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ARKANSAS BAPTIST



Volume 94, Number 17

August 24, 1995



**Thousands of Baptists from
around the world gathered
in Buenos Aires, Argentina,
to "Celebrate Jesus Christ:
The Hope of the World" during
the 17th Baptist World Congress.**

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WORLD MISSIONS

Arkansas volunteers find age a plus on Africa mission trip

Three Arkansas Baptists whose combined ages make them, according to one, "about as old as the United States," recently completed a near monthlong missions trip to Kenya.

H.E. Williams, Earl Humble and Fred Savage took part in a Southern Baptist missions project to establish new churches in the African country. Williams said about 2,000 missions volunteers converged on Kenya for the effort, coordinated jointly by the Foreign Mission Board and Baptist Sunday School Board.

Williams, 82, is founder and president emeritus of Williams Baptist College. Humble, 79, and Savage, 75, are both retired chairmen of the school's department of religion and philosophy.

The three worked out of Nairobi, Kenya's capital, and were assigned to mission teams that worked in the countryside. They left the States June 29 and returned July 24.

"We were part of a team doing personal work and organizing new churches where we could," Williams explained. "Dr. Humble did start a new church in a community that did not have a church. We also did personal work and discipleship work with new converts."

For Williams, it was his third trip to Kenya. He had helped establish churches there in 1976 and helped start Westlands Baptist Church in Nairobi. During the 1976 trip he also established a link between Kenya and WBC that has brought the school several Kenyan students since 1977.

"There are two reasons I'm making the trip," Savage said in an interview prior to the trip. "I've always been particularly interested in missions in Kenya because of

the students we received from there. Secondly, I have friends there who were my students and I look forward to seeing them."

Williams insisted age didn't play a big part in the group's decision to make the trip. "I'm not dead yet, and as long as I'm not dead, I'm supposed to do something," he commented.

He added that the age of the three worked in their favor. "The Africans call you *m'zee* (Swahili for elder) if you are elderly and they listen to what you say," he noted. "They have greater respect for elderly people. They listen to the *m'zee*. He is considered a man of wisdom, whether he is or not."

"People everywhere, except in the United States, I believe, regard age as a plus," echoed Humble. "In other words, we are supposed to have wisdom and maturity and they respect old age."

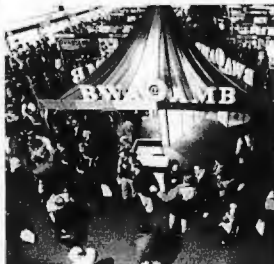
Humble noted that the Kenyans were "gracious" during the volunteers' trip. "I could not have asked for a better reception. We went into homes, we witnessed to people on the street and in the country lands... wherever we could find people.

"The people were responsive. We saw 61 professions of faith," he recalled. "Of course that was only our team. There were 30-something teams."

Williams said that Kenyan Baptists "are growing rapidly in the nation. When I went over in 1976, we had 40,000 Baptists. Now they say we have a quarter of a million."

He added that the missions trip may be his last to Africa. "I don't expect I'll go back over at this age. All three of us together are about as old as the United States."

Cover Story



Baptist World Congress 6-7

Thousands of Baptist from around the world gathered in Buenos Aires, Argentina, Aug. 1-6 for the 17th Baptist World Congress. The international event, held every five years, highlighted the theme, "Celebrate Jesus Christ: The Hope of the World."

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Trennia Henderson.....Editor
Russell N. Dilday.....Associate Editor
Colleen Backus.....Assistant Editor

Mille Gill.....Executive Assistant to the Editor
Becky Hardwick.....Accountant
Erwin L. McDonald, Litt. D.Editor Emeritus

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Acteens cross cultural, language barriers

By Colleen Backus

Assistant Editor, Arkansas Baptist

*"Dear Lord Jesus,
Thank you for dying on
the cross to take away my
sins. I am sorry for all the
wrong things I have done. I
ask you to please come into
my heart and live in my
heart forever. I am trusting
you right now to make my
heart clean. I take you to be
my very own Savior and
Lord. In Jesus' name, Amen.
Kimberly."*

The handwritten note from a second-grade American girl on the military base at Ramstein, Germany, was the highlight of the European Acteen Activators trip for team leader Angela Lowe. More than the Swiss mountains or eating weinerschnitzel, this was what the Activators Abroad program is all about.

Lowe, state Acteens director for Arkansas Woman's Missionary Union, took six Acteens and two leaders to Germany July 14 through Aug. 1. The trip was part of the Arkansas Baptist missions partnership with the European Baptist Convention. Faith Baptist Church in Kaiserslautern, Germany, the largest congregation in the EBC, served as the host church.

When the team members arrived in Kaiserslautern, they discovered that only one of four boxes of supplies shipped by Lowe a month earlier had arrived in Germany. Without the clown suits, face paint and Backyard Bible Club supplies in the missing boxes, the volunteers grew concerned about accomplishing the major thrust of their trip. Lowe requested prayer from the host church and faxed home a prayer request to Arkansas churches.

The next day, the team went to Ramstein Air Force Base, where they had been given permission to lead Backyard Bible Clubs. Not only did the program result in a profession of faith, but as the team was finishing the activities, the pastor's wife from Faith Church, Laurie Martin, drove up with the news that the boxes had arrived. "We jumped up and down, we were so happy to get our supplies and be able to minister," Lowe said.

Misty Rosenbaum, an Activator from Benton First Church, noted, "Always trust in the Lord for anything that needs providing or needs prayer."



Acteen Activators and leaders who ministered in Europe are: (back row, left to right) Angela Lowe, Sandra Kemmer, Katie Galucki, Allison Kemmer and Judy Wood, (front, left to right) Misty Rosenbaum, Heather Sadler, Emily Goode and Jenny Counts.

Team member Heather Sadler from Strawfloor Church in Jonesboro, echoed her sentiment. "The Lord has awesomely shown His wonderful power," she affirmed. "He has shown me how to put my trust in Him."

That evening, the team went to Landstuhl Army Post where they did clowning and puppet skits, testimonies, mime, face painting, animal balloons and tract distribution. They also promoted an upcoming revival, scheduled for the following week. "We were the drawing card," Lowe noted. "In addition to the good crowd in attendance, people opened their windows and listened to us from all over the housing unit."

The team continued to do Backyard Bible Clubs each morning that week. They repeated the clowning activities at Vogelweh Army Post, and on Wednesday afternoon, the team went to Landstuhl Army Hospital dressed as clowns to visit the sick children.

"Activators is a chance to do hands-on work for God," pointed out Allison Kemmer, an Activator from Brinkley First Church. "It's not just reading about what the missionaries do, it's doing missions."

Part of the team went to the military base in Baumholder, expecting to do their clowning presentation on post. Even though contacts had been made earlier, when the team arrived, the head chaplain, from another denomination, would not let them perform. Unfazed, Lowe packed up her team and went to Baumholder Community Lake, a popular recreation site. Once the girls put on their clown costumes, a crowd started gathering.

"The clowning ministry crosses

language barriers," Lowe, emphasized. The team handed out German-English tracts in addition to doing mime, balloon animals and other clowning activities. "The crowds were very receptive," she noted. "We drew not only kids, but their parents."

"I learned that people are the same all over the world," commented Jenny Counts, an Activator from Benton First Church. "They all need God's love. All people have hurts and gaps in their lives that only God can fix. I am God's tool which He can use."

On Friday and Saturday, the girls were program guests for the European Baptist Convention Acteens Lock-in. They led conferences on clowning, mime and drama and also shared their testimonies.

"The Activator team helped me to grow spiritually," noted Katie Galucki, an Activator from Cabot Second Church. "It was a great experience to do the studies and the training and to put all that to use. It was a blessing to work with the children and to meet all the new people."

The team reunited in Kaiserslautern to assist with the "Christ is Alive" revival, led by Romanian pastor Peter Vadou. Veteran Activator Emily Goode from Benton First Church, sang a solo during one service.

"All Activator trips are meaningful in their own ways," Goode said. "Each trip I have been on has allowed me to see various aspects of mission work, grow in my faith and form relationships with the team and people we work with."

During the revival, the Activator team worked with children and preschoolers. "We could win the world for Christ with Acteen Activators," noted Sandra Kemmer, Acteen leader from Brinkley First Church. "It is humbling to see how godly the Activators are."

Leader Judy Wood from Cross Road Church in Little Rock, noted, "God has allowed me through this Activator trip to fulfill two dreams — going to Europe and serving alongside Acteens who love our Lord with all their hearts, souls and minds."

Jimmy Martin, pastor of Faith Baptist Church in Kaiserslautern, noted, "These girls and their sponsors are super folks. They have represented you very well in their commitment to the Lord, their flexibility and their effectiveness as workers. Thanks for sending them to us!"

YOU'LL BE GLAD TO KNOW



By DON MOORE
ABCS Executive Director

"Missions begins at home." Have you heard that before? Is it correct? The answer is, "Yes." Jerusalem and Judea were mentioned by the Lord when He told the disciples that Samaria and the uttermost part of the earth was their responsibility. Our Jerusalem and Judea happens to be Arkansas.

With there being so many churches in Arkansas, it is hard for people to see Arkansas as a mission field. The facts are that there are over one million people in Arkansas without a church home. That increases 60,000 per year. We would need to start 25 churches each year to keep up with the population growth. We are not doing that. We are presently helping 52 missions and 34 Bible study groups we hope will become churches soon.

One factor hard for most Arkansas Baptists to realize is how many people of other languages now live in Arkansas. Most of them have Catholic, Buddhist, Muslim or Hindu backgrounds. God may have sent them here believing Arkansas Baptists would faithfully share Christ and His Word with them. We now have 57 congregations in Arkansas that worship in a language other than English. The mission field is very much here.

Huge opportunities are ours as our prison systems fill and expand. Our chaplains see 400 or more saved every year.

Almost half of the support for mission projects in Arkansas comes from the Dixie Jackson Missions Offering. From migrant centers where we witness to over 10,000 each year, to the Federal Rehabilitation Center in Hot Springs, to the resorts on our lakes and the purchase of portable chapels to help new churches started, our state missions department is striving to get the gospel out to all.

Would you give your church the privilege of joining in this ministry? Tell them about the work. Invite them to give. Most of our people will do something to help if they are given an opportunity. Pastor, ask your people to give. Church member, ask your pastor for an opportunity to give. No one will be hurt and many will be helped.

RONNIE ROGERS

President's Corner

Balancing truth, compassion



The Psalmist said of Jesus, "Loving-kindness and truth have met together." Jesus spoke truth that scorched the pride of the Pharisees and ministered to the woman at the well. Our call is to speak the truth without dulling the sharpness of the two-edged sword and yet be as sensitive and compassionate as our Lord Jesus. Great peril comes when we do not speak the truth, acquiescing to modern society's belief that absolute truth is not merciful. Truth should never be sacrificed on the altar of misguided compassion. Conversely, truth without love and compassion is unduly harsh and offensive.

The abortion issue illuminates the potential peril which looms overhead if we fail to balance truth and compassion. Some try to show compassion for the mother by supporting pro-choice — whatever their different rationale may be — but in doing so become accomplices to the murder of innocent children. In their acceptance of compassion without truth, they become barbarically brutal. Conversely, some who rightly call abortion murder and call all to repent, who are or have

been involved with abortion, are unwilling to show compassion for those who contemplate or have at one time made the tragic choice. In other words, they will preach against abortion, but they will not minister to the needs of the spirit and the soul of the guilty one.

We should always uphold the sanctity of human life that is taught in the Scripture. We should call abortion what it is — murder. We should call those who condone the practice or promote abortion, except to save the physical life of the mother, to repent. To do otherwise is to lie and to be most unmerciful. We should also be the first ones to minister to a woman who finds herself facing the question of abortion or recovering from the soul scar of abortion. We must be willing to go the extra mile and not only speak the love and truth of Christ but also show the love and truth of Christ. Admittedly this is a delicate balance, but it is the challenge we face.

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

Personal perspectives

"Christ's abiding presence with us will inspire us to be missionaries, not mercenaries. It will inspire us to be disciple makers, not personal empire builders; men and women of compassion, not men pleasers."

—Baptist World Congress speaker Noah Pashapa, pastor of Hatfield Baptist Church in Harare, Zimbabwe

"One of the things that really struck me was that it didn't matter what language we were speaking, God understood every word. It showed how unified we really are."

—College freshman Matt Wyatt of Fresno, Calif., evaluating impact of 17th Baptist World Congress

"I knew I would go to heaven if I was killed, and that was better than being alive."

—Ten-year-old missionary kid Christine Harrington, one of five people kidnapped and rescued in Tanzania

Baptist reunion affirms faith, family

Family reunions are a unique cultural experience. You gather around rickety picnic tables to swap memories with folks you seldom see. Much of the day is spent exchanging bear hugs with distant cousins while the kids graciously endure dreaded tweaks on the cheek from well-meaning aunts and uncles. By the end of the day, despite the requisite heat and humidity, everyone is eagerly making plans for the next get-together.

What makes such rituals so inviting? Perhaps it's the thought of Aunt Suzy's mouth-watering fried chicken or the promise of plump watermelons and homemade ice cream. Or maybe there's more to it than that — perhaps it's the fact that family bonds really are worth cherishing and celebrating.

Baptists do as good a job as anyone of emphasizing family ties. From the time-honored homecoming Sundays in rural churches to elaborate annual meetings in plush convention centers, Baptists spend lots of time celebrating as family.

In international Baptist life, few gatherings can rival the worldwide family reunion hosted every five years by the Baptist World Alliance. Held earlier this month in Buenos Aires, Argentina, the 17th Baptist World Congress attracted an estimated 8,000 participants from more than 120 nations.

BWA is the international umbrella organization of Baptists, encompassing some 38 million Christians in more than 165 Baptist unions and conventions around the world. Focusing on the theme, "Celebrate Jesus Christ: The Hope of the World," BWA participants demonstrated an unwavering commitment to Christian unity which is a worthy example for Southern Baptists to follow.

At first glance, unity would appear to

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR

By TRENNIS HENDERSON



be an unrealistic goal for BWA participants to achieve. With a diversity of languages, cultural views, socioeconomic backgrounds, educational levels, worship styles and countless other differences, there appears to be more to separate worldwide Baptists than to draw them together.

Yet the key to Baptist unity on the international level is a common focus on the things that really matter. Spending a week with fellow believers from Nigeria, Australia, Germany, the Bahamas, Brazil and dozens of other lands is a graphic reminder that our God is big enough to produce peace among all His children who sincerely seek His face.

Amid years of fellowship-fracturing feuding in Southern Baptist life, what can we learn from our international brothers and sisters about harmony? What are the factors which prompt God-honoring unity in BWA life?

For starters, Baptist World Alliance priorities consistently focus on the importance of a shared faith in Jesus Christ. The BWA logo prominently features the inspirational words of Ephesians 4:5, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism." In a world where harping on the negatives and the things that divide is commonplace, BWA

leaders have consciously chosen to highlight life-changing biblical truths which promote unity.

Even amid potentially troubling encounters between Serbian and Croatian delegates as well as black and white participants from South Africa, individuals agreed they must rely on their common bond in Christ to overcome differences.

"We have a way to go, but with the power of God, we will walk together," affirmed one South African leader. "We will show the world how races can stand together as one."

In addition to the priority of a shared faith in Christ, delegates joyfully celebrated the privilege of being family. Noting that the Baptist World Congress "is the only time we bring Baptists together representative of all we do worldwide," Woman's Missionary Union executive director Dellanna O'Brien described the family gatherings as "a little taste of heaven."

Fused with the faith and family factors is a fervent focus on the future. "Christianity must meet the challenges facing us today or we risk losing the 21st century," warned BWA general secretary Denton Lotz. "We have the hope in Christ that Christian victory will be won."

New BWA president Nilson Fanini has called on Baptists worldwide to lead 60 million people to faith in Christ and double the number of Baptist congregations to 300,000 by the turn of the century. "Let God use Baptists to be His chosen people to spread the word of Jesus Christ," Fanini urged.

What does the 21st century hold for Southern Baptists and our counterparts around the world? With a Spirit-led focus on faith, family and the future, we will have unlimited opportunities to "Celebrate Jesus Christ: The Hope of the World."

Baptist world harmony: a view from the choir

By Brenda J. Sanders
Assistant Director of Communications
Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

"Tonight, I sang my favorite piece of music with a choir of musicians who had never met one another before. We sang Handel's 'Hallelujah' chorus from 'Messiah' during the Friday evening service at the Baptist World Congress in Buenos Aires.

The choir was made up of international singers who shared a love of the music and a love for their Lord.

To my right was a woman from Argentina, our host country. She spoke no English and I spoke no Spanish. But she

greeted me with a kiss on the cheek and was careful to make sure I had plenty of room to sit comfortably on the riser beside her.

The woman to my left was from the Bahamas. She had a bright smile and spoke English with a lovely, lilting accent. She told me she sings in an 80-voice choir in her church back home.

A woman behind me was from Germany. After we sang, she hugged me and said, "God bless you." I thought of how much she looked like someone I know back in the United States.

The man who directed us was David Peacock of Great Britain. He brought us

together and helped us become a cohesive unit because he wanted to lead us in praising God.

When I sing "Hallelujah," I always imagine a choir of angels singing along with me, praising the "King of Kings and Lord of Lords."

Tonight, I didn't have to use my imagination. Indeed, a choir of angels sang all around me. One spoke Spanish. Another had dark skin. Another looked like a friend back home.

All of them lifted their voices with mine, praising our Lord together, sharing a blessing I will carry with me the rest of my life.

Baptists host 'family reunion'

World Baptists celebrate common bond during international congress

By Robert O'Brien
SBC Foreign Mission Board

BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA (BP)—Icy temperatures chilled 8,000 world Baptists in a barely heated convention center, but the joy in their hearts warmed and bonded them into a multi-colored family.

They came in from the cold of a world fractured by many problems to celebrate unity in Jesus Christ at the 17th Baptist World Congress in Buenos Aires, Aug. 1-6. Some wore national garb; others wore minks and finely tailored attire. Some were refugees; others had recently broken free of the tyranny of communism. Some live in countries with religious freedom. Some do not.

The congress, held every five years, forged a necessary link for many, providing the love and support to remind them they belong to a larger family. For example, Eleazer Zihheramhere, a refugee in Kenya, said the congress broke isolation he felt after fleeing for his life from war-torn Rwanda.

"Taking part in this congress is somehow another opportunity to allow us to indeed realize that we are human beings," said Zihheramhere, now regional secretary for the All Africa Baptist Fellowship of the Baptist World Alliance.

Indeed, the congress became a family reunion for Baptists divided by racial and political gulfs, such as Serbs and Croats and blacks and whites from South Africa.

"We have longed to be somewhere we can meet with one another," said Branco Lovrec, president of the Baptist Union of Croatia, as he put his arm around Dane Vidovic, a pastor in Belgrade, Serbia. It's not possible, he noted, for Baptists from those republics in the former Yugoslavia to meet in their homeland.

Although Serb and Croatian Baptists clearly disagree on many issues regarding causes of the civil war there, they agree strongly with a central theme which wove itself like a golden thread through the congress.

That theme emphasized that Jesus Christ is the only hope for the world; that only He can truly transcend race and hue and mold humanity into a unified rainbow with Himself as the primary color; and that only Jesus can create true unity in diversity which transcends theology, ecclesiology, politics, language and culture.

That unity even seems on the horizon for black and white South African Baptists, who found themselves in a family confrontation during the congress.



Carlos Menem, president of Argentina, spoke to a crowded hall of delegates and guests during the opening session of the 17th Baptist World Congress in Buenos Aires.

Pain over apartheid spilled over after a congress workshop on racism, when a black South African Baptist leader charged that a white Baptist leader from the country had failed to acknowledge that the white community had "tacitly supported this brutal system of oppression."

BWA officials announced preliminary plans to send a "friendship" delegation to South Africa later this year to help build bridges in the Baptist community. The plan emerged from a meeting of BWA leaders with the white and black South African groups. Both sides agreed they must rely on their common bond in Jesus Christ to heal their pain and division.

*"We must work together
if we are to win the
world for Christ."*

— Nilson Fanini
Newly elected BWA president

"We have a way to go, but with the power of God, we will walk together," said one South African leader. "We will show the world how races can stand together as one. With hope for the future and the Holy Spirit, we can move to reconciliation and then forgiveness."

Meanwhile, congress participants from

124 countries, spanning six continents, focused on such issues as evangelism, social action, human rights, justice, peace, religious liberty, human need and church development. They heard speakers; attended meetings for women, men and youth; took part in workshops; sang and mingled culturally.

And they put words into action through such activities as the "True Love Waits" campaign for premarital sexual abstinence for young people, as well as "Love in Action" projects including local hospital visits, building benches for churches and street evangelism.

Congress participants also took note of the 75th anniversary of Baptist World Aid (BWAid), the BWA's relief arm, which dispensed \$10 million in relief aid last year. During the congress, BWAid director Paul Montacute urged world Baptists to contribute to BWA efforts to help refugees displaced in the heightened conflict between Croatia and Serbia in early August.

Delegates also paused to view brief videotaped messages from former U.S. President Jimmy Carter and evangelist Billy Graham. The BWA presented Carter its first human rights award at the congress and approved a resolution of appreciation for Graham, who has spoken at almost every Baptist World Congress since 1950.

Speakers — beginning with Carlos Menem, president of Argentina, and ending

'CELEBRATE JESUS CHRIST: THE HOPE OF THE WORLD'

with Southern Baptist Sunday School Board president James T. Draper Jr. — urged world Baptists to put Jesus Christ ahead of worldly gain, service ahead of self and justice ahead of oppression.

"Christ's abiding presence with us will inspire us to be missionaries, not mercenaries," declared Noah Masimba Pashapa of Zimbabwe. "It will inspire us to be disciple makers, not personal empire builders; men and women of compassion, not men pleasers."

Another speaker, Beverly Dunston Scott, vice president of the American Baptist Churches, USA, said, "No Christian should believe that God will take care of injustices and unfairness and that he or she can do nothing. It's a sin to close our eyes to human needs, to walk away from an outstretched hand and to maintain silence when voices of justice, humanity and love desperately need to be heard."

Nilson Fanini of Brazil, elected to succeed Knud Wumpelmann of Denmark as BWA president, issued a challenge to world Baptists to engage in a concerted evangelism thrust through the year 2000, when the Baptist World Congress will convene in Melbourne, Australia.

"Evangelism puts fire in our hearts," Fanini told evangelism leaders from around the world. They ended the session with Fanini on their knees, "heating" the atmosphere with fervent prayers in a variety of languages.

Baptists comprise the largest army on the face of the earth today, Fanini said, outnumbering 2-1 the combined military forces of the United States, Russia, England, Israel and other military powers.

"With this army can we win the world for Jesus Christ?" he asked. "Yes, we can."

Fanini, pastor of the 7,000-member First Baptist Church of Niteroi in the Rio de Janeiro area, urged Baptists to set a goal of winning 60 million people to Christ over the next five years. Baptists worldwide number more than 40 million and represent an extended family exceeding 100 million.

Congress meetings — punctuated with color, pageantry and stirring music — created a festive atmosphere, with musical beats ranging from "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name" to the Samba.

But the overarching message was one of the difference that love makes in human relationships.

Bernice King, daughter of the late Martin Luther King Jr., put that in perspective in an evening plenary session.

It doesn't take more power, military might, education, money or technology to resolve human rights issues, said King, associate minister at Greater Rising Star Baptist Church in Atlanta.

"We need more love," she said. "Love is really what drives me to care for you."

Baptist World Congress offers delegates 'little taste of heaven'

By Trennis Henderson

Editor, Arkansas Baptist

Describing the 17th Baptist World Congress as "a little taste of heaven," Woman's Missionary Union executive director Dellanna O'Brien said the international gathering held every five years "is the only time we bring Baptists together representative of all we do worldwide. That's exciting."

O'Brien affirmed that the August 1-6 congress, sponsored by the Baptist World Alliance, offered thousands of Baptists "the ability to see the big picture" in worldwide Baptist ministry.

Emphasizing that the unity displayed by participants from more than 120 nations reflects "what really is important," she added, "It makes you want to put aside the things that are incidental and don't really count and get on with the evangelization of the world."

Oloyede Kayode, a teacher from Osun, Nigeria, was among congress participants who made significant financial sacrifices to travel to Argentina for the six-day event.

Kayode, who was making his first international trip to attend the congress, said his travel expenses equaled four years' salary, which he accumulated with assistance from his wife and other individuals. His family even postponed plans to build a new home in order to save money for his trip. While in Buenos Aires, he stayed free in the home of Baptist church members to help curb expenses.

Calling his pilgrimage a "once-in-a-lifetime experience," Kayode noted, "It's wonderful. I don't believe it. I pray that in the near future I will have enough money to sponsor another person to come."

"The worship and praise and Bible studies are quite a wonderful experience," he shared. "It is a new experience for me."

Erich Geldbach, a professor of church history in Bensheim, Germany, noted that "the most significant part" of the BWA event "is the internationalization of the Baptist movement, exchanging ideas and being exposed to different ideas from different countries."

Geldbach, who serves on the BWA's

Commission on Baptist Doctrine and Interchurch Cooperation, added, "It is of utmost importance that we begin to realize that the gospel must be contextualized throughout the world and that still we are one."

"In most countries, Baptists are in minority situations. In many cases we are looked on as cults," he pointed out. "It helps the average delegate from any country to see we are a worldwide fellowship. That is a boost to any delegate."

Marina Sands, president of the National Baptist Women's Ministry and Education Convention in the Bahamas, emphasized that the opportunity for Christian fellowship during the congress "is like a tapestry weaving together with different backgrounds and different views; with the love of Christ we can weave together."

"This one meeting gives us a time to touch each other and feel the love of Christ upon us which says even more than words," she remarked. "The experience here deepens our Christian commitment and service to Christ."

Arthur O'Halloran is a retiree from Melbourne, Australia, where the next congress will be held in 2000. Greeting visitors to a booth promoting the Australian congress, he said he hopes that delegates both this year and in 2000 "gain enrichment and are drawn closer to God and are encouraged to share the love of God with others."

Acknowledging that "the world is in a mess," O'Halloran said the BWA gatherings offer participants a vivid reminder that "Christ is still alive and is with us."

Matt Wyatt, a college freshman from Fresno, Calif., was among hundreds of young people who participated in the Baptist World Congress. Wyatt, a member of Trinity Southern Baptist Church in Fresno, said the event helped give him "a worldwide awareness of how Christ's work is done and of the needs that are still out there in other parts of the world."

"One of the things that really struck me was that it didn't matter what language we were speaking. God understood every word," Wyatt noted. "It showed how unified we really are."



Evangelism, missions, recreation highlight Arkansas Baptists'

SUMMER CAMPS '95



registered 9,096 total participants. Part of the recreation is a new "adventure games" course at the camp, which includes stations where participants must work together to scale walls, jump through tires, balance on logs, climb swinging ladders and remove tires from 15-foot-high tree stumps.

The games were a favorite with Josh Wallace, 12, of Havana First Church in Danville. "I came to learn more about God and the recreation is great. You get to have fun and it's nice to meet people."

He added, though, that there are other reasons to attend camp. "I've learned that I need to be a whole lot nicer than I am and need to learn more about God."

Other campers said they miss the competition. When asked if she liked the new recreation format, Stephanie Roberts, 15, a member of Central Church in North Little Rock, replied, "Kind of."

"I really liked competing in volleyball and that was a lot of fun," she explained, "but this does take a lot of teamwork and that's pretty good. It gets us kind of close, but I still liked the athletic competition."

She said that she has attended summer camp at Siloam "every year. I haven't missed since fourth grade and I love it. I look forward to it all year.

"It is the most awesome camp I go to all year because I get really close to God and I really enjoy fellowshiping with people from my church," she emphasized.

Sarah Matthews, 15, a member of Graves Memorial Church in North Little Rock, said her "favorite part of camp" was the worship services, but that recreation was a close second.

The youth curriculum for the first six weeks of camp was "Growing in Godliness: Moral Purity," which Batchelor said is a continuation of the Baptist Sunday School Board's popular "True Love Waits" campaign for teen sexual abstinence.

Another strength of the 1995 assembly schedule, said Batchelor, was "the adults' involvement. We've been having a meeting

with the adults every day and their involvement in the camp and their commitment to build relationships with their kids is really what has changed the atmosphere up here this year."

Joann Toddy, a member of the youth committee of Amboy Church in North Little Rock, served as an adult sponsor. "It's a wonderful camp. I was sort of wondering about how this would go with having to do these activities, but they've seemed to turn out well."

As a sponsor, she noted, "I get such a blessing. I have watched most of these girls grow up from babies...and it's wonderful to see them in our youth program."

Melissa Hildebrand, a sponsor from First Church in Judsonia, said their group's camp experience was "awesome."

"They love it because the whole camp is geared toward letting them get to know each other better and they are learning to work together - learning teamwork."

Music camps

Two Arkansas Baptist music camps involved children and youth in music training events with a Christian emphasis.

The annual Young Musicians Camp, held June 26-29 at Ouachita Baptist University, focused on missions, said Peggy Pearson, an associate in the ABSC church music ministries department.

"We had (foreign missionary) Carlos Ichter as our camp missionary and he brought and played instruments from countries he had served," she said.

Pearson noted that participants also wrote letters to missionaries and held a commissioning service for Ichter, who has recently been assigned to service in Germany.

"Camp was successful because the kids realized the need to witness and to be more effective witnesses," she said. "We had 14 decisions and many of them came forward wanting to know how to witness to family members and friends."

She also noted that the camp enrolled 459 children, "up for the second year."

More than 180 youth in grades 7-12 and their leaders participated in Music Arkansas, held July 24-28 at Ouachita. The camp featured training both for vocalists and band instrumentalists.

Rob Hewell, director of the ABSC church music ministries department, said the camp experienced "strong" worship services. "I think that probably the atmosphere of being at a music camp caused me to tune into worship in a unique way."

"The focus that God has a will for everyone's life was intentional," he said. "We hoped to provide an atmosphere

By Russell N. Dilday
Associate Editor, Arkansas Baptist

Arkansas Baptist camps have always been a popular way for children, youth and adults to spend the summer and the 1995 camp season was no exception. Summer camps involved more than 12,000 participants.

One of the most marked changes in camps this year came at Arkansas Baptist Assembly at Siloam Springs, where camp planners moved youth participants away from competitive sports activities and toward team cooperation-building events.

"The spirit's been great," remarked camp director Pat Batchelor, an associate in the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Sunday School department. "Our philosophy this year is to make the camp a place where it's easy for people to be saved."

"So we do games in the afternoons," he explained. "We have recreation not to fill time, but so that we can build relationships. In everything that we do, we work toward making Siloam a place where it's easier for people to be saved."

Batchelor reported that 369 people made professions of faith during the assembly's seven-week season, which

ARKANSAS BAPTISTS

where everyone could grasp what that will is."

Participants also recognized senior high school Honor Camper Meredith Codling of Central Church in Magnolia and junior high school Honor Camper Ian Galloway of Cedar Heights Church in North Little Rock.

Hart of the Hills

Two Hart of the Hills camps registered a total of 216 participants at Camp Paron this summer.

The young men's camp, held July 24-28, had 94 campers and leaders while the young ladies' camp, held July 31-Aug. 4, had 122 campers and leaders.

Hart of the Hills camps are annual camps sponsored jointly by the ABSC and National Baptists.

Super Summer, Junior High Jam

Evangelism training was the focus of

more than 1,360 youth who attended Super Summer, held June 19-23 at Ouachita.

The worship sessions, led by Keith Naylor of Stone Mountain, Ga., focused on the love of God and expecting God's grace.

Super Summer coordinator Randy Brantley, an associate in the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, noted that Naylor's message was "really different."

"He explained that God loves us and isn't going to 'zap' us, but instead invites us to sit in the lap of our *Abba* daddy," Brantley noted. "When we are under God's love and grace, we will then want to live an obedient life and share our faith with friends - it was a refreshing approach."

The ABSC evangelism department also sponsored Jr. High Jamboree, which drew a record 394 youth to the campus of Williams Baptist College Aug. 3-5.

Event coordinator Randy Brantley said the "Jam" used the ministry of Xtreme Productions to lead in worship.

"The focus of Xtreme's ministry was to communicate that the three biggest things teens in the '90s want are freedom, image and acceptance," Brantley noted. He said Xtreme team leader Gale Kelsey "made the point that these three pursuits are ever elusive until students find true freedom in the cross of Christ."

Brantley reported that participants also were trained in personal evangelism during small group sessions.

GA, RA camps

Royal Ambassador and Girls in Action camps each emphasized missions.

Sandy Wisdom-Martin, an associate in the ABSC Woman's Missionary Union department, reported a 16 percent increase in attendance at their four GA camps in June and July, up 104 campers to 653.

Two of the camps were for GAs only and two were mother-daughter camps.

Noting the results of a camp survey, Wisdom-Martin said, "We asked, 'What did you like best about camp?' Of course, swimming was the number one answer. Following close behind were answers like, 'Hearing from missionaries'; 'Being with my mom'; 'Spending time with my GAs'; and 'Going on a safari.'"

The theme for the camps was "Missions Safari." In addition to crafts, recreation, missions education and worship, participants raised \$792 to provide birthday and Christmas checks to missionary kids attending school in Arkansas.

Three RA camps, including a new regional event, registered a total of 276 boys. Ozzie Berryhill, state RA coordinator, said the popularity of RA Camp led to the introduction of a regional camp held June 12-16 at Mt. Zion Camp near Walcott. "That was a new development to reach more kids around the state," he said. "We also are looking for a south Arkansas location."

The statewide RA Camp, held July 10-14 at Camp Paron, registered 165 boys, 23 of whom made professions of faith.

Arkansas Baptists also provided leadership for the Iowa Southern Baptist Fellowship's summer RA camp Aug. 14-18, attended by 27 boys.

Baptist summer camps offer 'fun' recreation opportunities



Team members (left) at Arkansas Baptist Assembly work together to lift a tree over a tall tree trunk as part of the camp's new team-building recreation emphasis.



Jr. High Jamboree participants played in huge inflated "toys" such as the obstacle course (above).



A girls' recreation team (left) at Arkansas Baptist Assembly pulls one of their members through the Spider Web, a course of interlaced ropes. Their goal was to get all team members through the web without touching the sides.

Adult choir festivals highlight ministry

Six Adult Choir Festivals across the state in October will "encourage adult choir members in their ministry," said Rob Hewell, director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention's church music ministries department.

The bi-annual festivals are beneficial to choir members because they "will provide opportunities to hear and sing for other church musicians," Hewell noted. "Choirs want to be their best and the festivals will help strengthen what they do. It also gives them the opportunity to work under a clinician."

Participating choirs may sing for a rating or may request to sing for an adjudicator's comments only. Accompaniment may include only a pianist, an organist or both.

Hewell said participating choirs must sing two selections of the minister of music's choice with a total time of not more than eight minutes.

"Memorization is encouraged, but not required," he explained. "However, only choirs which sing from memory will be eligible for a 'superior' rating."

Participants also will sing "Sometimes I Hear God's Music" by Joseph Martin (Glorious/G-6821) in a combined choir during the worship time at each festival. Hewell said choirs must supply their own copies of the song and learn the music prior to each festival.

Festivals will be held Oct. 2 at Second Church in Little Rock, Central Church in Magnolia and First Church in Fayetteville. Oct. 3 festivals will be held at Walnut Street Church in Jonesboro, East Side Church in Fort Smith and First Church in Pine Bluff. Each festival will begin at 7 p.m.

The cost for the festivals is \$2 per singer, with a maximum cost of \$50 per choir before Sept. 4. After Sept. 4, the maximum will increase to \$60 per choir.

For more information or to register, contact Hewell at the ABSC church music ministries department; phone 501-376-4791, ext. 5121.

Baptist Men's Retreat to feature deer hunting

Planners of Arkansas Baptists' 1995 Baptist Men's Retreat are combining fellowship with one of Arkansans' favorite fall pastimes.

The Baptist Men's Retreat, set for Oct. 24-28 at Southwest Association's Camp Canfield near Lewisville, will offer participants a program of fellowship, food and deer hunting.

"What I'm excited about is the fellowship," said Ronnie O'Neal, an associate in

the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Brotherhood department. "We'll have a good time hunting as well as hearing testimonies and our guest speaker."

The program will feature guest speaker Rusty Griffin, assistant vice president of program services for the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission.

While O'Neal highlighted the fellowship, he said hunting opportunities should be good with the area considered "one of the tops in harvest ratio in the state" for whitetail deer.

"Our camp is Southwest Association's camp and is limited to 88 hunters, but we will also be hunting on the 32,000-acre Lafayette County Management Area," he said. He added that although the retreat number is limited, participants will be sharing the management area's hunting privileges with other hunters.

The retreat will offer black powder, muzzleloading gun hunting Oct. 25-27 and smokeless cartridge gun hunting Oct. 27-28.

The cost for the retreat is \$150 per person. A \$75 per person registration fee is required by Sept. 1. Final payment is due by Oct. 1. The cost includes a permit to hunt in the management area, meals and lodging. Campers must provide their own bedding, towels and hunting items.

For more information or to register, contact O'Neal at the ABSC Brotherhood department at P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203; phone 501-376-4791, ext. 5158.

RA leadership training scheduled for Oct. 7

Leaders of boys' mission organizations will receive training during the RA Leadership Conference Oct. 7 at First Church in North Little Rock.

Harry Black, director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Brotherhood department, said the annual event is "designed to instruct, encourage and inspire Royal Ambassador leaders."

Black said the conference, led by state RA coordinator Ozzie Berryhill, will feature special sessions for leaders of RAs, Challengers and other Brotherhood-sponsored ministries.

He said training for RA leaders will include training in the use of the new Easy RA (EZRA) leadership model. "This is enjoying great success," he noted. "RA chapters are being reborn through EZRA."

A session on leading Challengers and missions education for boys in grades 7-12 will be included during the conference, as well as sessions on World Changers and campcraft.

Black said that for participants "who

have had the basics and need advanced training," the conference will offer a Missions in the Marketplace seminar, reviewing clowning, puppetry and other creative ministries.

Black will lead a training session for associational Brotherhood directors "dealing with changes in the Brotherhood ministry, including Promise Keepers, Dad the Family, Shepherd and other new ministries," he noted.

There is no cost for the conference, but there is a \$5 cost per person for lunch. Participants must pre-register and pre-pay for lunch.

For more information or to register, contact Black at the ABSC Brotherhood department, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203; phone 501-376-4791, ext. 5158.

'Something for Singles' to be held Sept. 29-30

Parkway Place Church in Little Rock will offer "Something for Singles" during a regional Single Adult Conference Sept. 29-30.

The conference program features dual tracks: The Friday session was designed for single adults of all ages and will focus on successful single living. The Saturday session has been designed for participants dealing with separation and divorce-related issues and for those who work in divorce recovery ministries.

J.D. Stake, director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention crisis support ministry, noted that the need for such conferences is growing. "The most obvious example of the need for the conference is that 50 percent of the adult population is single," he said. "In times past, this has basically been a couples society."

The program will feature Harold Ivan Smith, adjunct professor of single adult ministry at Northern Baptist Theological Seminary in Lombard, Ill.

Smith is author of *51 Good Things to Do While Waiting for the Right One to Come Along, Reluctantly Single and A Time for Healing: Coming to Terms With Your Divorce*.

The cost for the conference is \$10 per person for the Friday session only, \$15 per person for the Saturday session only and \$20 per person for both Friday and Saturday sessions. The Saturday session cost includes lunch.

Registration for the conference begins Friday at 5 p.m. and the session begins at 7 p.m. The Saturday session begins with registration at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 4 p.m.

For more information or to register, contact the singles department of Parkway Place Church, 300 Parkway Place, Little Rock, AR 72211; phone 501-224-3003.

Rescue of kidnapped missionaries 'a miracle'

By Mark Kelly & Marty Croll
SBC Foreign Mission Board

IRINGA, TANZANIA (BP)—A missionary pilot pled for God's help Aug. 6 and scarcely 10 minutes later flew over a remote spot where five Southern Baptist kidnap victims had been left drugged in Tanzania the day before.

Kidnapped were Southern Baptist missionaries Sandra Harrington, 35; David Moreland, 50, and his wife, Mildred, 43; Harrington's daughter, Christine, 10; and Joanna Giddens, 10, daughter of FMB missionaries Ed and Nancy Giddens.

The pilot arranged a rescue from the ground after spotting the abductees — missing since an Aug. 5 carjacking — at the edge of a wild game park outside Morogoro, Tanzania.

"That was a miracle. That was just the Lord. He just guided the plane," missionary pilot Mike Cannata said after the rescue.

The kidnap victims had been taking a rest stop along the main dirt road through the Mikumi National Park Aug. 5 when three armed men approached them. Harrington's husband, Bill, had walked away from the car and was returning when he saw bandits beating David Moreland and forcing others into the car.

One of the attackers commandeered the missionaries' vehicle while the other



Missionary kids Christine Harrington (left) and Joanna Giddens relax with Christine's dad, Bill, and Joanna's mom, Nancy, a few days after the girls were among five kidnap victims rescued in Tanzania.

two followed in another car. Harrington laid low until they had left, then flagged another vehicle and followed the kidnapers. They abandoned the chase, however, after it appeared the assailants realized they were being followed and doubled back into more remote areas of the park. Harrington returned to Iringa, where he notified police and an all-out search for the missing missionaries was launched.

Meanwhile, the bandits had driven their five hostages out into the bush where the thieves robbed them and forced them to ingest a powdered drug to make them

sleep. The assailants then drove off into the bush, leaving the five to fend for themselves with night falling rapidly.

The attackers had roughed up the missionaries and repeatedly threatened their lives. The threats ended, however, when the bandits learned the Morelands and Harrington were missionaries.

Several hours after the abduction, police located the stolen missionary vehicle. The four-wheel-drive Nissan had been wrecked. A man, apparently one of the bandits, was dead at the wheel.

After beginning a futile ground search that night, the plane search started

after daybreak. Cannata had been flying about 45 minutes when he realized there was too much area and too many roads for a party of planes to search, let alone the sole plane he was piloting. He couldn't even see the five vehicles on the ground searching with him.

"I started praying: I said, 'God there is just no way I'm going to be able to find these people today. You're going to have to show me,'" related Cannata.

"I want God to get the glory," he said. "He literally kept the lions away, and he helped us find them (abductees) in good time."

Missionaries experience peace in the face of death

DAR ES SALAAM, TANZANIA (BP)—"Are we going to shoot them all together or one at a time?" the abductor asked his two associates. Lined up on their knees with their backs to him were three Southern Baptist foreign missionaries and two missionary children who had been abducted in central Tanzania.

"Oh, God, they're going to shoot Sandy," thought missionary David Moreland as the gunman grabbed another missionary, Sandy Harrington, and forced her to kneel five feet away.

"I was absolutely terrified," said Harrington. "My fear had been escalating throughout the whole ordeal. But even then, there was a calmness in the midst of my terror — a sense of heavenwardness. If they killed me, I'd be with God, I thought to myself." But she said to the gunman, "Please don't shoot me."

"We all grabbed one another's hand," Moreland said, with tears in his eyes. "I thought I was holding my wife's hand for the last time. We all tensed up, expecting the bullets to hit. I started to pray out loud and committed us to the Lord," he said. He prayed, "Lord, put your angels around us, but if it's time for us to go, then it's time. Do your will."

"I truly had a peace that passed all understanding," Moreland's wife, Millie, said. "We were ready to go. If we died, we died, but at least we were together. We had surrendered everything."

"When I saw the gun, I felt scared at first," said Harrington's daughter, Christine, age 10, "but I knew I would go to heaven if I was killed, and that was better than being alive."

Lined up, kneeling, their backs to the gunman, holding hands and praying aloud, the five expected to die. Then one of the abductors leaned down and asked David Moreland a question.

"Are you a 'padre'?" he asked. "Yes, I'm a 'padre,'" Moreland responded. "I'm a missionary with the Baptist church here in Tanzania."

"The next thing I knew," Harrington said, "we were all being told to drink this orange liquid they put before us. I was afraid it was poison and didn't know whether to drink it, but David said to drink it, that it was okay."

"When I saw the juice, I felt like shouting," Moreland said, "because I knew then that they wouldn't shoot us. I had read reports of other hijackings and knew that they drugged people. That's what they were doing."

"I'm ready to get on with life," Harrington said following the ordeal. "I feel grateful to be alive and have a great awareness of God's provision and mercy. It could have turned out differently — we could be dead — and God still would be great, but He intervened, and I'm very grateful to Him."

State Missions Season of Prayer

September 17-24, 1995

yes
everyone!



*"Red and yellow, black and white,
they are precious in His sight."*

What do Arkansans say about state missions?

"My children do not realize that 60 percent of their classmates do not know about Christ. It helps them understand their own school and community is a part of state missions."



Debbie Kluck
Second Church
Arkadelphia

"State missions is as equally important as home missions and foreign missions. We need to teach church members that missions happens wherever they are."



Jeff Cheatham
Director of missions
Arkansas River
Valley Association

"So many Christians think of missions as only overseas. They need to realize missions is going on in their own state."



Teresa Ford
Calvary Church
Hope

YOUR DIXIE JACKSON OFFERING DOLLARS

Where do they go?



State/Associational Leadership Development

Arkansas/HMB disaster relief assistance
Associational and state leadership training
Missions education
State missions staff supervision and development
State missions support services

11%

Language Missions

Deaf ministries
Ministries to internationals and refugees
Development of ethnic congregations
Language missions strategy planning and consultations

13%

Missions Ministries

Migrant centers at Hope and Hermitage
Interfaith Witness Training
Special ministries to resort and leisure settings
Volunteer enlistment, promotion and training

14%

Church and Community Ministries

Strategy planning
Christian social ministries
Mississippi River Ministry
Multihousing ministry

10%

Chaplaincy

Chaplaincy services to those confined to institutions and separated from local church ministries
Development of volunteer chaplaincy services

25%

Church Extension

Church building loans
Church pastoral aid to struggling churches with future growth potential
Mobile chapels
New church starts and development

25%

Theological Education

Boyce Bible School
Seminary Extension
Seminary studies

2%

Missions Facts

- There are more than 1 million people in Arkansas without a church home.
- A new mission church needs approximately \$500 a month from state missions funds during its first year.
- Summer missionaries working in migrant, resort and leisure centers throughout Arkansas reported more than 150 professions of faith in 1994.
- Nine of Arkansas' missionaries are related to the Home Mission Board and receive 40 percent of their salary support from the Home Mission Board.
- Mississippi River Ministry and the Arkansas/Iowa Partnership each completed more than 30 projects in 1994.
- The first mobile chapel was a railroad car. It was approved by the state convention in 1894.
- Arkansas Baptists have provided a chaplain for Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center for more than 16 years.
- The seven-state regional Mississippi River Ministry office is located in the Arkansas Baptist Missions Department.
- The first donation to state missions was a piano. It was willed to the convention even before the convention was formally organized.
- There are 39 Anglo mission churches and eight Black mission churches in our state.
- The Migrant Centers at Hope and Hermitage minister to more than 10,000 migrants each year.
- The Dixie Jackson State Missions Offering provides nearly half of the total state missions budget.
- There are approximately 60,000 more unchurched people today than at this time a year ago.
- Mission churches have a higher growth rate than established churches.
- Our state missions chaplains report 400 or more professions of faith annually.
- The 57 language congregations in Arkansas worship in nine different languages.
- Our youngest state missionary is 25 and the oldest is 86.
- Thirteen missions constituted as churches in 1994.

Arkansas

- Population - 2.4 million
- Area - 53,187 square miles
- Water area - 600,000 acres
- National forestland - 2.4 million acres
- Climate - Average temperature 61.4 F
- State bird - Mockingbird
- State flower - Apple blossom
- State Tree - Pine
- State Beverage - Milk
- State fruit/vegetable - Pink Tomato
- State Gem - Diamond

Missions video available

The 1995 Mission Arkansas video is available now. It can be borrowed from your associational missions office and can be copied for your use. It makes a great program piece for church missions festivals, Woman's Missionary Union or Baptist Men's meetings or for viewing by youth and children's missions organizations.

Contact your local director of missions to obtain a copy!



Your gift to the Dixie Jackson State Missions Offering will ensure that the message of Jesus Christ will continue to be spread across Arkansas.

DIXIE JACKSON OFFERING

State Missions

State goal: \$725,000

Amount _____ Envelope No. _____

Name _____

The state goal is \$725,000.
What part will you play in Missions Arkansas?

Salem where he was a charter member. Ray is a 1994 graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Michelle, have two children, Abigail and Truett.

Todd A. Cockran has joined the staff of Calvary Church in Osceola as youth and music director. He is a graduate of Arkansas Tech University in Russellville, and has served other Arkansas churches.

Danny Loretz joined the staff of Lonoke Church Aug. 1 as associate pastor with responsibilities in music, youth and education. He came to Lonoke from Immanuel Church in Carlisle. Loretz and his wife, Sally, have two children, Shelly and D.J.

Bob Ulrey began his service June 25 as pastor of First Church in Center Ridge. He is a May graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Ken Vallance is serving as bivocational youth director for Palestine Church at Quitman. He has been a member of the church and is a farmer. Vallance and his wife, Carol, have a son, Ben.

Phillip Millard has joined the staff of Southside Church in Stuttgart as youth and children's minister, having been summer youth minister there. A native of Hot Springs, Millard is a senior at the University of Central Arkansas.

David D. Crouch recently retired as pastor of First Church in Searcy, following 22 years of service. Crouch, who has completed 33 years of ministry as a pastor, came to Searcy from Immanuel Church in Warren. He has served as a member of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Executive Board and as first vice president of the state convention. He also has been moderator of Calvary Association and an active member of the Searcy Ministerial Alliance. He is a graduate of Hendrix College in Conway and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Crouch and his wife, Blanche, were presented with a love offering and a handmade quilt which featured church members' names. They also were honored with an appreciation dinner and reception. They will continue to reside at 810 Randall, Searcy, AR 72143; phone 501-268-3937.

John Smith has joined the staff of North Main Church in Sheridan as associate pastor and minister to youth. His 35 years in ministry have included serving as a pastor in eight states. He and his wife, Terri, have three children, Ashley, Lindsey and Wade. Smith will be available to lead weekend revivals and may be contacted at 108 W. 8th, Sheridan, AR 72150; phone 501-942-3215.



First Church of Arkadelphia broke ground July 9 for a new education building and 400-seat fellowship hall that will replace the current facility built in the 1950s. Educational space will provide departments for all ages. Participating in the groundbreaking were contractors Doug Wasson and Bill Fletcher; architect John McMorran; pastor Kevin Lee and building committee members David Bost, chairman, Charlie Wilson, Ken Crain, Beverly Hankins, Ben Elrod, Kara Mills and Scott Westberg.

Jesse Holcomb has resigned as pastor of First Church of Social Hill, following more than three years of ministry. Holcomb, who has served as pastor of several Arkansas churches, resides in Benton with his wife, Irene. He will be available to serve as a supply preacher and may be contacted at 501-794-2697.

James Nowlin resigned July 30 as pastor of Reyno Church. He and his wife, Carolyn, and their four children have moved to Brinkley.

Ernest McElroy of Monticello, who has been serving as interim pastor of Corinth Church in Bartholomew Association, is available to serve as a supply or interim pastor or to lead revivals. He may be contacted at Rt. 2, Box 140, Monticello, AR 71655; phone 501-367-3105.

Gordon Lunsford has joined the staff of First Church in Pine Bluff as youth and children's minister, coming there from Kentucky. He and his wife, Kristi, have one son, Kent.

James Burleson has retired as minister of music for First Church of Maumelle. Burleson, who has been in the music ministry for 39 years, has served Chicot Road Church in Mabelvale, Geyer Springs First Church in Little Rock, Second Church in Hot Springs and First Church in Marianna, and churches in Florida, Illinois, Indiana and Texas. He also has been publications director for Ouachita Baptist University. He and his wife, Shirley, will continue to reside at 64 Blue Mountain Drive in Maumelle, AR 72113; phone 501-

851-4111. They are parents of three children. Burleson is available to serve as an interim or supply music director, as well as lead music for revivals.

Bill Cypert joined the staff of Crosspoint Church in North Little Rock Aug. 6 as bivocational minister of music, coming there from Bingham Road Church in Little Rock. Cypert, a computer consultant, resides in Lonoke with his wife, Betty.

Dane Dover is serving as bivocational pastor of Temple Church in Benton. He is a certified public accountant.

Bob Kinnett, who has been serving as interim pastor of University Church in Jonesboro, has accepted the call to serve the church as full-time pastor.

Lynwood Henderson is serving as interim pastor of Eudora Church. Henderson is a retired Southern Baptist minister, having served as pastor of Arkansas churches, as well as a director of missions for Centennial Association.

Gary Thomas has resigned as pastor of Burnville Church in Greenwood to attend Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Linda Gray has resigned as minister to single adults for Baring Cross Church in North Little Rock to continue her studies at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Richard Pope is serving as bivocational pastor of Kearney Church, Redfield. He and his wife, Mary Ann, live in Alexander.

Greenman begins service as volunteer prayer coordinator

When Dave Greenman became Arkansas Baptists' state volunteer Bold Mission Prayer Thrust coordinator, he renewed a call to ministry first felt before he entered college.

Greenman, a retired medical researcher, began Aug. 8 as a Mission Service Corps volunteer assigned to the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. His assignment marks the first time since 1986 that the Baptist Building staff has used an MSC volunteer.

ABSC associate executive director Jimmie Sheffield said Greenman will be responsible for recruiting volunteer district BMPT coordinators, promoting BMPT across the state and training associational coordinators.

Bold Mission Prayer Thrust was created to support Bold Mission Thrust, an evangelism plan adopted in 1976 by the Southern Baptist Convention. BMPT's overall goal is "to tell the good news of Jesus to every person in the world by the year 2000."

"Bold Mission Prayer Thrust," Sheffield explained, "calls for every church to develop intercessory prayer ministries and networks that will consistently and unitedly call on God for revival and world evangelization and to seek the release of His power on behalf of the accomplishment of the goals of Bold Mission Thrust."

Sheffield said Greenman "brings a high level of organizational skills" and that he has "a deep spiritual commitment to prayer and to the place of prayer in the church."

He added that Greenman's status as a layman will help the position. "He will be able to speak from a layman's heart as a church member about the need for prayer and the place of prayer. That's a big advantage."

Greenman, a member of Park Hill Church in North Little Rock, said that the BMPT coordinator's position completes a call to ministry that he has felt since high school.

"I went into college thinking that I had been called into a ministry of some sort," he recalled.

After earning the bachelor of fine arts degree, he said, "I went to seminary for a year, but during that year decided that I must have been wrong."

Greenman enrolled in the graduate program at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind., and gained both the master's and doctor of philosophy degrees in biological sciences. He has been a chemist, university professor and medical researcher.

He worked in an Arkansas cancer research job for 20 years "until a couple of years ago, while going through Experiencing God. We came to the 'spiritual

markers' part of that and I always had wondered about what I had thought was a calling to the ministry.

"Then in 20 different ways the Lord answered and said, 'That was a calling, you just didn't have the faith,'" Greenman recalled. "At that time I felt the Lord say, 'You need to retire as soon as you can and be available for whatever comes along.'"

Although he "didn't think that was the right thing at first," Greenman said he eventually determined that "God is opening some new doors that won't be

closed. I'm excited about getting involved.

"I hope that the Lord will work through me to convince many people of the importance of prayer in missions and awakening," he added. "I see that as a real hurdle for me. I don't see that I can do it on my own. It's beyond me."

"The important thing that I am hoping comes out of the job," he concluded, "will be a greater awareness and participation of churches across the state in prayer for missions and renewal, revival and awakening."

1995 Annual Association Meetings

Association	Date	Place
Arkansas River Valley	Oct. 10	Ola First
Arkansas Valley	Oct. 16	Helena First
Ashley	Oct. 16	Magnolia, Crossett; North Crossett
Bartholomew	Oct. 16-17	Wilmar; Westside, Warren
Big Creek	Oct. 19-20	Spring River, Hardy; Enterprise, Viola
Black River	Oct. 16-17	Hoxie; Diaz
Buckner	Oct. 10, 12	Hartford, First; Parks
Buckville	Sept. 23-24	Rock Springs, Buckville
Caddo River	Oct. 16-17	Refuge, Story; Glenwood
Calvary	Oct. 17	Union Valley, Beebe
Carey	Oct. 16	New Hope, Sparkman
Caroline	Oct. 17	Keo
Centennial	Oct. 16-17	North Maple, Stuttgart; Eastside, DeWitt
Central	Oct. 19	Barcelona Road, Hot Springs Village
Clear Creek	Oct. 17	North Park, Van Buren
Concord	Oct. 17	First, Greenwood
Conway-Perry	Oct. 17, 19	Sweet Home, Perryville; Oppelo
Current-Gaines	Oct. 16-17	Piggott; Oak Grove
Delta	Oct. 16-17	Montrose; Watson
Faulkner	Oct. 23	Cadron Ridge, Conway
Garland	Oct. 9-10	Pearcy; Grand Avenue, Hot Springs
Greene	Oct. 16-17	Walcott
Harmony	Oct. 16	Forrest Park, Pine Bluff
Independence	Oct. 16-17	Cord; First, Mountain View
Liberty	Oct. 23	West Side, El Dorado
Little Red River	Oct. 16-17	Lone Star, Greers Ferry; Palestine, Quitman
Little River	Oct. 9-10	First, Locksburg; First, Foreman
Mississippi	Oct. 23	Second, Leachville
Mount Zion	Oct. 16-17	Central, Jonesboro; Friendly Hope, Jonesboro
North Arkansas	Oct. 17	First, Valley Springs
North Central	Oct. 9-10	Pee Dee, Clinton; Friendship, Clinton
North Pulaski	Oct. 16	Highway, North Little Rock
Northwest	Oct. 23	First, Genery
Ouachita	Oct. 9-10	Board Camp, Mens; Chapel Hill, DeQueen
Pulaski	Oct. 16-17	Olivet, Little Rock; Martindale, Little Rock
Red River	Oct. 16-17	Beirne; Antoine
Rocky Bayou	Oct. 12-13	Franklin, Ashflat; First, Cherokee Village
Southwest	Oct. 19	Bradley
Tri-County	Oct. 16	Union Avenue, Wynne
Trinity	Oct. 16-17	Black Oak; First, Harrisburg
Washington-Madison	Oct. 23-24	First, Fayetteville
White River	Oct. 16-17	Mountain Home; First, Bull Shoals

Foundation Sunday celebrates ministry's expanding impact

When Arkansas Baptists observe Foundation Sunday Sept. 10, they will be celebrating a strong ministry, affirmed Arkansas Baptist Foundation president David Moore. Foundation Sunday is a statewide emphasis highlighting the mission and ministry of the 45-year-old Arkansas Baptist agency.

"The Arkansas Baptist Foundation continues to grow sharply," Moore declared. "In the first 25 years of its existence, the Foundation managed less than \$1 million in assets. Since 1975, however, the Foundation has continued to grow at a phenomenal rate. Currently, assets under management are nearing the \$50 million mark."

Moore credits the Foundation's rapid growth to the expanding awareness of its services. "As more Arkansas Baptists become aware of what they can do for Baptist ministries that they love, they begin utilizing the Foundation as a service. With the recent addition of Paul White, vice president and general counsel, the Foundation is seeking to meet the growing requests for help and assistance."

As the trust agency for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, the Foundation serves as trustee of numerous estates and trusts that have been left to Baptist causes.

Moore said Foundation services include assisting Baptists with understanding estate planning and charitable giving techniques, providing estate planning documents to ministers and their wives as well as providing drafts of documents for donors, managing perpetual endowments for Baptist causes and managing charitable trusts and revocable trusts where Baptist ministries are the major beneficiary. He said the agency also assists Baptists in passing non-cash assets to the Baptist ministries they want to support, managing building funds and reserve accounts for local churches and serves as a resource for information on probate, estate taxes and trust administration.

Projecting strong growth for the Foundation's future, Moore added, "With various agencies and institutions embarking upon capital and endowment development programs, the Foundation will continue to provide service to the development officers with the legal, accounting, tax and investment services necessary to complete many gifts. In other words, the future looks bright for the continued growth of the Foundation."

For more information on how to promote Foundation Sunday, contact Moore at 501-376-0732.

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Something For Singles A Single Adult Conference with Harold Ivan Smith

Dr. Harold Ivan Smith, a nationally known author and conference speaker on single adult issues will be the featured speaker at a singles conference, September 29-30 at Parkway Place Baptist Church, 300 Parkway Place, Little Rock.

The conference will feature two very different and distinct sessions. The Friday evening conference is for single adults of all ages and will focus on successful single living. Friday evening's theme is CELEBRATING THE SINGLE SEASON. Dr. Smith, himself a single adult, has written extensively on single adult related issues. He will be sharing major aspects of his latest book, *S1 GOOD THINGS TO DO WHILE WAITING FOR THE RIGHT ONE TO COME ALONG* (Broadman). Warning: This session involves a lot of laughter.

The Saturday conference will focus on issues related to separation and divorce. Dr. Smith will be sharing from his new innovative nine-week divorce recovery program, *A TIME FOR HEALING: COMING TO TERMS WITH YOUR DIVORCE* (LifeWay Press).

For information or registration, call or write: Singles Department, Parkway Place Baptist Church, 300 Parkway Place, Little Rock, AR 72211 or call (501) 224-3003.

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HMB trustees establish transition committee

By Martin King

SBC Home Mission Board

ALPHARETTA, GA (BP)—Restructuring of the Southern Baptist Convention will not distract the Home Mission Board from its primary task of reaching the nation for Christ, HMB president Larry Lewis pledged during the board's Aug. 9 meeting.

Lewis told HMB directors "it would be presumptuous for me or my staff to attempt to unduly influence the structure of the new North American Mission Board....Our task is to lead Southern Baptists in the most intensive evangelistic effort in our history.

"Neither do I believe the SBC Executive Committee should assume the role" of structuring the new missions agency, Lewis said. "Only the directors of the North American Mission Board can assume that function, and half of that board is sitting here this morning."

To represent the HMB's interests in the merger, board chairman Steve Swofford appointed a transition committee. He said the committee will maintain contact with the SBC Executive Committee as well as the Brotherhood Commission and Radio and Television Commission. Charles Fuller,

pastor of First Baptist Church, Roanoke, Va., will chair the HMB committee.

In other business, the board voiced opposition to Woman's Missionary Union leaders' decision to produce materials for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, affirmed revision of the belief statement for chaplains and appointed 14 new missionaries and three new staff.

Board members approved a motion affirming a request from their administrative committee that Lewis write a letter to Dellanna O'Brien, WMU executive director, protesting WMU's production of missions education material for CBF.

Although the motion passed by a 3-to-1 margin, John Avant, pastor of Coggin Avenue Baptist Church, Brownwood, Texas, noted, "Our concern has nothing to do with the mission support of local church WMUs. Our concern is over this serious mistake by the leadership of the national organization and the resulting deterioration of our historic relationship with WMU."

The revised belief statement for chaplaincy candidates will add specific

questions about authority and inspiration of the Bible. Chaplains also will be asked to explain their understanding of the Bible's miracles and historical narratives, and the statement from article one of the Baptist Faith and Message that the Bible is "truth without any mixture of error."

Directors elected three new staff members including Donald A. Smith as associate director in the evangelism section. Smith presently serves on the evangelism staff of the Georgia Baptist Convention. Also elected were two staff in the church loans division. Joseph Pendas, a native of Louisiana, will serve as a loan manager, and Michael Rhine, of Ohio, as a loan officer.

Recognition was given to four staff who will retire this fall, including Bob Banks, executive vice president for operations. Banks has been in denominational service 43 years, 14 at the Home Mission Board, including one year as interim president prior to Lewis' election. Banks will retire Aug. 31 but will continue to assist the board in fund development through the end of the year.

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Pastor search — Trinity Baptist Church of Malvern is searching for a pastor and is currently accepting resumes for this position. Please address all information to: Search Committee, Trinity Baptist Church, P.O. Box 357, Malvern, AR 72104.

Two staff positions — First Baptist Church of Hot Springs is seeking two full-time staff members: Minister of Education and Outreach, and Minister to Students and Young Singles. If interested please send a resume to John McCallum, 2350 Central Avenue, Hot Springs, AR 71901.

Accepting resumes — Full-time pastor. First Baptist Church in Walnut Ridge. Please send resumes to Chairperson, Pastor Search Committee, First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 547, Walnut Ridge, AR 72476.

Preschool & children — Resumes now being accepted for part-time minister of preschool and children. Second Baptist Church, Jacksonville, 1117 N. James, 72076. Attn: Dale Sykes. Resume deadline Sept. 8.

Accepting resumes — for full-time pastor. First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 88, Harrisburg, AR 72432.

Accepting resumes — Full-time youth and music director. Send resume to: Youth & Music Committee, c/o FBC, P.O. Box 88, Harrisburg, AR 72432.

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DEAN SEARCH

Southwest Baptist University invites nominations and applications for the position of dean, College of Christian Studies. Responsibilities: academic program, budget, student and faculty recruitment, relationships with Missouri Baptists. Qualifications: must be Southern Baptist, with strong commitment to Missouri Baptists; PhD or ThD in religion; academic teaching and administration experience; commitment to principles of shared governance and collegial decision-making; preaching and local church experience. Application deadline: Sept. 15, 1995. Applications must include curriculum vita, statement of Christian educational philosophy and at least three references. To submit nominations or request additional information: Dr. Fred Teague, Chair, Dean Search Committee, SBU, 1600 University Ave., Bolivar, MO 65613; FAX: 417/326-1719. E-mail: cgradedu@sbnuniv.edu.

Ouachita Baptist University

Faculty exchange program — Representatives from Ouachita Baptist University and Beijing University signed a faculty exchange agreement during a recent visit to Arkadelphia by officials from the Chinese capital. The program is set to begin this month with the exchanging of one Ouachita faculty member and one Beijing University professor.

Susan Wink, associate professor of English, has been chosen as the first OBU faculty member to participate in the semester-long program. Wink will teach

English and literature in the department of English at Beijing University. In return, Fu Guo-Ying will teach Chinese language and culture during the fall semester at OBU. Ouachita also sends students to study at Beijing University each July and August.

Williams Baptist College

Turbyville named registrar — Scott Turbyville has been named the registrar of Williams Baptist College. A graduate of WBC, he has worked for the college for five years, serving previously as assistant registrar. He and his wife, Rhonda, have three children.



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Convention Uniform

A promise of new power

By Tommy Robertson, director of missions, Liberty Association

Basic passage: Acts 1

Focal passage: Acts 1:1-8

Central truth: The Holy Spirit came to equip the church for its work of evangelizing the world.

Jesus was about to send His followers on a mission that seemed impossible in their own strength. The power of the Holy Spirit was promised to them for this enormous task. We must remember the Holy Spirit is ready to empower us, too.

■ *The promise of power.* Luke recorded that Jesus appeared to the apostles for 40 days after the resurrection and gave them many convincing proofs that He had truly risen from the dead. On one of those occasions, He gave them a command and a promise. The command was not to leave Jerusalem until the promise was fulfilled. The promise was that they would be baptized or immersed in the Holy Spirit so that He could empower them for the awesome task ahead. With the Holy Spirit using and controlling them, they would do extraordinary things and without Him they would fail. God does not assign us a task without giving us the ability and power to accomplish it.

■ *The purpose of the power.* The power was not to be used for selfish purposes, but was very specific: to enable them to be His witnesses. They were to share the good news of the risen Lord wherever they went. Lest they misunderstand and begin to believe their mission was only to Jerusalem and the Jews, He delineated the areas of their work. First, they were to evangelize Jerusalem itself, then all of Judea, Samaria and finally to the ends of the earth. This was a worldwide assignment and still is. To say that a handful of men are charged with carrying the gospel across the world sounds unbelievable on the surface. To say that we are still given that same mission sounds impossible as well. Yet when we realize the Holy Spirit fills us and uses us, the task is no longer improbable, but very realistic. It is only when we seek to do this in our own strength that we fail.

The command has not changed. We are still witnesses to the whole world. How far have we come? With this awesome power at our disposal, we must go on to fulfill that mission.

Life and Work

Christians and the law

By David Nápier, associate pastor, Immanuel Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: Romans 1:8-20; 2:17-24

Focal passage: Romans 1:19-20

Central truth: All are guilty before God, but salvation is available to everyone through faith.

Paul had a deep compassion for the believers at Rome even though he had not met many of them. His concern models a behavior we should have for our Christian brothers and sisters. In verse 8, he was thankful for their witness of faith. Verses 9 and 10 indicated that he prayed for them without ceasing. They didn't know he was praying for them, but God honored his prayer. Wouldn't the Christian army be powerful if Christians around the world could know that everywhere brothers and sisters were lifting them to God in prayer?

His deep affection for the people of Rome was evident in verses 11 and 12. He "longs to see them" so that they might share together a time of mutual blessing in the love of Christ. His debt to them was expressed in verses 13 and 14. He told them that he wanted to be with them sooner, but there was so much work to do in other areas that he had not been able to get to Rome.

The key passage is found in verses 16 and 17. Rome was a proud city and the gospel had come from a small city they had conquered - Jerusalem. Romans didn't look too highly on the Jewish people. Why should they put their faith in a myth about a poor carpenter who arose from the dead? Paul explained that as a Roman, he was not ashamed of the origin of his message; that it provided the power of salvation for all men. There was no distinction in God's sight between the cultured Roman and the poor Jew. To all men the righteousness of God is revealed through faith.

In verses 18-20 Paul began to address the unrighteousness of men. He noted that God's truth has been revealed to men through His creation (v. 20). Men have known the truth about God, but rather than allowing the truth to work in their lives, they have "suppressed" it (v. 18).

Paul closed the passages with a rebuke of the Jewish attitude regarding the law. The Jews took pride more in the possession of the law than its practice. We need to remember that while we possess the Word of God, our religion needs to be based on outward action, not an inward attitude.

Bible Book

A 'nevertheless' faith

By Marty Watson, pastor, Baring Cross Church, North Little Rock

Basic passage: Daniel 1:1-3:30

Focal passage: Daniel 3:1-30

Central truth: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego chose to serve God regardless of their fate in the fiery furnace.

The first few chapters of Daniel trace the movement of Daniel and his three friends, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego as they confront the challenges of being in exile. Their faith and loyalty to God will be severely tested. In chapter 3:1-7, King Nebuchadnezzar displayed an ungodly arrogance with his power. In a move to solidify his position, he had a 90-foot image of gold constructed in the plain of Dura and then demanded that all people of power - satraps, administrators, governors, counselors, treasurers, judges, magistrates, and all province officials - worship the image. Indirectly, they would be worshipping Nebuchadnezzar. Penalty for disobeying the king's command was death in the fiery furnace.

When Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego refused to comply, certain Chaldeans came before the king to accuse them of disobeying the king. Motivated by hatred and jealousy, they demanded that the king follow through on his decree of death for this disobedience.

In a rage, Nebuchadnezzar had the three men brought before him and gave them an opportunity to comply. He challenged their faith in God by asking, "Who is the God who will deliver you from my hands?" (v. 15). Without hesitation, the three answered, "We have no need to answer you in this matter. If that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O King. But if not, let it be known to you, O King, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up" (vv. 16-18).

A "nevertheless" faith! Their belief was that God would deliver them. Their resolve was that even if He chose not to, they would remain faithful. Put another way, they had a faith that believed in miracles, but did not demand a miracle to remain faithful.

Do you possess a "nevertheless" faith? Let us resolve to serve our Lord no matter what the cost.

Convention Uniform

Receiving new power

By Tommy Robertson, director of missions, Liberty Association
 Basic passage: Acts 2
 Focal passage: Acts 2: 1-13, 37-41
 Central truth: On the day of Pentecost the believers were filled with the Holy Spirit.

■ *The demonstration of power.* The extraordinary events at Pentecost were for the purpose of attracting people who had come from all over the world so that they would be willing to listen to the good news of Jesus Christ. They already knew the Old Testament and worshipped God, therefore they would be expecting the Messiah to come. As the Holy Spirit immersed the believers and filled them with His power, people began to hear them speak in their own native language, even though they spoke many different languages. They were so caught up in this phenomenon, they began to ask, "What was the meaning of all this?"

■ *The result of power.* This gave Peter an opportunity to tell the people what this was all about. He first told them it fulfilled the statements in Joel 2:28-32, in which Joel was quoting God, saying that He will pour out His Spirit on all people and their sons and daughters would prophesy. Joel was also saying that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved and there will be deliverance on Mount Zion and Jerusalem. This quite obviously was being fulfilled before their eyes. Then he told them about Jesus Christ, whom they had crucified, yet God has raised Him from the dead. This Jesus God had made both Lord and Christ (the promised Messiah).

Conviction became so strong in the listeners that they asked what they must do to be free from guilt. Luke said they were cut to the heart and were forced to face the crises in their lives. Peter told them to turn their backs upon that sin, trust Christ as Savior and be baptized. Three thousand people responded to the stirring of God and became believers.

When we realize that these people went back to their homeland to evangelize, God's wisdom becomes quite obvious. How else would this message of Christ spread so rapidly across the Gentile world? As believers we must submit our lives thoroughly to the Holy Spirit so that He may use us too. We have no excuse for not doing so, since the same Holy Spirit gives us the power to evangelize our society.

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Life and Work

Salvation through faith

By David Napier, associate pastor, Immanuel Church, Little Rock
 Basic passage: Romans 3:20-30
 Focal passage: Romans 3:21-24
 Central truth: It is our belief in Christ and not our behavior that leads us to salvation.

Throughout the course of Christian history, one of the most misunderstood concepts has been salvation by grace. So many people continue to believe that being "good enough" or "doing the right things" has a great deal to do with our justification before God. Our passage begins with a reminder from Paul that justification is an act of God, not an act of man. He used the Jewish law to make his point, stating that by the law we are only pointed toward our sin, not justified in obedience to it. Through the law we can see the righteousness of God, because it is holy, just and good, but it can never provide righteousness for sinful man. He stressed that righteousness comes not from what we do, but what we believe. The law can point us toward God, but it cannot justify us. Verse 22 stated that we are justified only by the grace of God through Jesus. It is our belief in Him, not our behavior, that makes us righteous.

Beginning in verse 22, Paul taught that this salvation by grace is available to all and necessary for all. Every man is sinful, therefore every man needs salvation. Paul reasoned that because both Jew and Gentile are guilty before God, both are offered His gift of salvation. In His mercy and grace, God gives us what we do not deserve. Verse 24 stressed that our justification is through Christ and provided by grace. Does God violate His own law or become less than holy by accepting the sin of man? Paul said "absolutely not" in verse 26. In Christ, God is both just and the justifier. When Jesus suffered God's wrath on the cross for man's sins, He met the demands of God's righteousness expressed in the law and demonstrated God's mercy. Therefore, in Jesus, the penalty for all the previous sins God had overlooked was paid. He was just and the justifier.

Paul closed this portion of Scripture with a reminder that we should never be arrogant or boast about our salvation. If salvation was found in the law, then man could boast. Many people in Paul's day and ours are arrogant about their religion. We cannot brag about achieving our own salvation. It is only the grace of God that provides it.

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Bible Book

The lions' den

By Marty Watson, pastor, Baring Cross Church, North Little Rock
 Basic passage: Daniel 4:1-6:28
 Focal passage: Daniel 6:1-24
 Central truth: Daniel's faithfulness was lived out privately and publicly.

Nebuchadnezzar is dead, Belshazzar has been slain and Darius has risen to power. Advanced in years, Daniel has been elevated to the position of governor in this new kingdom. He, along with two other governors, answered only to Darius. Because of Daniel's excellent spirit, Darius was contemplating putting the whole realm under his leadership (v. 6:3). Enraged by the preferred treatment they perceived Daniel to be getting, the other two governors and the satraps set out to undercut Daniel. Their investigation revealed no fault "because he had been faithful" (v. 4). They realized their only hope of undermining Daniel's position was through his faithfulness to God.

In an effort to set a trap for Daniel, they devised a scheme that would put his faithfulness to the test. Knowing that Daniel would not be unfaithful, they proposed to Darius that he establish a royal statute declaring that anyone who would petition any god or man other than Darius for 30 days would be thrown in the lions' den. Darius arrogantly went along.

Daniel responded by going to his home, opening his window toward Jerusalem, kneeling before his God and praying three times that day "as was his custom" (v. 10). Daniel did not respond with panic, but peace. He did not change his routine. When we face unusual challenges to our faith, is our walk with the Lord such that we can simply carry on as usual?

Confronted with Daniel's disregard for his decree, Darius reluctantly sentenced him to the lions' den. Notice that Darius tried in every way to release Daniel, all to no avail. His parting words to Daniel were, "Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you" (v. 16). After a sleepless night, Darius hurried to the den and with a "lamenting voice" cried out, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?" (v. 20). What a question! That is the question, however, we must answer for our world. We must answer, "Yes! Our God has been able to deliver us!"

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'Jane Roe' professes Christianity, changes abortion views

DALLAS (ABP) — "Jane Roe," the woman whose test case led to the landmark Supreme Court ruling legalizing most abortions in America, has become a born-again Christian and changed her position on abortion.

Norma McCorvey, known as Jane Roe in the 1973 Roe vs. Wade Supreme Court decision, was baptized Aug. 8 by Phillip "Flip" Benham, president of Operation Rescue.

"I'm pro-life. I think I've always been pro-life. I just didn't know it," McCorvey said. "I think abortion's wrong. I think what I did with Roe vs. Wade was wrong. I just have to be pro-life," she said on "ABC World News Tonight." McCorvey recently quit her job as marketing director at a Dallas abortion clinic, where she worked across the street from Operation Rescue's national headquarters.

Evangelist Angel Martinez, 73, dies in Arkansas hospital

FORT SMITH, AR (BP)—Southern Baptist evangelist Angel Martinez died early Aug. 17 in a Fort Smith hospital following a bout with a respiratory infection. He was 73.

"If he had lived to Sept. 5, he would have celebrated 60 years in the ministry," said Steve Taylor, a music evangelist who worked with Martinez for 41 years.

Shortly after his conversion in Texas at age 13, Martinez preached his first sermon and every member of his family, except his father, was converted to Jesus Christ, Taylor said. Conservative estimates are that more than 500,000 people were converted during his years of preaching, Taylor added.

Martinez held more than 1,500 revivals and crusades during his ministry, and returned to some churches as many as 10 times. He was a graduate of Baylor University, Waco, Texas, and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is survived by his wife, Robbie of Fort Smith; two sons, two sisters and a brother.

ACTS negotiations at an impasse; RTVC cancels meeting

FORT WORTH, TX (ABP)—Negotiations to keep ACTS, the Southern Baptist cable TV network, on the air are "at an impasse," SBC Radio and Television Commission president Jack Johnson said Aug. 8, leaving the future of the network in doubt.

Johnson canceled a special Aug. 11 meeting of RTVC trustees because officials have been unable to reach an agreement with VISN, ACTS' cable TV partner.

Since 1992 ACTS and VISN have shared time on the Faith and Values channel, a cable TV channel which reaches 23 million homes through 1,400 cable TV systems. VISN represents several mainline denominations, while ACTS carries evangelical programming.

Their shared-channel agreement was set to expire Aug. 15, and Johnson called the trustee meeting in hopes of getting approval for a new contract. But talks with VISN and Liberty Media, the other Faith and Values partner have been unsuccessful, Johnson said.

Bisagno to assist FMB in missions promotion role

RIDGECREST, NC (BP)—John R. Bisagno, senior pastor of First Baptist Church, Houston, will help the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board challenge Southern Baptists to new heights of missions awareness and involvement.

Bisagno, 61, will serve as a special assistant to FMB president Jerry Rankin to promote foreign missions in churches, conferences and other speaking engagements. He also will encourage fellow pastors to give higher priority to missions involvement and support. He will remain senior pastor of the 22,000-member Houston congregation. Bisagno's new role was announced to FMB trustees Aug. 15.

Stanley limits ministry role due to marital concerns

ATLANTA (BP)—Former Southern Baptist Convention president Charles Stanley, senior pastor of First Baptist Church, Atlanta, has relinquished all administrative responsibilities for the 14,000-member church due to ongoing marital problems.

Stanley told a called business meeting Aug. 13 he will continue as pastor but his "only responsibility will be to teach and preach the Word of God." The meeting was moderated by Baptist Sunday School Board president James Draper, also a former SBC president.

Stanley and his wife, Anna, have been separated since she filed for divorce in 1993. He announced that "if my wife divorces me, I would resign as pastor immediately."

According to Mrs. Stanley, "The time for, and the possibility of, reconciliation between Charles and me has passed."

The Stanleys' son, Andy, resigned as the church's associate pastor Aug. 6, apparently in disagreement with his father's decision to remain as pastor.

"All Southern Baptists need to be in prayer for First Baptist, for Dr. and Mrs. Stanley and for Andy during these very difficult days," Draper told Baptist Press.