had barred Operation Rescue from engaging in anti-abortion activities at clinics in northern Virginia.

Scalia, joined by Chief Justice William Rehnquist and Associate Justices Byron White, Anthony Kennedy and Clarence Thomas, said federal law's protection is invoked only when two conditions are met. Under court precedent, conspiracies

to deprive citizens of equal rights trigger the act when they are motivated by "some racial, or perhaps otherwise class-based" hatred and when they are "aimed" at rights that are "protected against private, as well as official, encroachment."

The majority said Operation Rescue's activities did not meet either test.

"Whatever one thinks of abortion, it cannot be denied that there are common and respectable reasons for opposing it, other than hatred or of condescension toward...women as a class — as is evident from the fact that men and women are on both sides of the issue, just as men and women are on both sides of (Operation Rescue's) unlawful demonstrations," Scalia wrote.

The majority vacated the award of attorney's fees but refused Operation Rescue's request to lift the permanent injunction against clinic blockades. Instead, the case was returned to federal district court to determine whether state-law claims can be used to keep the ban in place.

Writing separately, Justice David Souter cited his reluctance to depart from settled

court precedent in siding with the majority on the 1871 provision at issue in the case. But Souter argued that the case should be returned to the district court to determine whether federal courts may bar Operation Rescue's blockades under another provision of the law.

That provision applies to conspiracies to prevent or hinder state authorities from securing equal protection for citizens.

In a dissenting opinion joined by Justice Harry Blackmun, Justice John Paul Stevens said women seeking an abortion are protected under both provisions of the 1871 act.

Stevens said the court majority ignored the "obvious...congressional intent" of the statute "to protect this nation's citizens from what amounts to the theft of their constitutional rights by organized and violent mobs across the country."

The statute, he argues, "provides no basis for excluding from its coverage any cognizable class of persons who are entitled to the equal protection of the laws."

The case — *Bray vs. Alexandria Women's Health Clinic* — is not about abortion, Stevens said, but about "the exercise of

## Parental notification opposition is 'troubling,'

By Louis Moore

SBC Christian Life Commission

NASHVILLE, TN (BP) — The American Medical Association's Council on Ethical and Judicial Affairs has gone on record against mandatory parental notification or consent for minors seeking abortion.

In a report published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)* Jan. 6, the council concluded, "While minors should be encouraged to discuss their pregnancy with their parents and other adults, minors should not be required to involve their parents before deciding whether to undergo an abortion."

The report cites the need for privacy in the physician-patient relationship and the risk of abuse of minors whose parents learn they are pregnant as ethical reasons for their decision.

"While not surprising, the report is very troubling," said C. Ben Mitchell, director of biomedical and life issues for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

Mitchell voiced a number of concerns:

"First, it is true that some children are physically and emotionally abused when their parents learn they are pregnant," he said. "But that is a symptom, not the problem. The decision of the council reflects more an emotional response to the issues than an ethical or medical response. For instance, the council does not mention post-abortion trauma or the fact that, for instance, in mid-trimester abortions the medical risks are so great that as many as one of every 200 patients will have severe hemorrhaging, require hysterectomies, or will die. Failure to inform parents of these kinds of risks is a breach of physician responsibility.

"Second, I am very concerned about the social implications of some of the notions found in the report. For instance, the council concluded that minors are the best persons to decide whether parental involvement is advisable. Now, admittedly, that may be so in a small number of cases, but as a general rule it is highly overstated. In the overwhelming majority of cases, parents or parents with their children are in a far better position to

make wise judgments with respect to abortion."

Michael K. Whitehead, general counsel for the Christian Life Commission, questions the rationale of the panel of experts.

"Totally absent from this 'scientific' report is any mention of experts and evidence to support the opposing view," he said. "Does the AMA ask us to assume there is no evidence supporting the view that the lack of parental involvement may harm the minor?"

Most distressing, Whitehead said, is the way in which the report will be used in the courts. "The AMA report will become a legal standard to establish whether doctors acted with reasonable care in performing such abortions without notifying parents. If a young girl has an abortion without telling her parents, but suffers serious damage physically or emotionally, her parents may file suit against the physician for malpractice. Any allegation that the failure to notify the parents before the abortion resulted in injury to the patient will be met with this report, offered as evidence by defense attorneys, that the

federal power to control an interstate conspiracy to commit illegal acts."

In yet another dissent, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, joined by Blackmun, also argued that Operation Rescue's actions "fit precisely within the language" of both provisions of the 1871 law.

O'Connor said she did not question the sincerity of Operation Rescue's opposition but challenged its methods.

Operation Rescue members, she said, "are free to express their views in a variety of ways, including lobbying, counseling, and disseminating information. Instead, they have chosen to target women seeking abortions and to prevent them from exercising their equal rights under the law."

O'Connor said that although the 1871 act's immediate purpose "was to combat animosity against blacks and their supporters," its language "is more expansive than the historical circumstances that inspired it."

She criticized the court majority for "restricting the scope of the statute, to the point where it now cannot be applied to a modern-day paradigm of the situation the statute was meant to address."

The decision prompted promises from lawmakers in both houses of Congress to introduce legislation to provide federal protection against clinic blockades.

## say CLC leaders

doctor acted within the reasonable standard of good medical practice."

Mitchell said, "I am not entirely surprised, but it still amazes me that a minor has to have parental permission to take over-the-counter medication at school but does not have to have her parents' permission, or even notify them in some cases, to have an invasive medical procedure like an abortion. Clearly, most Americans support parental notification and consent."

An independent poll commissioned by *Parade Magazine* in May 1992 indicated that those polled between the ages of 18 and 65, almost 80 percent said one or more parents should be notified before an abortion is performed (31 percent said one parent should be notified; 48 percent said both).

Those figures are in keeping with a September 1992 USA TODAY/CNN/Gallup poll which found more than 70 percent of those polled favored restrictions on abortion, including requiring doctors to tell women about the risks of abortion and alternatives, 24-hour waiting periods and parental consent for minors.



Mike Huckabee spoke during the 15th annual "March for Life" rally held in Little Rock on Sunday, Jan. 17. The event drew a crowd estimated at 20,000.

## 'March for Life' attracts 20,000

By Millie Gill

Arkansas Baptist

"We are brought here today in great numbers for a cause that should never have to be," Mike Huckabee told the estimated 20,000 people who participated in the 15th annual March for Life rally Jan. 17 in downtown Little Rock.

Huckabee, a former president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention and currently interim pastor of Oaklawn Church, Texarkana, Texas, was referring to the 20th anniversary of the Roe vs. Wade Supreme Court decision which he noted as a decision "that resulted in the birth of the abortion industry, and the death of 4,000 unborn children every day."

Huckabee, who said he felt the abortion crisis in our nation existed because of the moral crisis within our nation, was halted numerous times by applause from the crowd. "Our society is becoming more and more like the culture that existed at the time the Old Testament book of Judges was written, which was characterized by the verse, 'Everyone did what was right in his own eyes,'" Huckabee declared.

He urged pro-life advocates not to become weary in well doing, resolving to not merely change the laws but to change the world by winning the hearts of fellow human beings, one at a time.

"Let us resolve to do more than merely protest that which is reprehensible; let's provide for that which is redemptive. Let us be known not so much for the doors we close to abortion clinics, but for the doors we open to alternatives to the abortion mills," Huckabee urged.

"Let us be known not so much for tearing down the arguments of the abortionists, but for building up the lives of the mothers faced with difficult situations," Huckabee continued. "Let us not be known so much for our slogans, but our sacrificial service to helping solve the problems of humanity."

"Jesus said that the world would know us by the way we loved one another. Let us make certain that our love is not limited to the unborn, but extended to the biological mothers, and especially to those who have had the abortions, and now need compassion instead of condemnation. Let love be given even to those who ridicule or lampoon us; let us not respond with the measure of their hatred and contempt, but with the Lord's measure of kindness and Christlikeness.

"Because we can do better, we must do better. And if this scene today is an indication, we will do better. Our hope is not resting on government, but God. And our faith is not given to a movement, but to the Master. And even more important than being on the prevailing side, is being on the right side. When we stand before Him, let us be judged for doing too much, but not too little, for the unborn children of our nation."

Ann Dierks of Hot Springs, president of Arkansas Right to Life, told the crowd which had marched from Main Street in Little Rock to the state capitol grounds that defeating the proposed Freedom of Choice Act "has to be our most immediate concern. We must make our wishes known to the White House and to Arkansas' congressional delegation."

## Arkansas All Over

MILLIE GILL

## People

**Jim Black**, pastor of Ruddell Hill Church, Batesville, has been endorsed to serve as a chaplain by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. He will be serving with Independence County Sheriff's Department, the Batesville Fire Department and the Emergency Medical Service.

**Buddy Benson**, head football coach at Ouachita Baptist University, for 28 years, has been selected as an inductee for the Arkansas Sports Hall of Fame, according to Hall of Fame president Jim Rasco. The ceremony will take place at the organization's 35th annual installation banquet Feb. 19 in Little Rock. Benson was a high school All-American running back at DeQueen, and played football with the University of Arkansas Razorback.

## Ordinations

**Blytheville First Church** ordained Johnny Wisdom and Chris Reynolds to the deacon ministry Jan. 10.

**Central Church** of Jonesboro ordained Bob Dunnam and David Cossy to the deacon ministry Jan. 3.

**Bethany Church**, Manila, ordained its first deacons Jan. 3 with pastor Paul King preaching the ordination message. Those ordained were Harold McCain, Dean Cherry, Sammy Parker and Marcus Meacham.

**Osceola First Church** ordained Billy W. Bowle, minister of music, to the ministry Jan. 17.

## Briefly

**Pine Bluff First Church** will present Clair V. Ross, harpist, in concert Feb. 7. The concert, scheduled to begin at 6 p. m., will be held in the chapel. Ross, a graduate of the University of Michigan where he earned a master's degree in harp performance, is on the "Arts on Tour Roster" of the Arkansas Council for the Arts. He is an instructor at the University of Arkansas, Little Rock.

**Cornerstone Church** of Texarkana recently became sponsor of a new mission,

Grace Community Baptist Church. The new work has been launched in the predominantly African-American community of Texarkana. Frank Byers is serving as pastor. Cornerstone Church, in its current budget, reflects the desire to support missions by helping to fund a new mission on the Flathead Indian Reservation in Montana. A group of men from Cornerstone Church will be on the reservation site in April and a full team of people will be there in July.

## Staff changes

**Craig Hobson** joined the staff of First Church, Van Buren, Jan. 24 as minister of students and recreation. He is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Hobson and his wife, Melanie, have a son, Caleb.

**Paul Hicks** resigned Jan. 17 as pastor of Palestine Church, Quitman. He will be available for pulpit supplies and to serve as an interim pastor. Hicks may be contacted by phone at 589-2860 or 728-4967.

**Leon Vandivor** is serving as pastor of Pines Church, Quitman. A retired superintendent of schools, he had been serving the church as interim pastor.

**Greg Meharg**, who made a recent commitment to Christian vocational service and was licensed to the ministry, is serving as pastor of Crosby Church, Searcy.

**Robert Meeks** of Little Rock is serving as bivocational pastor of First Church, El Paso. He previously served as pastor of Old Union Church, Benton. Meeks also has served as pastor of Hilldale Church, Alexander.

**Johnny Smith** has resigned as pastor of Brown's Chapel, Manila.

**Mitchell King** has resigned as pastor of Cross Roads Church near Blytheville.

**Troy Carroll** has retired as pastor of Baugh Church, Austin. He currently is living in Murfreesboro.

**Joe Gillen** is serving in his first field of service as pastor of Zion's Light Chapel, a mission of First Church, Marshall. He is a former member of Woodland Heights Church in Harrison.

**Bob Eubanks** is serving as pastor of Diamond City Church which was constituted

Jan. 10. Eubanks, who had been retired, has also served as pastor of other churches in Arkansas and Missouri.

**Jack Taylor** is serving as pastor of Valley View Mission, a mission of First Church of Berryville. He moved there from Louisiana.

**Orland Beard** is serving as pastor of Smyrna Church, Mount Vernon. Beard, who had been retired, has served as pastor of other churches in Faulkner Association.

**Eric Dale** is serving as minister of music and youth at Holland Church, Vilonia. He is a junior at the University of Central Arkansas, majoring in performing arts.

**Don Edmiston** is serving as pastor of Alexander Church, Paragould. He moved to his new church field from First Church in Paragould where he had been serving for three years as youth director.

**S. Edward Ellis Jr.** joined the staff of First Church in Batesville Jan. 17 as minister of education and outreach, coming there from Florence, Ala., where he had been serving on the staff of Woodmont Church. He is a graduate of Northwestern Oklahoma State University, Tahlequah, Okla., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Ellis also has served other churches in Alabama and Texas. He and his wife, Leslie, have three children, Carmen, Sara and Lindsey.

**Jim Willey** is serving as bivocational pastor of Calvary Church in Searcy. He has been serving as an evangelist.

**Charles Ballentine** is serving as pastor of Little Hope Church, Oden. A bivocational pastor, he was serving as pastor of Community Bible Church in Caddo River Association.

**Dale Howell** is serving as bivocational pastor of Mt. Gilead Church, Norman. He formerly served as pastor of Big Fork Church, Mena.

**Joe Damazio** is serving as bivocational pastor of Big Fork Church, Mena.

**Wes Hamilton** is serving as part-time youth minister for Sylvan Hills First Church, North Little Rock. He is a student at Ouachita Baptist University, pursuing a bachelor of arts degree in biblical studies with emphasis on the biblical language.

**Dale Shepardson** is serving as pastor of Johnson Church. He was a member of Goshen Church where he was ordained to the ministry. Shepardson, as well as serv-

ing as a supply preacher in Washington-Madison Association churches, has served as pastor of a California church.

**Ronnie Cox** is serving as interim music director for First Church in Fayetteville where he previously has served. Cox, who is an officer at First National Bank of Springdale, has also served on the staff of Wynne Church and as a member of the Arkansas Baptist Foundation Board. He and his wife, Sherrill, have two sons, Bryan and Mark.

**Marty Collier** began serving Dec. 27, 1992, as youth minister of Graves Memorial Church, North Little Rock. He currently is a student at Ouachita Baptist University, majoring in biblical studies. A native of Ashdown, he is a former member of First Church of Ashdown where he was licensed to the ministry in 1991.

**Troy Harris** of Harrell is serving as pastor of Harmony Church, Thornton. He has been a member of First Church Hampton, returning to Arkansas after serving as pastor of churches in California.

## Obituaries

**Paul Howell Pearson** of Roe died Jan. 12 at age 79. His funeral services were held Jan. 15 at First Church of Aberdeen where he had served as pastor since 1978. He previously had served as pastor of Hummoke Church. Survivors include his wife, Dorothy Stauber Pearson; a son, Kelly Pearson of Helena; a daughter, Paula Barnett of Stuttgart; a brother; a sister; and five grandchildren. Memorials may be made to Aberdeen First Church, Gideon's International or the American Heart Association.

**Rex Easterling** of Rogers died Jan. 10 at age 54. He was a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. A minister for 28 years, Easterling had served as pastor of churches in Oklahoma, Texas and Arkansas. Churches he had served in Arkansas include First of Mulberry, Open Door of Rogers and First Church of Lowell where currently he was most recently a member. He also had served as associate pastor of First Church of Rogers where his memorial services were held Jan. 14. Survivors are his wife, Sharon Nell Easterling; two sons, Ken and Jon Easterling of Rogers; two daughters, Kenell Patterson of Rogers and Karen Schermerhorn of Collinsville, Ill.; two brothers; and eight grandchildren. Memorials may be made to the Lowell church or charity of the donor's choice.

# Batesville teenager named to National Acteens Panel

By Susan Doyle  
SBC Woman's Missionary Union

**BIRMINGHAM, AL**—Wendy Elizabeth Hoag, a member of West Church in Batesville, has been named to the 1993 Acteens National Advisory Panel.

Hoag was selected from 103 teenage Acteen members nationwide who applied to serve on the six-member panel. Acteens is the missions organization for girls in grades seven through 12.

"As always the selection of the panel is a difficult task," said Marti Solomon, national Acteens specialist. "There are so many highly qualified girls that it is a challenge to choose only six. However, the selection committee felt particularly led to Wendy and the other five who were chosen."

"The Acteens selected for the National Acteens Panel are making a world of difference in their corners of the world," said Jan Turrentine, editor of the Acteens magazine, *Accent*. "Through their participation in all that the Acteens organization has to offer, they have acquired skills and developed personal talents and gifts. They have learned that one person can make a difference when that person is committed and obedient to God and to the Christian lifestyle."

Selections are based on scholastic achievement; school and church activi-

ties; and accomplishments in StudAct, Acteens' individual achievement plan.

In addition to their applications and written testimonies, candidates had to be recommended by their pastor and Acteens leader.

The panelists were selected by staff at the WMU national office and were announced during the WMU's Jan. 9-13 Executive Board meeting.

Hoag, 17, is a six-year member of Acteens. She has completed the "Queen Regent in Service" level in StudAct.

"Acteens gives girls like me the chance to not just read and see pictures of missions needs and missionaries," said Hoag. "It gives us the chance to go and see it for ourselves, to do ourselves and to meet those extraordinary people called 'missionaries' and know that God uses ordinary people like me and turns them into extraordinary people called 'Christians.'"

A high school senior, Hoag is involved in teaching literacy and leading in children's church.

Panelists' duties will include writing for *Accent* and participating in state and associational WMU-related meetings. They also will serve as pages at the WMU annual meeting June 13-14 in Houston, Texas, and at the Southern Baptist Convention June 15-17 in Houston.

The panelists will serve until Dec. 31, when selection for new panelists begins.

## New Christian money management material available for local churches

**NASHVILLE, TN (BP)**—A simple plan for teaching Christian money management, "Live Wisely," has been released by the Southern Baptist Stewardship Commission in a first-ever convention-wide emphasis.

The new emphasis and materials have been in development for two years, according to Lee Davis, money management specialist for the commission.

Materials available include a "How to Conduct a Live Wisely Emphasis" guidebook and *Five Steps to Successful Money Management*, a new Broadman Press book.

The guidebook outlines a one-Sunday emphasis supported with preaching helps, devotional, tract and poster.

"What's unique about the guidebook," Davis said, "is its thorough yet simple content." Also included is a teaching outline provided for church leaders who conduct the suggested one-hour training session.

The new book is for members participating in the emphasis. "The book covers every basic element of money management for individuals and families which I've discovered in 13 years of studying and teaching the subject," author Davis said. "I've used the principles successfully myself for all of these years and have given many personal experiences throughout the book."

"The Christian Manager," a money management program, also is available for MS-DOS computers.

James Walker, director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention's stewardship/annuity department said the material is "very practical and user friendly." He described the "Live Wisely" material as "an excellent introduction to family money management."

Additional information is available from Walker at P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203; phone 376-4791, ext. 5114.

# Family's escape from Vietnam yields personal faith and a growing ministry

By Eva Wilson

Baptist Press

GARDEN CITY, KS (BP)—When freedom was in sight, Thomas Tran turned back.

After escaping from a prison camp in his native Vietnam, Tran had passed through Cambodia to Thailand, where a chance to escape communism awaited him.

"But I missed my family," Tran said. So he went back to Vietnam to find his wife, Sarah; his daughter, Thu Van; and his son, Vi Nhan.

Now living in Garden City, Kan., and ministering to Vietnamese in Western Kansas Baptist Association, the Trans related their story during a recent interview at First Southern Baptist Church in Garden City, where he is pastor of a Vietnamese mission.

After Tran found his family back in Vietnam, they set out to find freedom together. They paid a guide five ounces in gold per person to lead them across Cambodia to safety in Thailand.

But when they reached the Thailand border, they were captured by the Khmer Rouge, soldiers known for their brutality.

The Trans' son, who was very ill, was examined by a Red Cross doctor. The doctor persuaded the Khmer Rouge to allow the boy and his mother to cross into Thailand in exchange for 20 25-pound bags of rice.

## 'God was with me'

Meanwhile, the Khmer Rouge daily were selecting prisoners to kill, and the situation grew more tense.

The Red Cross doctor intervened again by claiming that the Trans' son was dying and persuaded the Khmer Rouge to release Tran and his daughter, Thu Van. So more rice was exchanged.

However, when Tran saw his son, the boy was running and playing. "In that time, I knew God was with me," said Tran, although he was not a Christian at the time.

The Trans were in a refugee camp in Thailand for two years. They were allowed two bowls of rice per person daily, along with a gallon of water and a teaspoon of soap. Once a week they received a can of fish.

They were eventually accepted to immigrate to the United States. Before going to the U.S., they spent eight months in a refugee camp in the Philippines, where

they were oriented to American life.

in the Philippine camp, Tran began to worry about how he would survive in the United States. He had no job skills and couldn't speak English, so how could he find a job?

While in the camp, Tran wandered by a church organized by Southern Baptist missionaries and heard singing. He wondered why the people were happy when his heart was so burdened.

So Tran went into the church and met Vinh Le, a physician from Vietnam who was a Christian.

Tran went to church a few times and decided he wanted a Bible. Southern Baptist missionary Doug Kellum asked Tran to memorize 20 verses before he received a Bible. Thomas decided to memorize 40 verses so he could receive both an English Bible and a Vietnamese Bible.

He accepted Christ as his Savior and was baptized in a stream. Then he went home and told his wife what he had done. But Mrs. Tran laughed at him and said she would believe her husband's faith was real if he quit drinking and smoking.

As Tran grew in his newfound faith, his wife saw he had truly changed. So she and daughter Thu Van also accepted Christ.

After leaving the refugee camp in the Philippines, the Trans went to Wichita, Kan., where they stayed for a short time. They learned of job openings at the Iowa Beef Processors packing plant west of Garden City and decided to move.

In March 1991, a Vietnamese revival was held in Garden City. Vinh Le, who is now a pastor in Colorado, was the evangelist. On the last day of the revival, Le went to visit a Vietnamese family. This family said they knew of a Christian Vietnamese family.

So Le called the family; it turned out to be the Trans. Le invited the Trans to the revival and a joyful reunion took place.

"They could not believe they were seeing each other again," recalled Randy Caddell, pastor of the Garden City church which now sponsors the Vietnamese mission where Tran serves.

Several Vietnamese accepted Christ during the revival. And Vietnamese Sunday School classes, along with English-as-a-second-language classes, were started at First Southern Baptist Church as a result of the revival.

During an associational evangelism conference in the fall of 1991, Thomas and Sarah Tran made a public commitment to Christian service.

Tran began serving as lay pastor for Vietnamese congregations in Garden City and Liberal and became a full-time pastor Jan. 1. His salary is funded through the Kansas-Nebraska Convention of Southern Baptists and the Home Mission Board.

On Sunday mornings, he leads the Vietnamese Sunday School class and worship service at First Southern Baptist Church in Garden City. The Vietnamese Sunday School class has grown from six to 45 members, with an average attendance of 18 to 20.

Tran then travels to Liberal and works with the Vietnamese Sunday School class which meets at First Southern Baptist Church in that city.

In April 1992, First Southern Church in Garden City licensed Tran to the gospel ministry. The church ordained him on Jan. 17.

Since the Vietnamese ministry began in the association, 34 persons have accepted Christ as Savior. Noting the potential for ongoing ministry, Caddell said approximately 5,000 Southeast Asians live in the area.

## Missionary Notes

Stephen and Susan Bowers, missionaries to Ecuador, are in the States (address: 2520 Hilderbrand Dr., Douglasville, GA 30135). He was born in Blytheville, and considers Baton Rouge, La., his hometown. She is the former Susan Underwood of Georgia. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1988.

Harold and Rene Mitchell, missionaries to Rwanda, are in the States (address: 717 N. Hughes St., Little Rock, AR 72205). They are natives of Pine Bluff. She is the former Rene Boschette. They were appointed in 1976.

## MK Birthdays

The following missionary kids attending college in Arkansas have birthdays in February.

■ Feb. 11 — Carol Anne Hardister, OBU Box 3090, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001; senior from Jordan.

■ Feb. 22 — Scott Pickle, OBU Box 3843, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001; senior from Ecuador.



## Baptist relief workers in Iraq not evacuating

LONDON (BP)—Southern Baptist aid workers in Iraq indicated no intention of evacuating Jan. 18, despite the expansion of allied air strikes to Iraqi bases in the northern "no fly" zone where they work.

Paul Smith, leader of the workers in the area, contacted the organization for which they work.

"We're under pretty severe alert," he told a Global Partners official. "Lots of activity is close at hand and it's escalating pretty fast."

Still, he added, the aid workers are "okay and functioning."

"We're making big plans to expand; we're not giving up," Smith insisted, "unless things fall apart" in the region's fragile peace.

"Bottom line is that we are all fine, no one upset. We are continuing our work with precaution."

The Global Partners workers live in Zakho, near the Turkish border in the northern "no fly" zone, where they aid Kurdish people through medical clinics, well drilling and seed distribution.

Smith earlier said the workers would cease operation for several days after the Jan. 13 allied bombing of Iraqi missile sites bordering the southern "no fly" zone. Allied authorities in the northern area warned foreign relief workers to prepare for an increased risk of harassment or terrorism.

Western workers in the northern region have been targeted repeatedly over the last year in bombing incidents, shootings and destruction of vehicles and relief equipment.

Should they need to evacuate, the Global Partners workers have a detailed plan and could be "out of here ... in 15 minutes" on the way to Turkey, Smith said Jan. 13.

Global Partners personnel in Zakho include Smith, of West Monroe, La., and his wife, Virginia, of Farmington, Mo.; physician Robert Pepper of Beaumont, Texas, and his wife, Rhonda, of Rutledge, Ga.; well-drilling coordinator Art Baker of Georgetown, S.C.; and Chris Unger, a German. Seed-distribution coordinator Bill Hinton of Hopkinsville, Ky., has departed for Turkey on his way home to the United States.

## BWA team declares Cuba wide open to the gospel

By Wendy Ryan  
Baptist Press

WASHINGTON (BP)—While life seems harder in Cuba, and the political situation more tense, "openness to the gospel seems even more apparent now than 12 months ago," according to Tony Cupit, director of evangelism for the Baptist World Alliance.

Cupit led a seven-member BWA evangelistic team of British and American Baptist pastors and denominational leaders to Cuba in December that visited not only churches, but hospitals, factories, house churches and government officials.

"We also engaged in extensive pastoral visitation with Cuban pastors," said Cupit, who also led a BWA evangelistic team to Cuba in the fall of 1991.

### Political tensions

But before the most recent visit could start, political tensions between Cuba and the United States took a toll on the team—only seven of 14 requested visas were granted.

The seven visas granted were those requested by the Baptist Convention of Eastern Cuba, the group to which American Baptists relate. The Baptist Convention of Western Cuba, which Southern Baptists relate to, was denied all requested visas.

"The leaders are suddenly feeling vulnerable," Cupit said. "We are alone," some of the western convention leaders told him.

"While failure to secure all the visas for the BWA trip was disappointing, the group that went was outstanding," Cupit said, "and we saw such an openness to the gospel," evidenced by some 400 first-time decisions for Christ as a result of the team's preaching.

It was also seen in how the Cubans refused to let blackouts and transportation problems (horse and cart, tractors and fuel shortages for those with cars) keep them from the evangelistic meetings.

"It was unusual to have a service or a meeting without a response to the gospel," Cupit said. "Generally the responses were immediate; there was no need to prolong the appeal."

"The most exciting time for an evangelism impact in Cuba is now," said team member Isaac Torres, Hispanic consultant for the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

"What we have heard and what we have seen is, 'You have been sent from God,'" even from some Community Party members, Torres said.

"Not knowing, I witnessed to a man who was the head man of the party in the Granma province where I preached," Torres recounted.

"I was invited to eat at his home. He and his wife are medical doctors and his wife, a leader in the party, gave evidence that the Holy Spirit is at work in their lives.

"The man gave me his personal card and said, 'I am sorry but we are not allowed to go to any church,' but I was invited to speak at the medical center, at the human resources office where all the employees were asked by the supervisor to be present during the preaching.

"When an invitation was given to give public evidence of their faith in Jesus Christ by raising their hands, 10 made it public in that particular place." In another setting, Torres said, "A teacher brought her children to the place where I was staying so I could speak to them."

"Seeing an entire family come to Christ, including aunts and uncles was a highlight," said Daniel Sanchez, professor of missions and evangelism at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

"As soon as the invitation was given, one by one, in quick succession, they raised their hands and then made their way to the front to make a public profession of faith. The delight reflected in their faces when they received a Bible was something to behold."

### 'Marvelous testimonies'

Sanchez spent much of his time teaching a course on evangelism and church growth at the Baptist Seminary in Santiago de Cuba. The seminary is affiliated with the eastern convention.

Because of limited training opportunities for seminary faculty and the extreme difficulty in securing good texts in Spanish, the seminary struggles to maintain a good teaching standard.

"The students were so eager to learn that every free moment was spent answering their questions and hearing their marvelous testimonies of conversion," Sanchez said.

"Even though transportation is very difficult, these students look forward to the weekend where they have learned to practice what they have been put into



# ABN board receives positive financial report, plans for '93

The *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* ended 1992 with a net income of more than \$78,000, according to a year-end financial report. That contrasts with a \$28,000 deficit recorded in 1991.

The Newsmagazine board of directors began addressing the previous deficit by reducing both the frequency of publication and the size of the Newsmagazine staff. Those decisions, combined with underspending the 1992 budget, have helped the Newsmagazine regain financial stability.

"I deeply appreciate the board's willingness to make difficult decisions for the good of the Newsmagazine," noted editor Trennis Henderson. "I look forward to continued growth as we seek to effectively serve our readers throughout the state."

In other business during the board's Jan. 12 meeting in Little Rock, board members voted to set aside up to \$40,000 from 1992 income to help provide funds to hire an additional staff member in the future.

They also voted to set aside \$10,000 in the interest of possibly establishing a future endowment for the Newsmagazine.

Henderson reported that circulation growth continues to be a top priority, with the current number of subscriptions totaling just over 40,000. A series of "Editor's Forum" meetings, to be scheduled later this year throughout the state, will provide Arkansas Baptists an opportunity to meet and dialogue with the new editor.

## Board committees

Board members approved three committees to serve during the coming year. They include advisory committee: Curt Hodges (chairman), Greg Kirksey and Cliff Palmer; budget and finance committee: Lane Strother (chairman), Brenda Bruce and Nelson Wilhelm; and personnel committee: Bert Thomas (chairman), Lucie Hagins and Rick Hyde. Kirksey, president of the board, also will chair the executive committee which includes the chairmen

of each of the other board committees.

The board voted to amend the Newsmagazine's letters to the editor policy, limiting letter writers to no more than one published letter per quarter. They also heard a report from the advisory committee which voted to "reaffirm that the editor shall be accorded full freedom with respect to the selection and use of all printed matter." Both actions came in response to the ABN study report which was approved by Arkansas Baptist messengers in November.

In other actions, Henderson reported that Herschel Hobbs has agreed to write a series of articles for the Newsmagazine beginning in March. The series, which will examine the 1963 Baptist Faith and Message statement, will coincide with the 30th anniversary of the statement's adoption. Hobbs, pastor emeritus of First Baptist Church, Oklahoma City, was chairman of the committee which produced the 1963 statement.

Henderson noted that Arkansas Baptist pastors not currently receiving the Newsmagazine will receive a one-year free subscription during 1993. The subscriptions are being provided through the ABSC Executive Board budget.

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7:00-9:00 p.m.

#### FEBRUARY 23

First Baptist Church, Fordyce

For: Carey, Harmony and Bartholomew Associations

7:00-9:00 p.m.

#### FEBRUARY 25

Temple Baptist Church, Fort Smith

For: Concord, Clear Creek and Buckner Associations

7:00-9:00 p.m.

For further information, contact:

**L.B. Jordan, Director CLS Dept., 376-4791, ext. 5148.**



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# National CBF leader speaks in Arkansas

By Trennis Henderson  
Editor, Arkansas Baptist

Cecil Sherman, national coordinator of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, spoke recently at a series of meetings held across Arkansas. Sherman's trip was coordinated by the Arkansas Fellowship of Concerned Southern Baptists. Both groups differ with the current direction of the Southern Baptist Convention.

"The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship is a group of people—and it's more people than churches," Sherman told a group of about 80 people gathered Jan. 14 at Second Church, Little Rock. "We come out of the troubles of the Southern Baptist Convention over the last 14 years."

In addition to the Little Rock meeting, Sherman spoke to groups in EF Dorado, Mountain Home and Fayetteville during the week.

Sharing his perspective of the Southern Baptist controversy, Sherman told the Little Rock gathering, "The Southern Baptist Convention was a very orderly, function-

ing and useful body facing outward and beginning in 1979 a great deal of our energies have turned inward as we have fallen on one another."

Acknowledging his personal efforts to organize moderates to counter announced conservative plans to gain control of the convention, Sherman noted, "We were never successful. We never prevailed."

Following more than a decade of conservative leadership in the convention, he added, "It has been unbroken over so long a period of time now all of the boards are pretty well peopled by one side in Southern Baptist life....One set of ideas has become the controlling ideas in the board rooms."

Sherman said many moderates and conservatives tend to disagree on such subjects as inerrancy, education, women, the role of the pastor, mission strategy and church-state separation.

"We think things are not being done in Baptist ways," he declared. "It's not a case of they've got to do everything our way....It's that our point of view on these

ideas is not being argued at the table."

That sense of frustration eventually contributed to the official establishment of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship in May 1991.

"Nobody left the SBC; they formed the CBF," Sherman explained. "CBF is primarily a group of people who are trying to do missions in a different way."

In addition to sponsoring 20 former Southern Baptist missionaries in Europe, the Fellowship helps fund such agencies as the International Baptist Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland, and the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs. The group also channels approximately 50 percent of its income to SBC causes and state conventions. "We send more to the Southern Baptist Convention each month than a sizable number of state conventions do," Sherman pointed out.

He said nearly 800 churches from 31 states, including 14 in Arkansas, have channeled funds through CBF.

Responding to a question about CBF eventually establishing a separate convention, Sherman said, "CBF could become another convention when the majority of the people at CBF vote to become a convention....Most of the people—I would guess about 80 to 90 percent of the people in CBF—do not want to make that step now."

Comparing a church's decision to support CBF to another church supporting independent Mid-America Baptist Seminary in Memphis, Sherman asked, "What's the difference in what we're doing and what they're doing?...It's a case of exercising the local autonomy of a Baptist congregation."

By contrast, SBC Executive Committee president Morris Chapman remarked in November that CBF's "greatest integrity would be openly declaring they no longer are cooperating Southern Baptists, rather than claiming to be Southern Baptists and trying to draw funds from good-hearted, grassroots Southern Baptists."

Emphasizing that Southern Baptists "began as a freedom people," Sherman urged listeners to not compromise their convictions. "We're the folks who are supposed to free things up," he insisted. "Whatever happened to freedom?"

Emil Williams, moderator of the Arkansas Fellowship, said he does not view CBF as a threat to Arkansas Baptist ministry. "We are still Arkansas Baptists and have no intention of being anything else," said Williams, pastor of First Church, Jonesboro. "We're still supporting Arkansas Baptist work."

## RACE RELATIONS CONFERENCE

February 11

9:00 A.M. - 12:15 P.M.

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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"Perspectives on the African-American  
in a Predominately White Organization"

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Business Perspective: James Haymon  
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Legal Perspective: Wendell Griffen

**Sponsor:** Cooperative Ministries with National and Southern Baptists of Arkansas

# Innovative churches encourage growth

By Sarah Zimmerman

SBC Home Mission Board

HOUSTON (BP)—Innovative churches will play a leading role in the future of the Southern Baptist Convention, said speakers during a conference for leaders of such congregations.

At least 1,200 people, from as far away as Georgia, California and Michigan, attended the three-day forum sponsored by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board and Vision 2000, a network of innovative church leaders.

"The spirit, attendance, interest and evident presence of the Spirit of God at this meeting are far greater than any of us anticipated," said Charles Chaney, HMB vice president for extension.

Innovative churches demonstrate new ways to reach lost people, to build them up in Christ and send them into the ministry, Chaney noted. Such churches become the "research and development department of the denomination" as they test new methods, he said.

With more than half of Southern Baptist churches plateaued or declining, conference leaders said innovation is essential. Rick Warren, pastor of Saddleback Valley Community Church in Mission Viejo, Calif., told participants, "You are the future of the Southern Baptist Convention." Others called the conference, the first of its kind, a "historic meeting" and a "watershed event."

Churches labeled as innovative are not all alike, but typically their primary focus is attracting unchurched people. Some use drama in their services, sing more choruses than hymns and ask those making commitments to use response cards rather than walk down the aisle.

Churches that break from tradition, however, should not discount the past, said Erwin McManus, director of Global Impact in California and one of the meeting's organizers.

"Leaders of the past have given us a love for the Word and a commitment to seeing people come to know Jesus. We must not give up our heritage and our roots," McManus said.

"God is not a rigid God," he added. "He is creative. God said, 'Behold, I will do a new thing.' You were not called to live in the past but to launch from the past."

Purpose statements are essential road maps for launching into the future, several conference speakers said.

A clearly defined and effectively communicated purpose statement offers several benefits, Warren said. In addition to

building morale, the statement reduces confusion.

A purpose statement also helps the church concentrate on fulfilling its task rather than trying to do too many activities, he said.

Commitment to do whatever it takes to reach a community for Christ is the only proper motivation for being innovative, he said.

Innovative church leaders should abide by three rules, said Warren, whose church is among the fastest-growing in the Southern Baptist Convention.

First, never compare ministries. Comparison causes discouragement when leaders find people doing a better job and pride when leaders find others not doing as well.

Second, never criticize others' methods, and stay positive when being criticized. "My goal is to stand before Jesus and hear Him say, 'Well done, my good and faithful servant.' Live your life for an audience of one."

Third, never give up. "Keep your eyes on the goal, and the goal is changed lives."

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### Langemeier new BSU assistant at Ouachita

Kristi Langemeier has joined the Baptist Student Union program at Ouachita Baptist University as an assistant to Ian Cosh, BSU director and director of religious activities.

Langemeier, 24, is a native of Liberty, Mo., and a graduate of Southwest Missouri State University in Springfield.

Her job description centers on relating to students through the campus discipleship program and helping with directing committee goals.

In addition to assisting Cosh with the 18 BSU discipleship groups on campus and the work of the BSU office, Langemeier will aid the director in planning upcoming mission trips to Ecuador and Florida.



### Program recounts Baptist relief efforts

JACKSONVILLE, FL (BP)—"When the Storms Passed By," a documentary about Southern Baptists' response to Hurricane Andrew in Florida and Louisiana, as well as Hurricane Iniki in Hawaii, will be shown on the ACTS/VISN and Family Net cable systems Jan. 30 at 9 p.m.

The in-depth report presents the initial impact of the hurricane on the states and the ongoing ministry of Southern Baptist churches to local residents.

The hour-long program includes a segment on the volunteers who rebuilt homes in south Florida over the New Year's holiday and discusses the continuing needs.

Produced by the media services department

of the Jacksonville-based Florida Baptist Convention, the program is probably one of the "rare occasions" a state organization has produced a documentary for a national audience, said Ty Wood, director of the department.

Wood said producing the piece gave him a new appreciation for Southern Baptists. "As I began looking at this nationally, I received a fresh insight into Southern Baptists and how we can almost simultaneously respond to three national disasters on the scope that we did."

The ACTS/VISN Network can be seen on 1,200-plus cable systems with a viewership of 20 million households.

### Volleyball tourney to benefit Children's Home

The sixth annual Arkansas Baptist Children's Home Mixed Volleyball Tournament, hosted by Monticello First Church, will be held on Saturday, Feb. 6, at several gyms located in Monticello. All entry fees, after trophy costs and gym rental, will be given to the Arkansas Baptist Children's Home in Monticello.

A \$50 per team fee is due Jan. 30. Confirmation, playing times and location will be mailed to the team representative. For more information, contact Tom McCome, minister of music and youth at Monticello First Church, at 367-3449. Mail entry fees to First Baptist Church, 413 N. Main, Monticello, AR 71655.

#### AN INVITATION TO OUACHITA'S ALUMNI & FRIENDS

# Alumni '93

## WEEKEND

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History of the Red River Region  
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Music of the South  
Preaching in the 90s  
The Road to the White House

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Medicine: Southwest Arkansas Physicians Update: \$50 by Feb. 15, \$75 after Feb. 15

Education: Managing Stress: \$35 by Feb. 15, \$45 after Feb. 15

Law: Continuing Legal Education Update: \$65 by Feb. 15, \$75 after Feb. 15

#### ◆ Preschool Activities: \$15 by Feb. 15, \$25 after Feb. 15

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\$50 maximum fee per family for preschool, children & youth activities

For more information about Alumni Weekend, contact:  
Alumni Office  
Ouachita Baptist University  
P.O. Box 3762  
Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001  
501-245-5506

## Southern's Simmons takes early retirement

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP/ABP)—Paul D. Simmons has taken early retirement from his teaching position at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in the wake of a film he showed to a class in December that sparked controversy over its sexual content.

Simmons submitted a letter to seminary president Roy L. Honeycutt Jan. 6 announcing his retirement effective retroactively to Dec. 31. Simmons' decision abruptly ended a 22-year career as an ethics professor at the Louisville, Ky., school.

Simmons, 56, has faced mounting pressure in recent years from seminary trustees who disagree with his pro-choice views on abortion. The last in a series of attempts to resolve the conflict failed Dec. 15 when trustees at a called meeting in Atlanta soundly defeated a proposal from their academic personnel committee to buy out Simmons' teaching contract. (See *Arkansas Baptist News Magazine*, Dec. 31, 1992, issue, page 12.)

After the closed-door meeting in December, Honeycutt told reporters the trustees' decision put efforts to resolve the issue "back to ground zero." Several trustees speculated publicly that formal charges of dismissal would be filed against Simmons in the coming months.

Since that meeting, however, new controversy flared suddenly on a different front. Near the end of the fall semester,

Simmons showed an explicit video on disabled persons and sexuality to a masters-level class on "The Church and Sexuality."

When four students from the class registered formal complaints, the matter was placed under administrative review. Before the review was completed, however, Simmons announced his decision to retire.

Honeycutt said seminary officials had not requested Simmons' resignation and that the formal action under consideration in response to the classroom incident did not include dismissal.

"Dr. Simmons has been a productive and effective member of the seminary faculty," Honeycutt said. "In more than two decades of teaching ministry on this campus, students and faculty colleagues have admired him for his commitment to integrity, his dedication to teaching and his devotion to Christ.

"It's healthy for Paul that the long period of controversy has come to an end," Honeycutt added. "I felt it came to an end at Paul's decision. It should introduce an era of some stability in the arena."

Simmons described the ordeal that led to his retirement as "an enormous grief." Insisting that his presentation of the video "was carefully and professionally done" in the course's larger context of sexual ethics, Simmons said, "The thing

that provoked my decision and finalized it in my mind was the political nature of the administrative response. Taking early retirement is an option I have considered for a couple of years. At some point, I've been aware my tenure would be over. The question was when and how."

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## NATION

# Tom Elliff expected to be nominated as Foreign Mission Board president

RICHMOND, VA (ABP) — Oklahoma pastor Tom Elliff is expected to be nominated as president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board when trustees meet Feb. 8-10.

Elliff, 48, is pastor of First Southern Baptist Church in Del City, and was an FMB missionary for a short time. Although no public announcement of Elliff's selection has been made, FMB trustee chairman John Jackson said Jan. 11 that the search committee had made its choice. The committee will mail trustees a packet of information about the nominee early this week, according to sources close to the process.

News of Elliff's selection was reported by the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* Jan. 23. It was confirmed by several sources at the Richmond-based agency.

Elliff is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

Born in Paris, Texas, Elliff lived in Texas, Arkansas and Missouri while growing up. He served Baptist churches in Arkansas during college and in Texas during seminary. He left for the mission field in 1981, serving two years as a church development consultant in Zimbabwe.

## Southern search narrowed to four

MEMPHIS, TN (BP)—Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's presidential search committee has narrowed its list of potential nominees to four.

Wayne Allen, chairman of the Louisville, Ky., seminary's trustees, said the names are not being released at the request of the four individuals.

Allen, in a telephone interview with Baptist Press, said the seven-member search committee met Jan. 11-12 in Memphis and settled on four potential nominees as successful to Roy L. Honeycutt.

The committee will interview the four potential nominees in mid-February, Allen

said, and select the person it will recommend to fellow trustees in early March.

After one further in-depth interview, the individual's name will be announced in April, Allen said.

"We are doing background checks theologically, psychologically, physically and financially," Allen said. "We want everybody to know we're doing a thorough job of research regarding the person we will nominate." He said the committee is asking each nominee to provide a brief written interpretation of each article in the *Abstract of Principles*, the document signed by new faculty members.

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## Convention Uniform

### Christ's new kingdom

By Hunter R. Douglas, Woodlawn Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: Luke 24:13-53

Focal passage: Luke 24:36-53

Central truth: Every Christian is called to witness.

Jesus had tried to explain His mission and His kingdom. They were not to lord it over others, like the kings. "I am among you as one who serves" (Luke 22:25-27). He would suffer. His disciples "did not understand any of this" (Luke 18:31-34).

The Jews could not conceive of a Christ who would suffer, much less die, even though Jesus plainly told them. "But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself" (John 12:32-33). The Jews replied that their law had taught them to look for a Christ who would remain forever, so they argued (John 12:34). When Jesus had fed the 5,000, He had to flee them, because they intended to make Him a king by force (John 6:15).

The Jews, waiting for the Messiah, wanted power, and a kingdom, without their suffering, and at the shedding of someone else's blood. "Talk of 'Our suffering' and 'My blood' meant nothing to them. No wonder Jesus told the two walking to Emmaus 'How foolish you are' (Luke 24:25). Jesus, to them, was "a prophet, powerful in word and deed" (Luke 24:19). They saw Him suffer, and lost hope that He would redeem Israel. No wonder they did not recognize Him while He was explaining His suffering.

The disciples were not persuaded until confronted with the face-to-face reality of the risen Christ. Only after they knew it really was Him, would they listen. "Then he opened their minds so they could understand the scriptures" (Luke 24:45).

The Christ they had been looking for indeed had come. He had suffered and had risen from the dead on the third day, just as it had been written "in the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms" (Luke 24:44-46). This was a new kind of Christ to them, and a new kind of Kingdom, which they had not understood.

There was a new power, and a new commission. This power was not for enslaving, but for freeing and empowering people. "And repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations" (Luke 24:47). By this power all Christians are commissioned to spread the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ.

## Life and Work

### Faithful to the finish

By Bruce Tippit, Pianna Hills Church, Fort Smith

Basic passage: Genesis 23:1 - 25:11

Focal passage: Genesis 23:1-2,3-4,

17-20; 24:1-9; 25:1-11

Central truth: The value of a believer's life is measured more by their finish than their start.

One of the most dramatic statements of Paul's ministry was his comment to Timothy, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith" (2 Tim. 4:7). Our ability to finish our Christian life with faithfulness is more important than how we began. That principle is seen clearly in the life of Abraham. Abraham began by responding to God obediently (Gen. 12:1-4) and finished by serving God faithfully (Gen. 25:8).

First, Abraham refused to let life's greatest loss eliminate his greatest gain (Gen. 23:1-4). Sarah was Abraham's companion for well over 100 years. Now she had been taken from him. The issue would be whether or not he would allow this great loss to destroy all the gains he had made as a man of God. There are many losses we suffer as Christians. However, we must not let these cause us to lose our faith but renew our faithfulness.

Abraham also continued to prove his trust in God's promises (Gen. 23:3,4,17-20). It's fascinating that God had promised Abraham that one day the land on which he walked would belong to his children (Gen. 12:7). While almost 100 years later, it took the death of his wife and the purchase of a cave in Canaan for the land in reality to become his. How long will it take for God to fulfill His promises to us? We can't know. Our task is to continue to trust that He will keep His word.

Another area where Abraham proved his faithfulness was his placing his family in the hands of God (Gen. 24:1-9). Abraham knew that his life was drawing to a close and his son Isaac needed a wife. He sent his servant to secure such a woman. God provided everything necessary. Are we willing to trust our family now and tomorrow to God's care? We must if we are to be faithful.

Finally, Abraham gave to his family his faithful heritage (Gen. 25:1-11). At his death he "left everything he owned to Isaac" (Gen. 25:5). That meant material wealth but also the example of a faithful life. This is the greatest inheritance we can give.

## Bible Book

### God restores His people

By George O'Neel, Bella Vista Church

Basic passage: Psalm 77, 85, 126

Focal passage: Psalm 126

Central truth: When God restores His people from captivity it is a time for great rejoicing and for fervent prayer that God will complete His work.

This Psalm was likely one of the Hebrews' favorite songs, comparable to our "Victory in Jesus." They would sing it as they moved toward the temple for worship, rejoicing over the wonderful work God did in bringing them back to Jerusalem from captivity in Babylon.

I. The Captivity, verse 1. Israel's history is a series of captivities: to the Egyptians; to fear and unbelief in the wilderness; to various Canaanite nations like the Philistines and Midianites; and to Babylon. God kept delivering them from their bondage.

A serious question is, "Are God's people in bondage to the world in this present time?" A.W. Tozer wrote more than 30 years ago, "When viewed from the perspective of eternity, the most critical need of this hour may well be that the Church should be brought back from her long Babylonian captivity and the name of God be glorified in her again as of old."

II. The Celebration, verse 1b-3. Those who were released in Babylon could hardly believe the news. There was jubilation at being able to return to Jerusalem and to worship God as their fathers and forefathers had done.

This kind of hostage release was evidently unparalleled in those days, because the pagan neighbors of Israel attributed their liberation to the working of their God.

III. The Cry, verse 4. If the Hebrew people were now liberated, why would they keep praying for God to restore their nation? Evidently it was because not every Jew decided to return to Babylon. They had become comfortable on the enemy's turf. To make the long journey back to Jerusalem would be too great a demand. Yet prayers continued on their behalf because those praying knew that God's renewing work would be like refreshing streams in the desert.

IV. The Promise, verses 5-6. When God's people sow tears of repentance and tears of intercession, there will come a time of spiritual harvest. Here is a key to the revival so desperately needed in our day so as to deliver us from cultural captivity!



## Convention Uniform

### Responding to the gospel

By Hunter R. Douglas, Woodlawn Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: Romans 10

Focal passage: Romans 10:5-17

Central truth: Christians are to proclaim the gospel everywhere.

1. Our response to the gospel is faith. God has provided for man's salvation in Jesus Christ, and all who believe in Him will be saved (Rom. 10:9-11). By grace, God has acted. Mankind must respond to this, through faith, to be saved. "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith" (Eph. 2:8).

2. Our faith response is confession. Jesus taught that "repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in His name to all nations" (Luke 24:47). Repentance can be described as a turning "from sin" to God." In turning to God, we confess we were in sin, and thus wrong and condemned. In repentance, we confess with our mouth that Jesus is Lord (Rom. 10:9). This comes as a result of having truly believed in our hearts that Jesus is Lord, that He is worthy of being our Lord, that He is able to cleanse us from all sin (1 John 1:9). We confess what is in our heart, and we are saved (Rom. 10:10).

3. Our faith response is to trust Him. "Anyone who trusts in Him will never be put to shame" (Rom. 10:11). This means we trust Him for our salvation, for guiding our lives, and we obey His command to make disciples (Matt. 28:19-20).

4. Our faith response is to spread the gospel. "How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in?" (Rom. 10:14). Many have heard, and not believed (Rom. 10:16). Still, we know that "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved" (Rom. 10:13). "How can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?" (Rom. 10:14). The whole of the gospel story is a call to missions by believers. We are not called to privilege, but to service. "Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the Word of Christ (Rom. 10:17). "And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!" (Rom. 10:15). Every Christian is "sent," and each one can proclaim the gospel in some way. "Preaching" means proclamation. How you act every day is a proclamation.

## Life and Work

### Seeing in the dark

By Bruce Tippitt, Flanna Hills Church, Fort Smith

Basic passage: Genesis 27:28

Focal passage: Genesis 28:10-22

Central truth: God wants us to recognize His presence in our times of darkness and confusion.

In every life there are times of darkness and confusion. We think it will never end. We assume that because we feel alone we are alone. Nothing could be further from the truth. In Jacob's encounter with God at Bethel he discovers that when it seems he is abandoned by all, God is there displaying His presence.

Jacob was a fugitive from his brother Esau. He is in this predicament because of his mother's dominance (Gen. 25:28; 26:34-35; 27:5-17, 42-46), his obedience to his father (Gen. 28:1-9) and the failure to decide for himself (Gen. 28:7). Jacob avoided reconciliation with his brother but could not avoid an encounter with the God of his fathers.

While Jacob is alone he has a dream. The circumstance was running from his brother Esau (Gen. 28:10-11). The content was unusual (Gen. 28:12-15). The figure of a ladder reaching up into heaven with angels moving up and down was frightening. Yet, God's one word to Jacob is a promise originally given to Abraham, passed on to Isaac and now given to Jacob (Gen. 28:13-15). The dream convicted Jacob that he was not alone and God had a purpose for him (Gen. 28:16-22).

What happened to Jacob was a gift of God's grace. Jacob was unworthy of such an encounter. God didn't rebuke him but blessed him. This event would dominate the rest of his life. It literally brought a change in the morning. His fears of the future were eliminated. His doubt of the promise was gone.

Do you need to see in your darkness? We can see in the darkness of our circumstances and problems by recognizing the very presence of God (John 1:51), by resting on God's promises (Job 6:10) and we can see in our darkness by remembering God's care for us in the past. Where He has touched us yesterday assures us of His presence tomorrow.

Jacob spent a long night alone, but with the dawn came a different man. Why? He saw God in that darkness. No matter how long the night, we must watch and see....His light on our horizon.

## Bible Book

### Under God's judgment

By George O'Neal, Bella Vista Church

Basic passage: Psalm 58, 83, 137

Focal passage: Psalm 137

Central truth: The person of faith especially experiences agony of soul when under the judgment of God.

This Psalm is like a picture postcard of what life was like for the Hebrew exiles while in Babylonian captivity. It was evidently written by one who had returned to Jerusalem after being released by King Cyrus. This person of faith in Jehovah expresses great commitment to Him but also great anguish of soul.

I. The Bitter Memory, verses 1-2. A group of the Hebrew people gathered on the banks of one of the rivers in Babylon. They brought their musical instruments to play and sing but the conversation turned to how it used to be in Jerusalem. And they were in no mood to sing because they remembered how their beloved city lay in ruins.

II. The Impossible Demand, verses 3-4. Some of their captors came and asked the Hebrews to sing one of their joyful songs about Jerusalem. But how could they change moods so quickly? They were in sorrow over their city. Yet what these exiles likely heard in the request was ridicule and mockery, as if Jehovah must have been asleep when the Babylonian army laid the city waste.

III. The Covenant Response, verses 5-6. For the Jewish people Jerusalem represented the totality of their faith. To think of being disloyal to Jerusalem was like turning their backs on their covenant with God.

IV. The Retaliating Request, verses 7-9. The Edomites were archenemies of Israel and perhaps some exiles still remembered their cheering on the invading Babylonian army. Israel did not want God to forget what their enemy had done.

In verses 8-9, the Hebrews speak a curse on the Babylonians that they would experience the same atrocities which the Hebrews themselves had received. Isaiah prophesies such an event in chapter 13, verse 16, which these exiles may have been aware of.

The New Testament reveals that our enemy is "not flesh and blood but principalities and powers" (Eph. 6:12). Christ teaches His disciples to love and pray for their enemies which can only be accomplished through His supernatural power.



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## NEWS DIGEST

### Baptists securing blankets for needy in Bosnia-Herzegovina

DALLAS (BP)—At the Pentagon's request, the organization of Texas Baptist Men is securing at least 25,000 blankets to be distributed by non-governmental humanitarian groups this winter in war-torn Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Bob Dixon, TBM executive director, received a fax message Jan. 4 from Robert K. Wolthuis, deputy assistant secretary for global affairs, U.S. Department of Defense, citing needs in the former Yugoslavia and asking for help in securing blankets.

Wolthuis explained that the Department of Defense had exhausted its supply of excess blankets and asked that Texas Baptists help secure "vast quantities" of blankets as soon as possible. Dixon made an initial commitment for 25,000 blankets to meet the most immediate needs.

### Homeless families on rise in America, report says

WASHINGTON (ABP)—More Americans are seeking shelter and finding themselves in danger of a hazardous winter this year than in recent years.

According to a report from the National Coalition for the Homeless, the number of Americans seeking shelter has sharply increased over the past two years, and much of the increased demand comes from families with children.

"We fear this winter could be the most dangerous one yet," said Fred Karnes, executive director of the National Coalition for the Homeless.

"We cannot accept homelessness as a common occurrence or norm of life," said Nathan Porter, consultant for domestic hunger for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. "The call we must face is to commitment and action, not only in ministries, but also to bring changes in public policy."

### Poll finds American teenagers say they're religious

PRINCETON, NJ (ABP)—Most American teenagers consider themselves "religious," according to new research by the Gallup Organization.

About seven in 10 teens surveyed said they agree with the statement that they are religious, including 19 percent who agree very strongly. And many teens who don't attend worship regularly still consider themselves religious.

Younger teens are most likely to consider themselves religious, the new poll found. However, a dip in identification with religion occurs around ages 14 to 15.

Teenagers who live in rural areas are more likely than those who live in urban areas to consider themselves religious. For example, only 15 percent of urban teens strongly agreed that they are religious, compared to about 25 percent of rural teens.

The poll was based on telephone interviews with a nationwide representative sampling of 12- to 17-year-olds.

### Ragan Courtney to lead BSSB worship drama focus

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—Ragan Courtney, free-lance actor, producer, playwright and lyricist, will join the Baptist Sunday School Board's church music ministries department Feb. 1 in the newly created position of worship drama consultant.

The focus on worship drama is a part of an expanded concept for church music ministries and is separate from drama skills offered through the board's church recreation program.

A long-time Southern Baptist Christian artist, Courtney, 51, is known for his performances in theater as well as his drama workshops. He is a graduate of Louisiana College and of The Neighborhood Playhouse School of the Theatre in New York City. He has been writer, narrator and actor for the live telecast of the Houston Christmas Pageant for 16 years. For five years he was associate professor of church drama at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. His works include numerous recordings and musical and book publications. Courtney gained early Southern Baptist recognition as lyricist for the 1971 musical drama "Celebrate Life!"

### Japan Baptist Union repents of WWII actions to neighbors

WASHINGTON (BP)—The Japan Baptist Union has adopted a statement of repentance of its cooperation with the Japanese government's World War II activities, "especially the colonial oppressions and the invasions carried out by the government."

"With deep pain, we repent and confess our sins to God and we ask all people who were victimized by our faults to forgive our sins," said the union's "manifesto of repentance," approved at the body's 35th annual meeting last August. The manifesto was received last month at the Baptist World Alliance's headquarters in Washington.

The union, one of four Japanese Baptist bodies in the BWA, encompasses 57 churches with more than 4,800 members.

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