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November 10, 1988

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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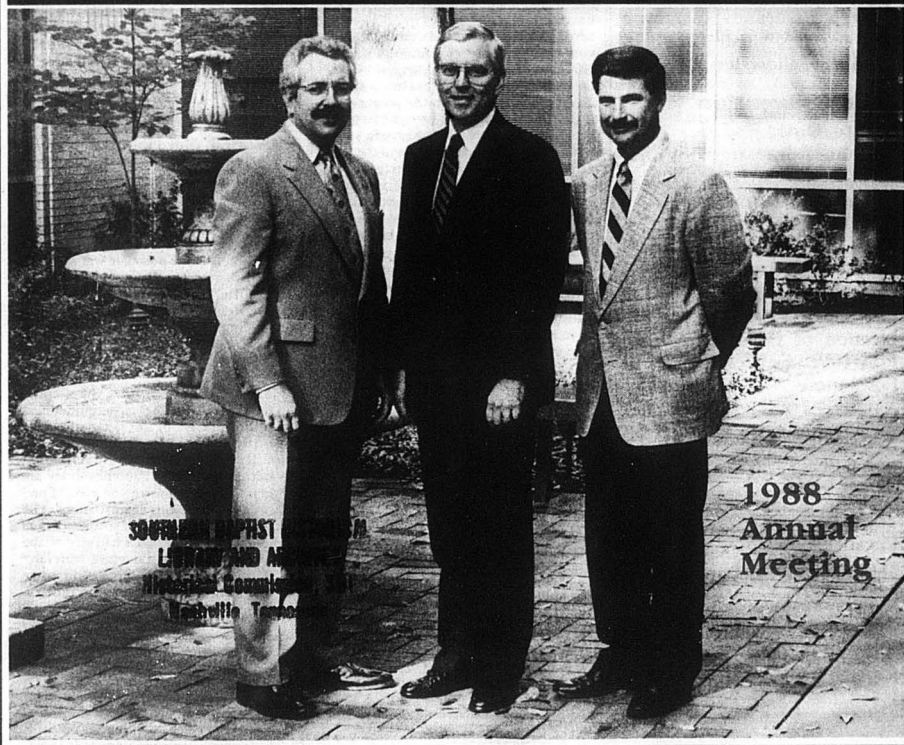


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Budget Cut

Arkansas Baptist

November 10, 1988



SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION
LEWIS AND ARCADE
Historical Commission
Nashville, Tennessee

1988
Annual
Meeting

In This Issue

Cover Story



ABN photo / Millie Gill

Time for Repentance . . . 6-13

Arkansas Baptists met at Park Hill Church Nov. 1-2 for their 135th annual meeting.

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IT'S UPLIFTING

'Madam Moderator'

JAKARTA, Indonesia—For the first time in the 37 years Southern Baptist missionaries have served in Indonesia, they have elected a woman to be moderator for official meetings. The woman, Hazel Barron of Richton, Miss., will chair the mission's 1989-90 executive committee sessions and its 1989 annual meeting. In Indonesia she and her husband, Tom, have worked in developing churches and in student evangelism, in addition to raising two children.

Attendance Good

SINGAPORE—The opening prayer rally in preparation for a week-long evangelistic rally in the city-state of Singapore drew more than 300 Baptists from 30 Baptist congregations. Prayer focused on the need of people to bring non-Christian family members and friends with open hearts to the 4,000-seat auditorium of World Trade Center. The theme of the island-wide rally is "Life's Turning Point." Messages Dec. 29-Jan. 2 will be spoken in English, Mandarin, and three Chinese dialects.

GOOD NEWS!

Four Faces Of God

A description of God is so multifaceted that no one name or title can adequately describe him.

In classic Hebrew, the most common word used for deity, *EI*, is translated some 250 times in the Old Testament as "God." It is most frequently used in circumstances which especially refer to the great power of God. For instance, *EI* brought Israel out of Egypt. Moses told the Israelites their *EI* was "the great, the mighty, and the terrible God" (Dt. 10:17, RSV). *EI* refers to the God of absolute, unqualified, unlimited energy; but God was not thought of as impersonal cosmos or energy. *EI* was understood by the Israelites to be the personal God of power.

E. E. Marsh gives an illuminating summary of the divine virtues of God generally associated with *EI*.

Duration—"And Abraham planted a grove in Beer-sheba, and called there on the name of the Lord, the everlasting God" (Ge. 21:33).

Recent historic events between Israel and Egypt remind us of the patience and endurance of God who has waited 30 years for the Israelites and the Arabs, both God's people, to settle their differences and to find their security in him as the God who endures and who brings peace.

Holiness—"The Lord thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God" (Dt. 4:24).

As Moses called Israel to task for idolatry, America must be warned against the gods of money, sex, power, and pride. The symptoms of moral decay are all around us: injustice, disintegrating families, bribery, immorality. We have casually formed our graven images and worshiped them! The very name *EI* warns that God is "a consuming fire, even a jealous God."

Fidelity—"Know therefore that the Lord

thy God, he is God, the faithful god, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him" (Dt. 7:9).

The pathways of American economic success are strewn with broken promises. As we have flourished materially, we have become wedded to things. We have lost the meaning of trust which makes daily business and social interaction possible. A person's word is not longer his bond; his signature or adequate collateral is required. Covenant keeping grows out of acknowledging an absolute source of righteousness. Only in the fidelity of *EI*, "the faithful God," can trust among persons have meaning.

Compassion—"I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful" (Jo. 4:2).

The picture of a prophet becoming angry over a whole city repenting is strange indeed! This obstinate preacher was A.W.O.L. until the fish vomited him out on the dry ground. He then hastened to Nineveh, where he enjoyed a great revival. Instead of rejoicing, he retired to his gourd-vine retreat to sulk! His anger grew out of a misunderstanding of God's compassion for all persons.

Jonah's prejudice against the Gentile Ninevites parallels the close-mindedness about the "aliens" of this generation: the minorities, the disenfranchised, the culturally unacceptable. Jonah's generation has not passed. Some churches today are still limiting their ministries because of prejudices and objections against aliens. The gracious and merciful God speaks to us as he did to Jonah. "Thou has had pity on the gourd . . . Should I not spare Nineveh" (Jo. 4:10-11). When our compassion is like that of our Lord, all persons become infinitely precious.

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If We Respond . . .

J. EVERETT SNEED

The 1988 meeting of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention at Park Hill Church, North Little Rock, was basically harmonious and well attended. The only tension which was evident during the meeting came during the discussion of the resolutions report. With the conclusion of the resolutions report a giant exodus of messengers occurred, indicating a general misunderstanding of the purpose of Baptist conventions by our messengers.

Much of the harmony that our state convention enjoyed is the result of excellent moderating on the part of Convention President Cary Heard, the excellent guidance provided by Executive Director Don Moore and the good work of the Executive Board.

Park Hill Church deserves the applause of Arkansas Baptists. The church staff and the volunteers enlisted provided well for the needs of the messengers during the convention. Volunteer hostesses were posted at the major entrances, and church staff was also available to meet any needs that arose.

A major emphasis which was echoed throughout the convention was the need to provide more support for worldwide missions. Dr. Moore's excellent message entitled "From Jerusalem to Illyricum" called for individuals to be involved in mission activities at home and around the world. Moore emphasized the necessity of going, but when going is not possible we are to send others.

Ron Herrod, pastor of First Church, Fort Smith, also emphasized the need for more mission support. He went on to point out that Keith Parks, president of the Foreign Mission Board, had just announced that for the first time in history the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board may have to cut back on appointments because of the lack of money to send missionaries.

The call for mission support was further emphasized by an impassioned plea from Jack Bledsoe, director of missions for Cary Association and one of Arkansas' trustees on the Foreign Mission Board. Bledsoe pleaded with pastors to go to their churches and encourage giving to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and to increase Cooperative Program support.

Another highlight of the convention was the excellent Bible studies presented by Roy Fish, professor of evangelism at



Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas. Each of his Bible studies dealt with the theme for the particular session.

Several important items of business came through the Executive Board. The most important was the passage of a \$13 million budget which assures that all that Arkansas Baptists are doing in our state and around the world will continue in 1989. But special note should be taken of the fact that this year's budget represents an increase of only 1 percent over the 1988 budget. It should also be observed that we increased our SBC Cooperative Program by 0.25 of 1 percent. Much of the increase of the 1989 budget will be passed on to causes outside of Arkansas. Some of the ministries in Arkansas will actually receive a decrease in funding in 1989.

Arkansas Baptist

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 Mark Kelly Managing Editor
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Letters to the editor are invited. Letters should be typed double-space and may not contain more than 350 words. Letters must be signed and marked "for publication." A complete policy statement is available on request.

The convention also approved a partnership mission project with Guatemala for 1989-1992. Since Guatemala is not far removed from the United States it will give opportunity for many individuals and churches to be involved in hands-on mission activity.

The re-election of Cary Heard as convention president for 1989 and the election of Randel Everett, pastor of First Church, Benton, as Executive Board president will assure the convention and the Executive Board of prime leadership in the year that is ahead. We need to pray that God will use officers and elected staff to direct our convention as he would have it to go.

The greatest excitement at the convention seemed to be over the resolutions report. It should be remembered that resolutions are not binding on any individual. They are simply the feeling of the messengers present and voting on a given topic. The resolutions committee, under the direction of Chairman Randel Everett and President Heard, are to be commended for maintaining a good sense of humor and keeping this from being a time in which tempers flare.

Perhaps the greatest negative note was the fact that two-thirds of the messengers left upon the completion of the resolutions report. This reflects that many messengers are not interested in hearing the important reports that are presented from the agencies, institutions, and Executive Board.

This year's convention should assist Arkansas Baptists in moving forward in serving the Lord during the coming year. If messengers respond to the plea for greater commitment to missions at home and abroad, this year's convention will have been a tremendous success.

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BOB PARKER

Today's Issues



The Right Enemy

I have in my library a book published in 1887 entitled *Christ in the Camp or*

Religion in Lee's Army. Its author was J.W. Jones, a former Baptist chaplain in northern Virginia. Outside the Word of God, it is one of the most inspiring books I have read. Much in it is timely for our own day even though published 101 years ago.

The author, in relating the splendid cooperation seen during that conflict among the various evangelical chaplains, penned "I was sent once to stop the firing of one of our own batteries, which was, by mistake, firing into our own men; and I shall never forget the eagerness with which I put spurs to my horse and galloped across the field, crying at the top of my voice, as I waved a white handkerchief: 'Cease firing! Cease firing! You are firing into your friends!' And so I never see bitter controversies between evangelical Christians that I do not feel like crying with all of my feeble powers: 'Cease firing into the ranks of your brethren, and trail your guns on the mighty hosts of the enemies of our common Lord.'"

We will, if really born again, manifest the fruit of the Spirit beginning with the most important, *agape* love! This should especially be seen plainly in our relationships with fellow Baptist Christians, individually and convention-wide. We absolutely must cease firing into our friends! Undoubtedly, Satan chuckles with delight when we do so.

Bob Parker is director of the Christian Life Council.

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Stewardship Commission photo



A youngster learns an important lesson on tithing in the recently-released film on stewardship, "The Darkness Shall Turn."

'The Darkness Shall Turn'

by Don Moore
ABC Executive Director

Your immediate response to this prophecy is sure to be, "when?" The answer lies in the remainder of the chorus in our missionary hymn, when "Christ's great kingdom shall come on earth."

How we hunger for the darkness to turn! The scourge of darkness has infiltrated every segment of our lives. From the yet unborn, to the vibrant young adults, on to the fainting hearts of the aged, darkness stalks. From family life, education and entertainment on to religious life, darkness tends to pervade. Plundered of virtue, godliness and integrity, darkness leaves in its path the scattered remains of once promising lives.

This seems to be the perception of the Apostle John when he announced that Jesus had come as "the light of mankind. The light still shines in the darkness, and the darkness has never put it out" (Jn. 1:4,5; Phillips).

The great hope for individuals and for society is that his light be made known. Christ turns back the darkness in the heart and in the home. He even does it in a community when a significant number of the community honor him as Lord.

But, what about the world? Can anything turn back the darkness in the ghettos, behind the Iron and Bamboo Curtains? Oh, yes! The darkness can't extinguish his light. The problem is simply getting the light throughout the world. It was John's high privilege "to bear witness

to that light, that all men through him might believe" (Jn. 1:7). That is precisely our privilege and obligation. What an awesome reality!

How to address this matter is overwhelming! The only hope is that we find a plan to do it together. The entire body of Christ could do this in this generation if we did it together. A part of the body of Christ has made a commitment to do this. Thirty-seven thousand churches are working together to turn the darkness.

"The Darkness Shall Turn" is a newly released film that will help Southern Baptists to see what their cooperative efforts have been doing to turn the darkness. Those who have paid the bill need to see the product of their faithful participation. Those who want to work with others to turn the darkness need to know of this biblical plan for "bearing witness to the light."

Every Southern Baptist should have the privilege of seeing this film. Given the size of the world, the size of the needs, and the size of our efforts, it is not reasonable to assume that a large part of the work could be featured in a 28-minute film or video tape. What is featured will bless and gratify the hearts of the people who want to know that they are "making a difference" in this world.

This film is available through your state office. Call 376-4791 and ask for Jimmie Sheffield's office. You can reserve the film or tape now.

Food & Fellowship

Senior Singers

VIRGINIA KIRK & JANE PURTLE



The Sunshine Club of First Church, Batesville, presented the delightful musical "Saints Alive" by Bob Wooley and Terry Kirkland several months ago. This lively group of men and women, 50 years and up, first heard excerpts from the

musical when they were guests of the Heber Springs First Church senior group. Shortly after the visit to Heber Springs, the energetic leader of the Sunshine Club started practice sessions in a leisurely, no-pressure fashion, preparing for "Saints Alive" to be produced in Batesville. Only about a fourth of the 20 participants had singing or choir experience. People who had never sung a solo made their debut. An important participant was the pianist. It required four narrators, so those who did not want to sing also had an important part. For some, a bit of acting was necessary. These people were all wonderful and had a good time working together.

In February, they presented this funny, nostalgic, Christian musical as a Valentine gift to the church. It was a pouring-down-rain Sunday night and the house was full. Children and grandchildren came to see and hear their parents and grandparents perform. Friends from other churches were there.

After this performance, the club received invitations to repeat the program. Westside Church had them as guests at a potluck dinner with their senior group. Newport First Church and Walnut Ridge First Church also invited them to lunch and they sang again. This gave them two more interesting bus trips. They like to travel.

At the Newport luncheon the following dessert was served and the recipe shared. It goes by several different names—usually "Four-layer-pie." By any name, it is good and easy.

Four-layer-pie

Layer 1—Mix and press into a 9x13 inch ungreased pan:

- 1 cup flour
 - 1/2 cup chopped nuts
 - 1 stick softened margarine
- Bake at 350 degrees until slightly tan. Cool.

Layer 2—Cream together:

- 1 cup powdered sugar
 - 8 oz. creamed cheese
- Fold in 1 cup whipped topping. Spread over layer 1.

Layer 3—Cook, while stirring, 3 cups milk and 2 small packages chocolate, butterscotch, or vanilla pudding mix until thick. Cool. Spread over layer 2.

Layer 4—Cover with whipped topping mix. Refrigerate. Can be made the day before serving.

Virginia Kirk, professor emeritus at Arkansas College, is a member of Batesville First Church. Jane Purtle teaches at Lon Morris College in Jacksonville, Texas. They have enjoyed cooking together for several years.

A SMILE OR TWO

A man and wife walked into a hotel in Vermont and asked the desk clerk, "Do you take children?"

The clerk replied, "No, we only take cash and credit cards."

Even a fish would stay out of trouble if he kept his mouth shut.

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Time for Repentance

Arkansas Baptists Hear Repeated Calls for Repentance, Cooperation, and Increased Commitment to Missions

by Mark Kelly

Managing Editor, Arkansas Baptist

Arkansas Baptists conducted their business in virtual unanimity during the 135th annual meeting of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Nov. 1-2 at Park Hill Church in North Little Rock.

Unlike last year's annual meeting at Fort Smith, where the hallways buzzed with speculation about plans for an SBC-style "conservative" takeover of the state convention's offices and boards, this year's meeting passed rather routinely. Messengers unanimously re-elected their president, host pastor Cary Heard, and adopted most of the recommendations and resolutions without debate.

Only one resolution, on the priesthood of the believer, drew serious debate. It was resolved on a close vote, the only public indication of substantial disagreement among the messenger ranks.

On all other items of business, however, messengers exhibited a strong consensus of spirit. They adopted a \$13 million 1989 budget, approved a partnership mission project with Guatemala Baptists, and set goals for 200 new Sunday School teaching units and 45 new churches to be established in 1989.

Tuesday Morning

A steady stream of messengers poured through registration lines Tuesday morning in preparation for the first session of the annual meeting. Clear weather and a central location assured a registration total higher than last year's 1,076 at Fort Smith.

The morning session opened promptly at 8:30 as Lester McCullough came to the platform for the first time as director of church music for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. He led the congregation in hymn number 33, "To God Be the Glory."

Tom Deere, pastor of Plainview First Church, brought the invocation and gave first voice to a theme messengers would hear repeatedly in the hours ahead. Deere confessed that division among Southern Baptists had gone on too long and that time was growing short for the gospel to be proclaimed throughout the earth. He asked God to instill love for Christian brothers and sisters in the messengers' hearts and deepen their commitment to give

ABSN photo / Mills Gil



New ABSN officers Delton Beall, first vice-president; Cary Heard, president; and Mark Brooks, second vice-president.

sacrificially for missions causes.

Dawn Smith, a former Miss America runner-up and member of the historic First Baptist Church of Columbia, S.C., introduced the first of her four theme interpretations, an energetic rendering of traditional hymns such as "Leaning on the Everlasting Arms" and "Victory in Jesus."

In addition to Smith's theme interpretations, another program highlight that ran as a common thread throughout the convention was the four Bible studies delivered by Roy Fish, professor of evangelism at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

Fish, a native of Star City and former pastor at Winslow, drew on Ephesians chapter three for his explanation of the morning's theme, "Equipping the Saints Through Essential Doctrine."

Fish identified the passage's reference to the "unsearchable riches of Christ" as the heart of essential doctrine. He challenged Arkansas Baptists to focus their proclamation on the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, as the early church did, and witness how hungry hearts respond to that name.

At 9:20 a.m., ABSN President Cary Heard announced the convention committees. Following the enrollment of the messengers, Mike Huckabee, chairman of the Committee on Order of Business moved the adoption of the printed convention schedule.

James Bryant, pastor of Grand Avenue Church in Fort Smith, rose to offer an amendment to the order of business: moving the special music and annual Convention Sermon from 11:55 a.m. Wednesday morning to 10 a.m.

Bryant reasoned that the lateness of the scheduled hour would prevent many messengers from hearing that sermon, which was to be delivered by Bryant's fellow Fort Smith pastor Ron Herrod, of First Baptist Church. By shifting the sermon from the close of the session to a point immediately prior to the resolutions, he argued that many who would leave early to return home for Wednesday evening services would still be able to hear Herrod's address.

In the absence of arguments defending the printed order, messengers approved the amendment on a show of hands, with only a few scattered "nays," and the order was adopted as amended.

Resolutions Committee Chairman Randal Everett, pastor of Benton First Church, read into the minutes resolutions received by his committee and urged messengers with other resolutions to present them as soon as possible. Everett joked that the committee had rejected a resolution, "On Being a Gracious Loser," from Coach Jack Pardee of Houston, Texas, on the grounds that the coach was not a duly elected messenger to the annual meeting.

ABSN Executive Director Don Moore presented a plaque to Bernes K. Selph, emeritus pastor of Benton First Church, recognizing 11 years of service to the Arkansas Baptist History Commission. Selph encouraged messengers to study history, not only world history but also biblical and Baptist history. Such studies, he asserted, "will keep us from making a lot of foolish mistakes."

After another round of congregational hymns, the Arkansas Music Men presented special music, including a stirring performance of "Glorious in Holiness" from the musical, "Beginnings," by Buryl Red.

Allen Thrasher, pastor of Booneville First Church and chairman of the state convention's Missions Advance '87-89 emphasis, told messengers that, with six months remaining in the program, 116 speakers have been trained to present to churches the challenge of world missions through the Cooperative Program.

Thrasher revealed he had learned many things as a result of his involvement with Arkansas Baptist churches in Missions Advance. He said he had witnessed a tremendous zeal for missions among Arkansas Baptists and had seen unmatched generosity in sacrificial giving.

But he also said he was saddened to encounter many Baptists who were uninformed about the Cooperative Program. The result of such ignorance, he said, was a lack of commitment and generosity in churches which had never really been challenged to a vision of worldwide missions and evangelism. Thrasher called on churches to invite Missions Advance team members into their services and urged pastors to preach and lead book studies on world missions and lead their churches into a plan of systematic increases in missions giving.

ABSC Executive Director Don Moore continued the missions emphasis by reminding messengers about the SBC Foreign Mission Board appointment service scheduled for April 11, 1989, in Little Rock. Moore said he believed the "once in a lifetime" experience would play a vital role in cultivating a brighter vision for world missions among the state's Baptists.

Constitution and Bylaws Committee Chairman John Maddox brought a proposed bylaw change to the messengers. Jesse Taylor, director of missions in Rocky Bayou Association, had proposed changing the words "associational missionaries" in Bylaw Five, paragraph four, to "directors of missions" in order to bring the bylaw into conformity with contemporary usage. Maddox announced the proposed change would be voted on during the Wednesday morning session.

Following the recognition of Baptist hospital representatives, retired workers, former presidents, and new Arkansans, Don Moore called Ervin Keathley, recently retired director of the ABSC Church Music Department, to the platform. Keathley was presented a plaque acknowledging his 15 years of dedicated service to the state convention's music program.

With the program running 30 minutes ahead of schedule, the Arkansas Music Men performed a majestic arrangement of "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," immediately prior to the morning's highlight, a message from Larry L. Lewis, president of the SBC Home Mission Board.

Lewis based his sermon on Matthew 28:18-20 and told messengers that they must acknowledge missions as an "imperative doctrine" of the Christian faith.

Pointing out the commands and challenges laid out by Jesus in the Great Commission, Lewis asserted every Christian church must be missionary and every individual Christian a soulwinner in order to be faithful to Jesus Christ.

"You can't get over-obsessed about the cause of sharing the gospel with the lost world," Lewis declared. "If we are to be the church of Jesus Christ, we must share the gospel with all the people of all the nations. Jesus, not Buddha, not Mohammed, is the Savior. There is no other way but the way of the cross."

With the world's population quickly outstripping the number of new Christians being added, Lewis challenged messengers to make soulwinning their top priority and to commit themselves to the task of starting new churches and praying for spiritual awakening in the United States.

Larry Kindrick, pastor of Blytheville First Church, pronounced the benediction at 11:45 a.m.

Tuesday Afternoon

After a prelude provided by the Arkansas Music Men Brass and a series of praise-oriented hymns led by David Lanier, minister of music for Trinity Church in Texarkana, messengers heard a second theme interpretation from Dawn Smith and listened to Roy Fish's contribution toward the afternoon theme: "Equipping the Saints for Every-Member Evangelism."

Fish focused his attention on Jesus' disciples immediately after the crucifixion. In spite of all Jesus had taught them, and even in spite of his resurrection appearances, the Twelve were still dispirited and frightened. What they lacked was just one thing: the power of the Holy Spirit.

When that Spirit came, the disciples were transformed into a dynamic missionary force, Fish explained. In a similar fashion, the power of God's Spirit transforms Christians individually and as whole churches and drives them out among the lost, neglected groups of the world, carrying the gospel of redemption.

After another round of congregational singing and special music from James Allock, minister of music at First Church in Hope, messengers plunged into their primary business for the afternoon.

Jerre Hassell of Stuttgart presented the report of the ABSC Nominating Committee, which the messengers adopted as presented. The report included recommendations that the 1993 annual meeting be held Nov. 16-17 at Little Rock's Geyer Springs First Church and that Randal Everett of Benton deliver the Convention Sermon for the 1989 annual meeting. The report also suggested the 1989 convention date be changed to Nov. 14-15, because of a conflict with the 1989 general election date.

Six recommendations from the Executive Board were adopted as presented.

Messengers approved a \$13 million 1989 budget which will send \$5.3 million in Cooperative Program receipts on to the worldwide mission causes of the Southern Baptist Convention, keeping \$7.7 million in Arkansas for state mission concerns. The

ABN photo / Millie Gill



Discussing the Resolution's Committee report

STATE CONVENTION

budget reflected an increase of 4 percent over projected 1988 receipts and an actual increase of 1 percent over the 1988 budget of \$12.87 million. The share of Cooperative Program receipts passed along to SBC causes increased by .25 percent over 1988.

Messengers adopted three recommendations dealing with 1991 Simultaneous World Mission Conferences, establishing a long-range planning group for 1991-95, and adopting the Witnessing-Giving Life emphasis of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Another recommendation adopted by messengers called for Arkansas Baptists to join hands with Guatemala Baptists in a partnership mission project from 1989 through 1992. The proposal already had been approved by the SBC Foreign Mission Board and Guatemala Baptists.

The sixth recommendation set six priority goals for Executive Board programs in 1989:

- beginning 200 new Sunday School units
- equipping 500 congregations through the emphasis, "A Call to Baptist Basics"
- beginning 45 new churches
- training 200 youth leaders to lead Youth Christian Life Seminars
- involving 638 churches in the "Year of the Laity" emphasis.

An additional recommendation came before the messengers from the Arkansas Baptist Foundation. The proposal was the second vote on a change in the Foundation's charter which would allow it to act as an agent for individuals interested in purchasing life insurance contracts which

name Baptist causes as beneficiaries. Messengers approved the change unanimously.

Gary Lanier returned to the platform to lead in another series of congregational hymns, and convention organist Lyndon Finney of Little Rock Immanuel Church brought messengers to their feet with the familiar Vacation Bible School "stand up chord." Messengers joined in singing "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name," "Power in the Blood," and "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus."

The chair then recognized Emmanuel McCall of the SBC Home Mission Board, who called Bob Ferguson, recently retired director of Cooperative Ministries with National Baptists, to the platform. McCall honored Ferguson with the Home Mission Board's prestigious Victor T. Glass Award, given annually to individuals who have demonstrated outstanding commitment to the ministry of racial reconciliation. ABSC Executive Director Don Moore also presented a plaque which expressed the convention's gratitude for Ferguson's 18 years of service.

The afternoon session closed with special music from Stephen and Denise Edds of Sheridan First Church and the Executive Director's Message from Don Moore.

Moore surprised messengers by asking them to turn in their Bibles to the "Book of Maps." After convincing the congregation he was indeed serious, Moore traced for them one journey of the Apostle Paul to Illyricum, a city on Greece's western shore.

He told messengers that, in 20 years, Paul had personally carried the gospel more than 1,400 miles yet still felt his task would not be finished until he had preached in Rome and Spain. Moore praised the apostle as one whose heart was "gripped with a desire for every person to have a chance to know Jesus as Savior."

Explaining that Paul's incredible accomplishments resulted from the apostle's unusual self-understanding, his pure motivation, and his uncommon aspiration, Moore turned Paul's example back on his unsuspecting listeners.

Might it be that the reason many Baptist churches cannot get their message across the county, much less across a continent, is that they lack those traits which characterized the Apostle Paul? Moore queried. Might it be that the strength of Baptist churches allows them to fall back on their own resources, rather than God's?

Too many congregations have no higher goal than simply holding services, Moore asserted. Certainly none of them have deliberately planned for the decline which marks the majority.

Arkansas Baptists are not going forward,

Moore declared, and will not go forward until they see that God has called them to world evangelization and begin to set challenging goals, instead of just holding services.

The afternoon session closed with a benediction from Paul Sanders, pastor of Little Rock's Geyer Springs First Church.

ABN photo / Millie Gill



HMB President Larry L. Lewis

Tuesday Evening

The theme for the third session of the annual meeting was "Equipping the Saints Through Encompassing Fellowship," based on Philippians 2:2: "Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord and of one mind."

David Oliver, minister of music at Little Rock's Geyer Springs First Church, opened the evening session with three congregational hymns: "I Stand Amazed in the Presence," "There's Within My Heart a Melody," and "Because He Lives." Dawn Smith's third theme interpretation followed, a testimony about how the abduction and murder of her 17-year-old sister opened a deeper understanding of God.

Roy Fish's theme interpretation was drawn from the 13th chapter of First Kings. He said the passage told the story of a prophet who had been disobedient to God and allowed himself to get sidetracked from his mission and lost his life as a result. Fish also said the account illustrated the disastrous consequences of jealousy and competition between men of God.

Fish charged that Southern Baptists have

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been disobedient to God by allowing themselves to be sidetracked from their mission and that they stand in danger of "having their lampstand removed." He criticized preachers who, because of their jealousy for the success of another, engage in competition and purposeful deceit.

Fish called for repentance, regardless of how right any individual might feel he has been in the 10-year-old denominational controversy. "We have disgraced God's name before others," he said. "We have given occasion for others to stumble. And we will not solve our problems until we fall on our faces before God and repent of these sins."

Southern Baptists stand at a crossroads, Fish told the messengers. "God has brought us here for this day, but we are not God's last hope. If we do not respond, God will shelve us and turn elsewhere," he warned.

Fish challenged Arkansas Baptists to "go forward and fill the world with astonishment at what God can do." "God has commanded us to go forward. We cannot fail him now," he concluded. "In the name of the Lord, Southern Baptists can conquer again."

Messengers received reports from their college and university and previewed a new 30-minute feature film on the Cooperative Program before turning their attention to Cary Heard's President's Message.

Jack Nicholas, president of Southern Baptist College in Walnut Ridge, told messengers that SBC fall enrollment reached a total of 517 this year, an increase of 14.9 percent over 1987. He also revealed that a recent visit from an accrediting association positively evaluated improvements in the Southern College curriculum, including the new business administration degree and a proposed degree in elementary education.

Ben Elrod, Ouachita Baptist University's new president, brought his first report to messengers immediately following special music from OBU's 95-voice University Choir. Under the direction of David DeArmond, the choir performed three pieces, one of which was accompanied by an instrumental ensemble. Messengers responded to the performance with enthusiastic applause and a standing ovation.

Elrod's report consisted of three interviews with members of the OBU community: Dr. Donald Anderson, new professor of economics and transportation studies; Ian Cosh, new director of religious activities and Baptist Student Union; and Patti Jo Thorn, a recent OBU graduate and the reigning Miss Arkansas. Miss Thorne closed the report by singing, "Bring Back the Glory."

After the report, ABCS Executive Director Don Moore called retired OBU Presi-

dent Daniel R. Grant to the platform, where he presented Grant with a plaque recognizing his 18 years of leadership in Christian higher education. Messengers honored Grant with a standing ovation.

Messengers then viewed "The Darkness Shall Turn," a 30-minute film designed to capture the hope and excitement of the Cooperative Program as a channel for doing world missions. It is available from the SBC Stewardship Commission, as well as state convention and associational offices, for use by local churches.

Convention President Cary Heard drew his President's Message from Philippians 1:27-30. Taking the impending general election as his point of departure, he told messengers there are four distinctives of the Christian citizen: loyalty to Christ, unity with Christ's people, bravery before Christ's enemies, and conformity to Christ's servant example.

Heard asserted that one cannot be loyal to the gospel of Christ without being united with the people of Christ. He said that the doctrines of the believer's priesthood and local church autonomy must be balanced with an understanding of the oneness of God's people.

"Our witness to the world is not credible if we are not one," Heard declared. "Our oneness is our witness." He said the world will scorn Christians who "preach love and practice hatred."

The battle in which Christians are to be engaged is not between Republicans and Democrats or "fundamentalists" and "moderates," Heard said, but between God and his enemies. In words reminiscent of Roy Fish's earlier call for denominational repentance, Heard said Southern Baptists need to both experience forgiveness and practice it among themselves.

The most positive, helpful thing Southern Baptists can do in a time of denominational distraction is to accept the example of Jesus Christ and resolve to be like him, humble and servant-minded, Heard concluded.

Paul Williams, pastor of Greater Grace Church in Little Rock, pronounced the evening's benediction at 9:30 p.m.

Wednesday Morning

Wednesday dawned foggy and cool, and messengers, tired from two full days of conventioning, straggled into the building. By the time the fourth and final session of the annual meeting convened at 8:15 a.m., the fog had given way to the sun's warming rays.

Attendance was still thin when Ron Feener, minister of music at Fort Smith First Church, led off with congregational singing. But by the time Dawn Smith delivered

Notice

In response to a motion passed by messengers to the annual meeting, the ABN will publish Nov. 17 the texts of the President's Message and the Convention Sermon from the 1988 Annual Meeting.

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STATE CONVENTION

her final theme interpretation, the 1,400-seat sanctuary at Park Hill was "packed to the rafters." Even with extra chairs lining the aisles, many messengers were unable to find seats and wound up standing at the back of the auditorium.

They were drawn by the business of the day. Although President Heard was ex-

righteous suffer.

His heart knotted up with his complaints, the psalmist went into the sanctuary. There he met God, and in that encounter his problem was resolved.

It was resolved, not because he was made to feel better, but because he saw that the end of the wicked was destruction,

Fish said.

"Out of worship, God will stretch your mind regarding himself, his ways with others, and your own life," Fish concluded. "In worship, we bring before God our sorrows, weaknesses, and broken lives, and we find that God has a word for us."

After Fish's sermon, President Heard announced that Mark Brooks had been elected second vice-president

by a narrow 25-vote margin over Dennis Dodson. Of 507 ballots cast, Brooks received 266 (52 percent), edging Dodson, who received 241 votes (48 percent).

At 9:58 a.m., Ron Herrod rose to deliver the Convention Sermon, which originally was scheduled to close out the morning, but had been rescheduled to precede the resolutions period on a motion brought Tuesday morning. Many observers felt this would hurt attendance during five major board reports which followed.

Before turning to his text, Herrod thanked messengers for indulging the program change and urged them to stay until the "sweet end" of the morning session. He emphasized that the remaining reports and other business were "extremely important" and deserved their full attention.

Herrod then directed his audience's attention to the first chapter of John's Gospel and delivered his sermon, entitled "Bright Lights in a Dark World."

The Fort Smith pastor sketched a bleak portrait of a world in crisis, a world in which more than half the population walks in darkness without Jesus. He told messengers that, even if population growth ground to a halt, it would still take 5,600 years to win the world's lost at present evangelism rates.

Herrod painted a picture of a world growing darker every day. He told messengers that the forces of humanism, sexual immorality and perversion, and abortion were continuing to drag the United States deeper and deeper into darkness. The problem is made even worse, he said, by a compromising church which

is marked by complacency, controversy, and corruption.

Herrod called upon messengers to "pray for the Bride of Christ, because she is ill" and challenged them to stand out as lights which shine through the darkness and, like Christ, are not overcome.

Following Herrod's sermon, Randal Everett of Benton brought the report of the ABCS Resolutions Committee. He told messengers the committee had made a conscientious effort to listen to every person who presented a resolution to them and, at the same time, develop positive resolutions which would avoid partisan political language. Everett also noted that another resolution, one not reported by the committee because of its complex political nature, had been independently distributed to messengers by the resolution's author.

With that information in hand, messengers proceeded to adopt eight resolutions without debate. Four of the resolutions expressed appreciation for convention leaders and the host church, retired music secretary Ervin Keathley, retired Cooperative Ministries director Robert U. Ferguson, and retired OBU President Daniel R. Grant. Four other resolutions urged support of the Christian Civic Foundation and the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* and encouraged opposition to Sunday alcohol sales and state lot-



Dawn Smith visits with the Bill Elder family and Ben Elrod.

pected to be re-elected without opposition to the usual second term, two vice-presidential positions were to be filled, and messengers were prepared to debate the 15-item report from the Resolutions Committee which had been distributed the previous evening. The resolutions dealing with abortion and the priesthood of the believer were expected to be controversial.

Cary Heard opened the floor for presidential nominations at 8:37. The only figure to move toward the platform was Jere Mitchell, pastor of Fayetteville First Church and president of the ABCS Executive Board. Mitchell nominated Heard for a second term, and messengers elected him unanimously.

Two nominations were received for first vice-president: Dennis Dodson of Monticello First Church and Delton Beall of Forrest City First Church. Messengers elected Beall on a show of ballots.

Dodson was renominated when the floor was opened for second vice-president, and the name of Mark Brooks, pastor of Springdale Elmdale Church, also was brought. When a show of hands proved inconclusive, messengers cast their ballots.

After a duet from David Hayes and Tim Hess of Fort Smith South Side Church, Roy Fish addressed the morning's theme, "Equipping the Saints by Effective Worship."

Using Psalm 73:1-17 as his text, Fish preached on the question of what happens in effective worship. He held up the image of the psalmist, struggling with the fact that the unrighteous often prosper while the

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Resolution Nine, entitled "Abortion and Infanticide," reaffirmed the belief in the sanctity of "both born and pre-born" human life, which it said began at conception. It condemned the lack of judicial protection for "pre-born persons" and social acceptance of abortion, which it said dulled society's respect for all human life.

The resolution resolved that messengers go on record as abhorring "the use of federal, state or local tax money; public, tax-supported medical facilities; or Southern Baptist support medical facilities for the practice of selfish, medically unnecessary abortions, and/or the practice of withholding treatments from unwanted or defective newly born infants." It urged churches to work for legislation or constitutional amendments which affirm the sanctity of human life and encouraged them to "emphasize Christian morality, offer alternatives to abortion, and lovingly minister to those caught in this dilemma."

James Bryant, pastor of Fort Smith Grand Avenue Church and who had made the Tuesday morning motion to move the Convention Sermon to the position prior to the resolutions, brought to the floor a proposed amendment deleting the language dealing with "selfish, medically unnecessary" abortions. In the absence of any arguments to the contrary, messengers adopted the

suggestion and approved the resolution as amended.

Messengers slightly amended and adopted another resolution which expressed opposition to the experimental school based clinics. The resolution called "a camouflage" the contention that the clinics are intended to offer general medical services and argued instead that their "primary motivation... is to provide contraceptives to public school students." The resolution said that confidential provision of contraceptives undermines "God-ordained parental authority and responsibility" and "condones immoral sexual behavior." It called for churches to oppose the clinics and urged public schools to "uphold the standard of sexual abstinence outside of marriage." It also challenged families and churches to accept their responsibility to teach "a biblically-based, Christian view of sexual behavior and sex education."

Three other resolutions adopted without debate or changes expressed support for the use of released time for religious instruction of public school students and stated opposition to the export of tobacco and liquor products and the distribution and use of pornography.

Resolution Fourteen, as presented by the committee, affirmed Baptists' emphasis on soul competency, religious freedom, and

the believer's priesthood and added that such an emphasis "should not be interpreted to mean there is an absence of certain definite doctrines" at the heart of Baptist faith. It noted the autonomy of the local church, which operates "through democratic process under the lordship of Jesus Christ" and that, while members are equally responsible, the "scriptural offices" of the church are pastors and deacons. It closed with an affirmation of the Holy Spirit's leadership over both pastor and congregation to "carry out the Great Commission in a spirit of cooperation, harmony and love."

Gene Crawley, pastor of Newport First Church, offered an amendment which noted the role of "God-called pastors" in local church leadership, based upon Hebrews 13:7,17. When both a voice vote and a show of hands proved inconclusive, messengers cast ballots on the amendment. They then adopted without change a resolution which called on Christians to become more informed about peace issues and asked Baptist leaders to "actively seek" ways to involve Baptists in peacemaking.

Two resolutions were presented from the floor after the Resolutions Committee had completed its report. Marilyn Simmons, a member of Little Rock First Church, asked messengers to adopt the resolution which had been distributed separately

ABSC Auxiliaries Elect Officers



Floyd, Williams, and Cunningham



Elder (standing), Boone, and Kincl



Lowe, Hough, and Bates

Pastors

Members of the Arkansas Baptist Pastors' Conference elected officers during their annual meeting Oct. 31 in North Little Rock.

Elected to serve for the 1988-89 term were Ronnie Floyd of Springdale, president; Ross Williams of Mena, second vice-president; and Tommy Cunningham, of Little Rock, first vice-president.

Wives

The Arkansas Baptist Ministers' Wives Conference held an afternoon series of workshops on the theme, "The Apple of His Eye," Oct. 31 at Park Hill Church in North Little Rock.

Elected to serve as officers during 1988-89 were Linda Elder of Little Rock, president; LaVerne Boone of El Dorado, secretary; and Kay Kincl, of Magnolia, vice-president.

Educators

During their annual meeting in North Little Rock on Oct. 31, members of the Arkansas Baptist Religious Education Association elected officers for 1987-88.

Serving the group will be Angela Lowe, of Little Rock, second vice-president; John Hough, of Texarkana, first vice-president; Barry Bates, of Camden, secretary-treasurer. Not pictured is Ken Stogsdill, of Fort Smith, president.

STATE CONVENTION

Tuesday evening. The resolution expressed opposition to the initiated act on ethics and lobbying disclosure on the grounds that its terms were too restrictive on individual citizens who "encourage others to contact elected officials on important issues." The second resolution, brought by Phillip Payne of Hot Springs Lakeside Church, opposed the production and distribution of a new "day after" pill which induces abortion of a fertilized egg. Messengers approved both resolutions.

While waiting for the results of balloting on the amendment to Resolution Fourteen, messengers turned their attention to miscellaneous business. They gave final approval to recommended changes in the constitution and bylaws and approved on first reading Jess Taylor's correction of Bylaw Five. They agreed to dedicate the convention annual to retired OBU President Daniel R. Grant and W.O. Taylor, the state's oldest living minister.

A motion from Bill Lewis, director of missions in Harmony Association, initially asked the *Arkansas Baptist* to reprint the President's Message for the benefit of its readers, but Lewis realized he had misspoken and corrected himself, explaining he had meant the Convention Sermon delivered by Ron Herrod earlier in the day, not the President's Message delivered by Cary Heard the prior evening. The motion was adopted with slight opposition.

Messengers also heard a report that registration had topped out at 1,257, compared to 1,076 at Fort Smith in 1987. Jack Bledsoe, director of missions in Cary Association and Arkansas representative to the SBC Foreign Mission Board, also took the podium to make a plea for sacrificial giving to the 1988 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions.

At 11:27 a.m., President Heard reported that messengers had narrowly passed, by a 298-260 vote, the amendment to Resolution Fourteen. At that point, Dale Thompson, pastor of Rogers Immanuel Church, moved that messengers strike the resolution in its entirety and adopt instead the resolution on the priesthood of the believer adopted by messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in San Antonio last June. That resolution stirred controversy over its contention that the doctrine has been used to shield unbiblical beliefs and undermine pastoral authority. The substitute motion failed on a show of ballots, and messengers proceeded to adopt the amended Resolution Fourteen with only scattered opposition.

With the resolutions and business periods concluded, messengers were then to turn their attention to five reports from agencies and departments which account for 66 percent of the statewide \$7.7 million 1989 budget.

But as Ron Feener rose to lead another congregational hymn, hundreds of messengers left their seats and streamed toward the exits at the back of the sanctuary, ignoring Ron Herrod's earlier exhortation that they stay for the important reports which remained.

When the exodus abated, less than one-third of the audience remained, and by the time President Cary Heard voiced the benediction at 12:32 p.m., less than 200 persons were still seated in the sanctuary.

In the final 45 minutes of the session, messengers received reports from the state convention's foundation, family and child care agency, and newsmagazine, as well as reports regarding the "Church Arkansas" emphasis and Executive Board priority goals.

ABSC Church Extension Director Floyd Tidsworth told messengers six new works had been launched in trailer parks during 1988 and that 54 locations had been identified toward the goal of 45 new churches in 1989. Executive Director Don Moore presented a plaque of appreciation to L.B. Atchison, director of missions in North Arkansas Association. That association led the state by starting four new congregations during the last year.

Family and Child Care Services Executive Director Johnny Biggs used a statistical summary to sketch for messengers the tragic proportions of abortion in the state and nation. He urged Arkansas Baptists to unite against the abortion holocaust and support the agency's planned home for unwed mothers at El Dorado.

Harry Trulove, president of the Arkansas Baptist Foundation, told messengers his agency's assets increased 16 percent in 1988 and income was 21 percent greater than in 1987. He challenged messengers to strengthen their support of Baptist causes through the Cooperative Program, which he noted, is providing an ever-decreasing percentage of the operating funds for Baptist agencies.

Everett Sneed, editor of the *Arkansas Baptist*, praised Arkansas Baptists for their continued support as the publication struggles with skyrocketing postal costs. He urged messengers to "hold the rope" for the magazine by continuing to pray, sending local church news, and maintaining the ABN in their church budgets.

Jimmie Sheffield, associate executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, concluded the session with a presentation of the six top priority goals for Executive Programs in 1989. Messengers had adopted those goals during the Tuesday afternoon session.

At 12:30, President Heard called the newly-elected vice-presidents to the platform to present them to the remaining messengers, and he closed the annual meeting with prayer.

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Executive Board

Terms to expire in 1991

Arkansas Valley	James McDaniel, Brinkley
Benton	Homer Shirley, Siloam Springs
Big Creek	Ray Taffar, Viola
Calvary	Jimmy Miller, Judsonia
Carey	Don Phillips, Camden
Central	Randel Everett, Benton
Central	Ronald J. Bracken, Hot Springs
Concord	Clyde Vire, Paris
Conway-Perry	Horace Gray, Perryville
Harmony	Nelson B. Eubank, Pine Bluff
Harmony	Bob Harper, White Hall
Independence	Charles Osborne, Cord
Liberty	Jerry Wilson, El Dorado
Little Red River	Jerry A. Kirkpatrick, Heber Springs
Mississippi	Joe A. Thompson, Blytheville
Mount Zion	Dennis Coop, Jonesboro
Mount Zion	Stanley H. Ballard, Jonesboro
North Arkansas	Bill Riddle, Green Forest
North Pulaski	William R. Brown, Bayou Meto
Pulaski	Charles Atkinson, Little Rock
Pulaski	Sid Carswell, Little Rock
Red River	L. B. Jordan, Arkadelphia

Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services

Terms to expire in 1991

Harry Black, England
Charles O'Neal, Warren
Joe Hogan, Harrison
Watson Bell, Searcy
Rodney Landes, El Dorado
Larry Price, Fort Smith
Terms to expire in 1990
Mrs. Carter Dryer, Manila

Arkansas Baptist Foundation

Terms to expire in 1991

Joe Sullivan, Little Rock
Byron Eiseman, Jr., Little Rock
Allen Smith, Little Rock
Gary Newcomb, Mena
Ron Cox, Springdale

Terms to expire in 1989

James Sawyer, Little Rock
Tom Watts, Camden

Arkansas Baptist Historical Commission

Terms to expire in 1991

District 2—Hilton Lane, Fairfield Bay
District 3—Jimmie Anderson, Leachville
District 8—John McClanahan, Pine Bluff

Term to expire in 1989

Member at Large—Raymond Reed, Warren
Tim Reddin, Director

Arkansas Baptist News Magazine

Terms to expire in 1991

District 5—Lyndon Finney, Little Rock
District 7—Mrs. Carroll D. Caldwell, Texarkana
District 3—Jimmie Anderson, Leachville

Baptist Memorial Health Care System, Memphis

Terms to expire in 1991

Bob Harrison, Jonesboro
Tommy Hargrove, Holly Grove
Aubrey Worrell, Pine Bluff

Terms to expire in 1989

Larry Kindrick, Blytheville

Red River	Betty Dailey, Arkadelphia
Rocky Bayou	Noble R. Wiles, Oxford
Southwest	Bill W. Gunter, Hope
Tri-County	Bryan Moery, Wynne
Trinity	Captain Lovell, Harrisburg
Washington Madison	Ronnie Floyd, Springdale
White River	Paul Seal, Mt. Home
District 2	Alice King, Mt. Home
District 3	Melvaadeen Friday, Blytheville
District 4	Peggy Jeffries, Fort Smith

Terms to expire in 1990

Faulkner	Larry Pillow, Conway
North Pulaski	Kent Farris, North Little Rock
North Pulaski	Lex Eaker, North Little Rock

Terms to expire in 1989

Black River	Ron Sanders, Walnut Ridge
Delta	George Pirtle, Dermott
Liberty	Glenn Morgan, El Dorado
North Arkansas	Merle Milligan, Harrison
Ouachita	Dillard Miller, Mena

Baptist Student Union Advisory Committee

Terms to expire in 1991

District 1—Terry Eaton, Decatur
District 3—Bill Oakley, Blytheville
District 4—David McLemore, Russellville
District 6—Jim Guthrie, West Helena
District 8—Al Sparkman, Crossett
Member at Large—Jamie Jones, Fayetteville

Term to expire in 1990

District 7—Bob Webster, Arkadelphia
Member at Large—Mrs. Larry Lloyd

Term to expire in 1989

District 2—David Johnson, Horseshoe Bend
--

Christian Civic Foundation

Terms to expire in 1991

Jim Swedenburg, Benton
Mrs. Conway Sawyers, Little Rock
Ronnie Mayes, Beebe
James Gattis, Little Rock
Mike Trammell, Jonesboro

Ministry of Crisis Support Advisory Committee

Terms to expire in 1991

James Strait, Jonesboro
Bob L. Klutts, North Little Rock

Ouachita Baptist University

Terms to expire in 1991

Mrs. Mike Hurst, Van Buren
Mrs. Chesley Pruet, El Dorado
Elmer Ferguson, Dewitt
Mrs. Joe Ford, Little Rock
Jeral Hampton, Booneville
William H. Sutton, Little Rock
Bill Atkinson, Pine Bluff
Richard Lusby, Jonesboro

Southern Baptist College

Terms to expire in 1991

Bob Crafton, Rogers
Kenneth Sulcer, Osceola
L. B. Atchison, Harrison
C. B. Thompson, North Little Rock
Jim Shirley, Sherwood

Doug Bradley, Jonesboro

Ray Stewart, Fort Smith

Nathan Gregory, Augusta

Term to expire in 1990

Don Jones, Mt. Ida

Term to expire in 1989

Kerry Powell, McGehee

State Joint Committee Cooperative Ministries with national Baptists

Dillard Miller, Mena

Mrs. Joseph Hogan, Harrison

Tommy Cunningham, Little Rock

Constitution and Bylaws Committee

Terms to expire in 1991

John Maddox, Maumelle
J. W. Green, Stuttgart

World Hunger Committee

Terms to expire in 1991

Mrs. Adella James, Clarksville
Mrs. John McAlister, El Dorado

Terms to expire in 1990

Bill Peel, Stephens

1989 Convention Program Committee

Term to expire in 1991

C. A. Johnson, Paragould

1993 Convention

Date: Nov. 16-17, 1993

Place: Geyer Springs First Church, Little Rock

1989 Convention

Preacher: Randel Everett, Benton

Alternate: Randal O'Brien, Little Rock

1989 Annual Convention Recommended Date Change

The Nominating Committee recommends the 1989 Convention date be changed from Nov. 7-8, 1989 to Nov. 14-15, 1989.

Brotherhood Cuts Budget

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)—Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission trustees heard a report on ways to improve the commission's image, voted a budget reduction to reduce its deficit and elected new officers during their meeting in Memphis, Tenn., Oct. 21-22.

The 76-page image improvement report was an administrative communications audit, said Brotherhood President James Smith.

Included in the report were concerns about the commission's accessibility to the public and responsiveness to Baptist state leadership and trustees.

The trustees also approved Smith's proposal for redefining the office of vice presi-

dent. The change moves responsibility for program services from the first vice president to president. The new structure makes more people directly answerable to the president.

The trustee's executive committee met behind closed doors to discuss prospects for the new vice president.

In other business, trustees approved a \$150,000 budget reduction for the current year. As of Sept. 29, the commission was \$159,402 over its budget with another \$100,000 borrowed and \$35,000 owed to its printer. Some new products cost more than estimated, and the commission is selling several products at a loss, Smith said.

The commission is asking the Southern

Baptist Executive Committee for \$986,800 from the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program unified budget for 1988-89, a 4 percent increase. Smith told trustees no increase could be expected, however, because of a zerogrowth proposal for the overall Cooperative Program.

Midwestern Board Approves Goal

KANSAS CITY, Mo.(BP)—Trustees of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary have voted to raise \$50,000 to support the Leonard Sanderson Professorship in Evangelism.

During the Oct. 17-18 semi-annual meeting, trustees and former trustees of the school were asked to accept a challenge to raise a minimum of \$1,000 each from outside sources and/or personal contributions.

A formal effort to raise \$250,000 in total contributions to establish the Sanderson professorship was approved during the April trustee meeting.

The first named professorship in Midwestern's 30-year history honors Sanderson, a leader in Southern Baptist evangelism who has been a visiting professor of evangelism since 1983.

Southern Fills Two Vacancies

ORLANDO, Fla. (BP)—Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's board of trustees filled two vacancies on its board and heard a report from its executive committee during a called board meeting Oct. 19 that concluded a two-day trustee retreat.

Although Southern's trustee board has only one full meeting annually, the trustees' third annual fall retreat also included a brief business session. The first two retreats were held in Louisville, Ky., where the seminary is located, but this year's event was moved to Orlando, Fla., at the invitation of a trustee who provided accommodations.

Two trustees added to the 63-member board are James E. Harris, Baptist associational religious education director in Dayton, Ohio, and Samuel Carey Heard, pastor of Park Hill Baptist Church in North Little Rock, Ark.

Harris, whose election is subject to ratification by the full board at its 1989 annual meeting in April, will fill the unexpired term of Ohio trustee Ronald E. Stewart, who moved out of the state. Heard, who will serve until the 1989 session of the Southern Baptist Convention, will fill the unexpired term of Arkansas trustee Mark Coppenger, who left that state.

This announcement is neither an offer to sell nor a solicitation of offers to buy any of these securities. The offering is made only by Prospectus.



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Basic passage: Jeremiah 7

Focal passage: Jeremiah 7:1-15

Central truth: A call to righteous living and proper worship.

Among the reforms of King Josiah was the destruction of a place of grim pagan sacrifice. Apostasy in Judah had gone so far that children were offered in sacrifice to the god Molech (2 K. 23:10). Taken as an example of the kind of horrendous practice that prevailed in Jeremiah's time, the fact will help us understand the severity of language used by Jeremiah in the great temple sermon.

Jeremiah was a preacher who was sure of his authority. He spoke "the word of the Lord," to whom he gave the exalted titles, "the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel." The tremendous claim would doubtless secure the attention of those who had come up to Jerusalem to worship.

Jeremiah's sermon had a two-fold emphasis, "Amend your ways" and "Trust ye not in lying words" (vv. 3-4). He would go on to specify what it would take for the people to amend their ways. The people were sacrificing to idols and calling the sanctuary "The Temple of the Lord." Josiah had refurbished the Temple after a period of neglect. It became an object of pride and was considered as their guarantee of national survival. They thought that as long as the temple stood, all was well with Israel. Jeremiah said security lay in a change of heart and conduct (v. 3).

The prophet's message was that, for worship to be acceptable to God, it must be offered by persons who were just and compassionate toward others. Splendid temple buildings and services could not avail if the conduct of those involved with them transgressed God's law of love (v. 5).

Foreigners should not be abused when they, like orphans and widows, were not in position to defend themselves (v. 6). In this same verse, the prohibition against shedding "innocent blood" is followed by a reference to idolatry, suggesting that the prophet was condemning human sacrifice.

Jeremiah was telling Israel that their practice was hypocrisy and that always brings a penalty (vv. 14-15). He declared that the people needed to come to the temple in confession and repentance so God could forgive them of their sin and cleanse them for a life of service.

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Life and Work

Integrity

by Stephen Pate, Second Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: 2 Corinthians 4:1-4; 1 Thessalonians 2:1-2

Focal passage: 2 Corinthians 4:2; 1 Thessalonians 2:3-12

Central truth: As believers, we are to share the gospel with integrity.

How do you communicate the gospel with others? The question is not referring to life-style evangelism or verbally confronting one with the gospel. It is referring to are we presenting the gospel truthfully and clearly so that it is easily understood with the right motive and are we living the "Christ Life?" A life that one can see Christ in and through us?

2 Corinthians 4:2 is Paul's reaction to those who were claiming that Paul was dishonest in his preaching. His response was he was preaching the gospel exactly how God revealed it to him. There were no half truths, deceptions, nor personal gain in his preaching.

We, like Paul, are living our lives "in the sight of God." It is our responsibility to make certain that our message is clear.

1 Thessalonians 2:3-4 indicates Paul's interest in assuring that motives were pure. Apparently he along with possibly others were under attack for "their motives." There were still many who doubted Paul and the total life-style change he had exhibited. Paul was preaching for decisions and was not ashamed in the least. His response was to take them to consider how he was living. Were his actions exemplary of one with the "king's motives" or of personal motives? He also claimed that he along with the other missionaries had been "approved by God." Greed nor glory was behind what they were doing. The furtherment of God's kingdom was the purpose alone.

In 1 Thessalonians 2:5-10, Paul reminds them of the type of lives they were living. They were exemplary. That they were to be as gentle as a nurse. Paul was not characterized as an authoritarian but like a nurse caring for a small child.

Finally, 1 Thessalonians 2:11-12 indicates the call of God to share in his kingdom of glory. That one of his responsibilities was to encourage and be a source of assurance. Being honest with them also is one of the demands that the gospel makes upon a Christian life.

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Bible Book

Support for Moses

by Bradley A. Rogge, Forest Tower Church, Hensley

Basic passage: Exodus 17, 18

Focal passage: Exodus 17:9-13, 18:14-18, 21-22

Central truth: Leadership needs support to succeed.

Moses was the leader of Israel. God had appointed him so. I think it is very important for leaders and those being led to realize that leadership is not aloneness.

Israel was about to face the greatest test of her travels thus far. Moses felt the people needed to see their leader in a time of crisis standing with them. Moses took two men with him to a place where the people could see him. As the battle raged the arms of Moses became tired. As the arms fell so did the spirits of the people. Instead of being critical of Moses, the two men held up his arms, thus the battle was won.

Today in our world and in our churches, we find it easy to find fault with our leaders. Often we find fault when we have little understanding of the circumstances our leaders are in. Maybe the battle has been long and our leader is tired and discouraged. When we see this we can have one of two responses. We can get beside our leaders and lift them up or we can stand back and find fault, thus adding to our leaders burden.

Sometimes the best way to help our leader is to show that leader a better way. That is what the father-in-law of Moses did. Leaders can take on so much that they break under the load. Seeing the load of Moses, Jethro introduced the first "shared ministry" concept.

Shared ministry basically is when more of the church people take on more of the ministry of the church. The work of the church is not just the task of the leaders, it is for all of us who are called Christians. Each of us much accept part of the work load.

As you read your lesson this week, ask yourself this question, is there some way I can help the leadership of my church? Am I one of those who are critical yet do little to understand where my leader is in his/her work? Right now would be a great time to stop and pray for your leader.

You may want to look into this new, yet not so new idea of shared ministry. Maybe you can help get the concept introduced in your church.

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Witness At Spearpoint

by Craig Bird
SBC Foreign Mission Board

WUNDANYI, Kenya (BP)—James Jones ran as fast as he could from the opportunity.

But since the Southern Baptist pastor from Kentucky was being chased by three Maasai warriors, he didn't get far. At spearpoint, he was returned to the village he had fled moments before. There he was quizzed about who he was and why he had barged into the village without invitation. And as a result, several of the warriors accepted Jesus Christ as their savior.

Jones, pastor of Campbellsville Baptist Church and a member of the Southern Baptist Executive Committee, didn't plan on heavy aerobic activity when he went to Kenya on a recent two-week evangelism crusade.

He was paired with Southern Baptist missionary Walter Allen near the Kenya-Tanzania border to spread the gospel among the Maasai—one of the most famous tribal peoples in Africa and, until the last five years, one of the most resistant to Christianity.

Jones and his translator Daniel, 17, a non-Maasai native of the area visited Maasai villages in the mornings and afternoons. They talked mostly to women and children. "If the warriors were around, they usually would not talk to us or let us talk to their wives," he said. Evenings were spent showing the film "Jesus" to crowds numbering up to 800 people.

Allen and Jones decided to split up to reach more villages, which is how Jones wound up trying to outrun the young warriors.

"We walked up to the gate of a village and called out, 'Hodi, hodi.' (A Swahili request to enter) like we always did and just walked on in," Jones said.

Before they got a dozen steps inside, an elderly man began yelling angrily at them in Maasai. The three warriors appeared in response to his screams, spears in hand.

Jones' translator, obviously frightened, said, "Run! Run!" That was an understandable reaction but a foolhardy one, since Maasai warriors are famed for their ability to run for miles without tiring. One warrior came directly after the two fleeing men, and the other two looped around the sides and appeared in front of them to cut off their escape.

"Daniel kept telling me they were going to beat us up and I was telling him to tell the warriors we meant no harm," Jones recalled. "Daniel talked really fast."

The warriors declined to spear their prisoners but wanted the two men to return to the village. As they marched back,

Jones focused on the Scripture from Matthew 28:19-20, which Christians have used for centuries as their rationale for going into all the world to make disciples. But this time he concentrated on the final words of Jesus, "And lo, I am with you always. . ."

The village leader was waiting for them. He listened to Daniel's explanation of their visit and ordered the elderly man, who was still screaming at the outsiders, to be quiet. Then he granted Jones' request to tell anyone who wanted to listen about Jesus.

"I had no doubt God had led me into that situation," Jones remembered. "I silently said, 'God, I trust you, and I commit everything that will happen to you,' and I felt great peace."

All three of the warriors who had chased Jones indicated they wanted to become Christians and asked him to come and talk to their wives, too.

When it was time to go, the young warriors escorted Jones outside the village, "partly to protect us from the old man who was still so angry at us."

Meanwhile, missionary Allen and the other volunteers had organized search parties and had been looking for the missing men for two hours.

Allen was afraid something unusual had happened to them—and it had.

Nigerians Rebuild

ZARIA, Nigeria (BP)—Last year's destruction of Baptist churches by Nigerian Muslims has caused congregations to plan not only for new buildings but bigger ones.

Attendance at worship services in Nigeria also has increased, even though congregations are meeting in temporary and borrowed buildings, observers reported.

Muslims burned 10 Baptist churches and several parsonages in Zaria, Nigeria, during religious rioting in March 1987 that also claimed churches of other Christian denominations in that area. Six Baptist churches in nearby Kaduna also were burned. But the Christians' refusal to retaliate has inspired some Muslims to look closely at Christianity and in some cases to accept Christ as their savior.

Southern Baptist missionaries Payton and Helen Myers of West Point, Miss., have moved to Zaria to help with reconstruction and the starting of new churches.

Missionaries said the congregations need prayer as they rebuild while spreading the gospel in a strongly Muslim city.