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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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More Than Kid Stuff

Arkansas Baptist

November 17, 1988



Thanksgiving

In This Issue



ABN photo / Millie Gill

When mothers and daughters busy themselves preparing Thanksgiving dinner, they are making more than a meal.

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IT'S UPLIFTING

Missionaries Reach Garifuna

GUATEMALA CITY—Southern Baptist missionaries in Guatemala and Honduras have begun a joint project to evangelize the Garifuna people, who came from the West Indies and speak their own language. Missionary Charles Corey in Guatemala already has distributed 450 gospels of John in the Garifuna language in one area, and has begun the first Bible study in the country for Garifuna people. The study averages 20 in attendance.

Videotapes Up

SINGAPORE—More than 1,200 films were shown last year to more than 58,000 people through the Baptist media center in Singapore. From those showings, 300 peo-

ple accepted Jesus Christ as Savior. One person reported her non-Christian father is open to the gospel after watching the video, "Jesus," three times in the Cantonese Language. A showing of the same video in a Mandarin-language version resulted in four conversions in a small group setting. And one youth reported her sick father listened to some audio cassette tapes in Hokkien, a Chinese dialect, and accepted Jesus before he died.

Seminary Grows

TAIPEI, Taiwan—The first four men to study religious education at the Taiwan Baptist Theological Seminary were among 276 who graduated this summer. The seminary also broke ground for a new three-story library and seven-story dormitory for students, faculty and staff.

GOOD NEWS!

Hallelujah Amen!

Revelation 19:1-6

The vision of the apostle John on the Isle of Patmos was a worship experience. John heard the voice of many people in heaven saying, "Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God" (Rv. 19:1).

John's vision was a hallelujah service that grew out of his desire to adore the name of God. John's writings give a vital insight into the meaning of worship. In two words he captures the true essence of Christian worship: "alleluia" and "amen."

Adoration—Hallelujah is a Hebrew expression used liturgically in worship as a short doxology. It means literally "Praise ye Yah," "Praise the Lord."

In recent years the church has lost its lyrical note. Its voice is being swallowed up in the noise of stereos and stadiums. It is suffocating from institutionalism and sterile worship which make the songs of Zion sound slightly off key.

Americans should weep for the loss of their hallelujah religion. In the surging flood of increasing paganism, we are tempted to forget the songs of Zion and join in the raucous chorus of a nation which has forgotten the name of its God.

Worship of the true God brings the strength of Christian fellowship—Former members of our church often return to worship with us, and we hear the excitement in their voices as they say: "It is so good to be back. We love it here!" They

are not referring to the buildings in which we worship. They are referring to the people of God whose strengthening fellowship is centered in the name of Jesus.

Worship of the true God brings an assurance of ultimate victory. The New Testament disciples did not have to whistle in the dark to keep up their courage. Neither do we. We worship, as did Moses, as the altar of *Jehovahnistis*, meaning "the Lord my banner" (Ex. 17:15). Under this banner, we shall march triumphantly singing the praises of our victorious Lord.

Affirmation—The kind of God we worship determines the kind of people we become. Our acceptance of God's will is not a folded-hand resignation. It is an amen of strong affirmation: "So be it."

The amen of Christ's prayer in the garden of Gethsemane was a cross. The affirmation of God's purpose of his mission on earth was reflected in Christ's prayer: "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Mt. 26:39).

After the hallelujah of his life, there came the amen of his death. "Amen! So let it be!"

The acceptance of God's will must be followed by the amen of our commitment to his purpose. "Here am I, Lord. Send me. Amen!" This amen is not always a sigh. It is sometimes a shout.

Worship at its best includes both adoration and affirmation. They will be, "amen," "Hallelujah!" They will be done, "Amen!"

Adapted from "Proclaim," Oct.-Dec. 1980. Copyright 1980 The Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. All rights reserved. Used by permission. For subscription information, write to Material Services Dept., 127 Ninth Ave. North, Nashville, TN 37234.

Support the Dream

J. EVERETT SNEED

Family and Child Care Services have met the needs of children and their families for 94 years in Arkansas. At first, Arkansas Baptists provided an orphans' home. Today, the agency provides a much wider ministry, maintaining Christian services to children and families. The purpose is to help hurting people in the name of Christ.

Today, Family and Child Care Services can respond to the needs of children and families from 18 different locations in our state. Johnny G. Biggs, executive director of the agency says, "We are able to provide this service because of the cooperative efforts of Arkansas churches and associations. We hear the sound of pain and sorrow because people from our agency are there as an arm of Arkansas Baptists reaching out. We can make a difference and be redemptive as we carry God's love and grace to troubled lives."

This past year Family and Child Care Services provided direct care for 420 children through the Children's Home, Emergency Relief Homes, Group Homes for Boys and foster care. In area offices they provided help for 4,500 individuals involved in over 1,400 referrals. This included counselling service through six satellite offices staffed with compassionate trained professionals to meet the needs of hurting people.

Family and Child Care Services is concerned for all children, born and unborn. Executive Director Biggs is anxious to develop a Christian alternative to abortion. Approximately a year ago the agency was given a beautiful plantation home in south Arkansas situated on nine-acre estate. The agency believes that this secluded place can become a home for unwed mothers. This could become a partial answer to the holocaust of abortion and also offer a ministry of redemption and reconciliation.

The question arises: Is there a need for a home for unwed mothers? The answer is an emphatic, yes! Currently in America there are more than 1.5 million women who seek abortions each year. Statistics indicate that one out of every four pregnancies now ends in abortion. Executive Director Biggs said, "Caring people sympathize with pregnant teenagers and unmarried women who are caught in this conflict and often are under intense pressure to have an abortion. We believe that the main reason women and teenagers seek abortions is that



Christian alternatives are not being presented to them."

A second question arises: What is the situation in Arkansas? In 1986 there were 6,236 induced abortions reported to the Arkansas Department of Vital Statistics. Of these, 73 percent were white and 27 percent were non-white. Girls aging from 15 to 19 had 1,894 abortions and girls 10 to 14 had 102 reported abortions.

Arkansas is among the six states with the highest percentage of total abortions obtained by persons 10 to 19 years of age. The demographic profile of women obtaining abortions in Arkansas during the 1980s has remained basically consonant. The largest number of women are white, unmarried, ages of 20 to 24, and in the first five to eight weeks of pregnancy.

Until recent years, all human life, born and unborn, was considered sacred and protected by the Judeo-Christian ethic. It was only in the heathen world that human life was taken lightly. Both the Old and New Testament give us some insight into the thinking of the pagan world as well as the sanctity of human life.

Family and Child Care Services conducted a survey last year. The survey revealed that 98 percent of pastors and directors of missions surveyed favored the development of a home for unwed mothers. The survey revealed that 88 percent believe that adoption services should be offered to help place the babies that were given up by their mothers. Executive Director Biggs said, "We are gratified by the caring and support of those who have responded to the survey. We receive numerous calls from Baptist families each year who are interested in adopting a child."

The services currently being offered by Family and Child Care Services, as well as the agency's dream of beginning a home for unwed mothers can only come to pass if money is available. To meet the basic needs for this year's budget the Thanksgiving Offering must receive \$456,000. This represents 28 percent of the agency's total 1988 budget. If an adoption center is to become a reality additional money must be secured either through this offering or from some other source.

As we consider what God would have us to do in the Thanksgiving Offering for Family and Child Care Services, we should pause to thank God for what the agency is currently doing. We should also support through both prayers and offerings the dream of establishing a home for unwed mothers.

Arkansas Baptist

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DON MOORE

You'll Be Glad To Know



"The Purpose of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention is to assist the churches of the Convention in fulfilling their mission, and to encourage cooperative support of and involvement in our worldwide mission enterprise."

The statement above is the first paragraph of Article II of the Constitution. The churches do not exist to assist the churches. The convention does not exist to dictate to or police the churches. That happens in denominations that have a different form of government. The convention can't mandate to a church its progress, its mission giving, its officers or its moral values.

The convention can do whatever it wants to within the realm of the convention. Article X of the Constitution deals with amending of the Constitution. It states that any part of it may be amended, "except Article IV, which shall remain forever unalterable in substance." Article IV states "While independent and sovereign in its own sphere, this Convention shall never exercise any authority whatever over any church, nor shall it in any way interfere with the constitution of any church, or with the exercise of its functions as the only ecclesiastical body, but will cheerfully recognize and uphold the absolute independence of the churches."

You should be glad to know that you as a church and as an individual have no one who can lord it over you. This is the miracle and genius of Baptist associations and conventions. We voluntarily choose to work together. We do not have to. Nor do we have to all agree on everything. Since it is voluntary and privileged participation, we should show the highest regard and respect for each other.

Occasionally those of us who are convention employees are expected to exercise power that the convention has denied for itself. We have been employed to "assist the churches in fulfilling their mission." That servant role does not allow for decrees from this office, nor for "one issue" crusading. We are comfortable in doing what we have been called to do.

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

Woman's Viewpoint

A Woman's Place

NANCY JORDAN

Where it came from I do not know. As I was smoothing out one of the ever-present ragged fingernails, I noticed the emery board I was using had the words, "A woman's place is in the Arkansas National Guard" printed on it. It started a train of thought for me. Just what best describes the woman's place in our world?

Many women dislike the idea that a woman's place is in the home. Personally, I love it. I love being in the home. . . right beside the man! I must admit, I feel a lot like Jerry Clower describes his wife. He says, "That mamma don't wanna be liberated." I love being treated like a lady; doors opened for me, chairs held, being treated with respect simply because I'm a lady.

Then, a place of business can be another good place for a woman to be. It's very rewarding to be recognized



Union, we have heard much about the strong, faithful work that women in the past have done for mission causes. Time and again we hear our missionaries relate how much they appreciate the way they are supported by our denomination both monetarily and in prayer. Baptist women have much to do with that!

There are so many places where "It's a woman's place." Isn't it good being a woman? May we all strive to become the woman described in Proverbs 31:10ff, "A capable, intelligent and virtuous woman, who is he who can find her? She is far more precious than jewels, and her value is far above rubies or pearls. . ." (The Amplified Bible).

Nancy Jordan is the wife of L.B. Jordan, director of missions for the Red River Association. She has three grown children and five grandchildren.

A SMILE OR TWO

Truthful

A shop was giving away balloons to children. One little fellow asked if he might have two.

"Sorry," the clerk said, "but we give only one balloon to each boy. Have you a brother at home?" The youngster was truthful, but he did want another balloon.

"No," he replied regretfully. Then added hopefully, "But my sister has, and I want one for him!"

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Letters to the Editor

Pastoral Authority

Resolution Number 14 adopted by the state convention meeting in North Little Rock was needlessly amended to include a statement on pastoral authority. Allow me to suggest the dilemma of our time is not authority, pastoral or otherwise. Baptists believe their Bibles and respect their pastors. I am a pastor and must admit pastors are wrong from time to time in their actions and attitudes. Pastors can become full of "righteous anger" when they are corrected in an error. We should be grateful as pastors for correction made in love. Pastors are misreading church expectations in our day. We sometimes force our agenda on the congregations we are called to serve. Ours is an era when more than a few pastors use churches as means of personal advancement. The church has been and will always be a ministering fellowship and not a means. I fear pastors have used the term pastoral authority to cover a variety of matters involving self-interest. Let me remind all pastors that the disciples were warned never to "lord over one another like Gentile kings" by Jesus (Lk. 22:25). We are called to remember the greatest is the one who serves not the one who is served. Convention-wide pastoral terminations have tremendously jumped on account of this issue. The great problem of our generation is the absence of a serving spirit in our churches and their leaders. Let us never forsake the only pastoral model worth imitation, our Lord Jesus.—**Bob Parsley, Dardanelle**

Arrogant Doctrines

I understand the desire of "Name withheld" (Oct. 27 edition) to remain anonymous. I realize that by publicly stating my convictions I risk jeopardizing

my opportunity to minister. I trust that God shall provide.

I am sure that "name withheld" realizes that he is not going to get a biblical basis for either closed communion or alien immersion. Such exegesis flows from a mind that is already made up and looking for a proof text. The Arkansas Baptist position on both of these matters can be traced to the Landmark movement of the 1850s. It's pure and unadulterated denominational arrogance that was popularized and promoted by one J.R. Graves, editor of the *Tennessee Baptist* from 1848 to 1893. Graves, like J.M. Carroll (a Texas preacher from about the same era) followed the trail of Baptist blood all the way back to the Jordan River and the First Baptist Church of Jerusalem. That takes more imagination than research.

Graves concluded only Baptist churches were gospel churches. All other churches and denominations were "religious societies." Since they were not true churches they had no authority to authorize a man to preach. Nor were their ordinances valid. It follows... that baptism performed in a non-Baptist church by a non-Baptist minister is not acceptable even though it is the immersion of a believer. And, since only Baptist baptism is valid, and baptism is a prerequisite to the Lord's table, Baptists must practice "closed communion."

It is faulty theology based on faulty historical research and faulty exegesis of sacred Scripture. When listing Baptist distinctives we proudly talk about the autonomy of the local church, then we blatantly violate it with state convention requirements that don't have a scriptural leg to stand on. The Landmarks left us to form their own denomination over 80 years ago. Why do Arkansas Baptists continue to hold on to their arrogant and unscriptural doctrines?—**Donald Cochran, Fort Smith**

BEN EARLY

Early Reflections



Beauty of Gratitude

How good it is to be appreciated! So often we fail to let individuals know how

thankful we are for them.

I recall the account of the healing of 10 lepers found in Luke 12:11-19. The account talks of 10 men, a colony of lepers, lonely and rejected. Yet, when they met Jesus, they were all cured.

Yet in the Scriptures, the statement is made that only one returned to say, "Thank You."

Ingratitude seems to be a disease which is becoming widespread in epidemic proportions.

Not only do we fail to thank and praise others, but also we forget to thank and praise God.

I hear people say today, "It's just not in my nature." If Christ is in our hearts, love and gratitude has been placed in our nature.

We take so much for granted. We are guilty of assuming we can tell individuals later how much they are appreciated, or we expect others to be mind readers, saying, "They know how I feel."

I believe each day should be a day of Thanksgiving, where we spend time counting our blessings one by one. Opportunities need to be sought out to encourage others, share our appreciation and love.

In our churches, homes, and work places, I feel we could see great change in people's attitude and work if we could only learn to praise and say, "You did a good job, thanks."

Why do we feel it is so important to teach our children to say thank you, when we adults rarely use those two words?

At this special time of the year, I'd like to tell all of our Baptist friends in Arkansas, "Thank you for your support of SBC and Ouachita, and especially for your Cooperative Program gifts."

"Thanks for sending your youth to our campuses in support of Christian higher education."

"Thanks for your prayers and encouragement as we reach our state and world for Christ."

"At SBC we are grateful and appreciative for each of you."

"Thank you Arkansas Baptists!"

Ben Early is public relations director for Southern Baptist College in Walnut Ridge.

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More Than Kid Stuff

by Scott Collins
Southwestern Seminary

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—When it comes to children's music, Evelyn Phillips doesn't kid around.

For more than four decades Phillips has lived by the belief that "only the best music is good enough for children."

Phillips, associate professor of church music at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, is retiring this year after a career of teaching, promoting and often struggling to get the best churches can offer for children.

In the 40 years Phillips has worked with children's music, she has seen many of her dreams come true in Southern Baptist churches.

"Children's music became a great movement among Southern Baptists," she said. "It nearly swept the nation."

When Phillips joined the Southwestern faculty in 1948, the school of church music had only one class in children's music. Her task was to develop a curriculum that would guide the future of the ministry in local churches.

Her pioneering spirit was developed as

SWETS photo / David A. Barber



Children's musician Evelyn Phillips

a public school teacher and music minister in Baptist churches.

Phillips was on the seminary faculty until 1952, when she and her husband went to First Baptist Church of Texarkana, Texas.

The work in Texarkana provided the "golden years" of her church work with children's music, she said. In her first year of working with the children's program, attendance jumped from 18 to more than 100.

Phillips later was minister of music at First Baptist Church of Decatur, Ga. She returned to the Southwestern faculty in 1967 after her husband, Dwight, died.

When she rejoined the music faculty, Phillips brought a deeper commitment to the development of children's music programs in local churches.

Her commitment is based on the needs of children more than churches.

"Why is the church interested in the lives of its children?" she asked. "It is vitally important churches have music training because of what it does for the children. Music can reach where words can't."

Her travels have kept her in touch with the needs of churches over the years. And while the needs change, the most frequently asked question has not: How do you discipline the children?

Phillips' answer is one word—challenge. "There is nothing like challenge to discipline children. I tell them, 'You can do this. You can; therefore, you must.'"

It is a challenge she has lived up to herself.

But while Phillips challenges children, she still helps them enjoy music: "I tell them that choir is not for fun. Fun is only for now. We're after joy because that is eternal."

Phillips hopes her work with children's music also is eternal.

"What I have done will hopefully be the basis for what will be done," she said.

Congratulations!

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Faith Ann Kennedy
Sara Lokey
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Happiness Is...

by J. Everett Sneed
Editor, Arkansas Baptist

A \$10,000 grant from the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board has purchased 55,540 pounds of blackeyed peas to be distributed through the Arkansas Rice Depot for the needy of the state. The rice is given by rice farmers of Arkansas or is purchased at minimal cost through donations. Those involved in the rice depot were seeking a good source of protein, which will be supplied by the blackeyed peas. The rice depot was able to purchase the blackeyed peas in Arkansas, saving the shipping cost. The actual cost of the blackeyed peas was \$9,997.20.

Tommy Goode, the director of Christian Social Ministries for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, and Glenn Hickey, the director of missions for Pulaski Baptist Association, Little Rock, presented the check to Laura Rhea, the executive director of the Arkansas Rice Depot and member of Calvary Church, Benton, during its board meeting on October 13. Dr. Hickey serves on the board of directors of

The Arkansas Rice Depot was founded in 1982 by the Arkansas Inter-Faith Hunger Task Force in response to a growing awareness of hunger within the state. The rice depot began purchasing Arkansas grown brown rice to give to church food pantries, senior citizen centers, county health clinics and hunger agencies in the state. The depot purchased only Arkansas grown rice. This approach supports our state's economy as well as feeding the hungry. During the past three years, Arkansas rice growers have started donating rice to the depot and now one-fourth to one-third of the rice distributed through the depot will be donated by the rice growers.

During the past six years Arkansas Rice Depot has given away over 1.5 million pounds of rice. Currently, over 340 churches and agencies participate in the food distribution program which is operating in 73 of the state's 75 counties.

In February of this year the rice depot enlarged its program to include dried beans or peas when funds are available. This enlargement of the program is necessary

Arkansas Rice Depot Executive Director Laura Rhea and Pulaski Association Director of Missions Glenn Hickey examine the rice depot's food stores.



the Rice Depot along with Jan Wright, who is the secretary treasurer of the organization and a member of the Immanuel Church, Little Rock.

Dr. Hickey, who served as a foreign missionary, observes that there is a distinct difference between the administration of domestic hunger funds and those hunger funds used on the foreign mission field. He said, "Hunger funds received on the foreign mission field are directly distributed by foreign missionaries or through national churches under their supervision. At home there are no individuals who are already on the payroll to distribute domestic hunger relief funds. It must be done by volunteers. The executive director is the only paid employee of the Arkansas Rice Depot."

because of the increasing number of families needing food. Mrs. Rhea observed, "When rice and blackeyed peas are served together an individual receives an adequate amount of protein as well as a filling meal."

Any Arkansas church interested in serving the poor and hungry of its community may receive rice and peas from the Arkansas Rice Depot. In addition to the Little Rock office there are seven regional depots located throughout the state.

The rice and beans come in 25 or 50 pound bags. Peas are packaged in 60 pound bags. Volunteers from the churches are asked to pick up the food from the nearest depot and re-package it into family size portions. Dr. Hickey observes, "This is an ideal project for GA's, Acteens, or RA's."

The rice and peas are given without cost. Currently beans can be purchased at the actual price that was paid by the rice depot. Each family size bag is imprinted with this statement: "This food is a gift from people who believe happiness is when all God's family have food."

In 1985, it was estimated by Arkansas Hunger Project that as many as 134,000 families in the state were at risk of hunger. The goal of the Arkansas Rice Depot is to make sure that these families have access to a local church or hunger program where they can receive a gift of food to help them through this difficult period of their lives.

STATEWIDE RICE DEPOT

Distribution Locations

Arkadelphia

Southwest Arkansas Food Bank
904 N. 10th
Arkadelphia, AR 71923
246-8244

Fort Smith

The Clearing House
1411 Rogers Avenue
Fort Smith, AR 72901
782-5074

Hot Springs

The Salvation Army
115 Crescent
Hot Springs, AR 71901
623-1628

Norfork

Norfolk Community Care Program
P.O. Box 128
Norfolk, AR 72658
499-7565

Warren

Bradley County Helping Hand
Food Bank
P.O. Box 312
Warren, AR 71671
226-5152

Jonesboro

Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas
P.O. Box 1497
Jonesboro, AR 72403
972-5232

Little Rock

Arkansas Rice Depot
1014 Main Street
Little Rock, AR 72202
376-2315

LOCAL & STATE

Arkansas All Over

MILLIE GILL

People

David Nunn joined the staff of First Church, Fordyce, Oct. 30 as minister of music and education, coming there from Northwich Church in Richardson, Texas. He is a graduate of Oklahoma Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Nunn has served in churches in Oklahoma and Texas. He and his wife, Debbie, have two children, Matthew and Meghan.



Bill Vining Sr., athletic director and head men's basketball coach at Ouachita Baptist University, is listed as the second winningest active men's basketball coach in the NAIA.

Paul A. Rhoads has accepted a call to serve as pastor of Swifton Church where he has been serving as interim pastor. Rhoads is the assistant professor of religion and instructor in psychology at Southern Baptist College. He and his wife, Lana, and

their children, Susan and Matthew, served 10 years as missionaries to Korea.

J.E. Chaffin is serving as pastor of Macedonia First Church, Fouke. He and his wife, Evelyn, are from Texarkana, Texas.

Winfred P. Bridges has resigned as pastor of First Church, Paragould.

Harry Thomas Kennedy of Monticello died Oct. 28 at age 46. He was pastor of Second Church, Monticello, and also had pastored churches in Arkadelphia and Hope, as well as in Colorado and Texas. He was a graduate of Southern Baptist College, Ouachita Baptist University, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Survivors are his wife, Marjorie Trigg Kennedy; two daughters, Angela Sharrir of Sheridan, and Faith Kennedy of Monticello; two brothers; and two sisters. Memorials may be made to the Miracle Improvement Fund, Monticello Second Church.

Ty Berry was elected president of the Iowa Southern Baptist Convention Fellowship in its annual meeting, Oct. 14-15. Berry has served as pastor of First Church, Bettendorf, Iowa, for almost six years. He is the son of Robie Berry who serves as a deacon in First Church, Walnut Ridge.

John Maddox closed three months as interim pastor of First Church, Jacksonville, Oct. 26 when the church had a new pastor arrive on the field.

John S. Ashcraft began serving Oct. 23 as pastor of Lancaster Road Church in Little Rock. He is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and also has done graduate work at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary.

Angus Emerson, a member of Park Hill Church, North Little Rock, is participating in a 12-month program of clinical pastoral education in the department of Pastoral Care and Education at the University Hospital of Arkansas, Little Rock.

Billy Harwell began serving Oct. 23 as pastor of Military Road Church, Jacksonville, succeeding **Mason Bondurant**, a furloughing missionary who had been serving as interim. Harwell, who has attended Boyce Bible School, formerly pastored the Casa Church. He and his wife, Eutha, have two adult children and Alan, 10.

Katsy McAllister, president of Arkansas Woman's Missionary Union, recently participated in a two-day meeting with the Home Mission Board staff and directors.

Mike Hairston has resigned as pastor of Nimrod Church, Perryville.

Pete Cragar began serving Nov. 6 as pastor of Wye Mountain Mission.

Curtis Mathis began serving Nov. 6 as interim pastor of Walnut Street Church, Jonesboro.

ABN photo / Millie Gill



The Northwest District of Campers on Mission recently completed a building project at Old Campground Community, located between Ash Flat and Evening Shade. Eleven campers with six rigs spent five days providing labor, Bible study, and assisting with Sunday services. Jesse L. Taylor, director of missions for Rocky Bayou Association, has been assisted in launching this new work by R.D. Wiseman and Bernard Beasley. The group previously helped with the building of the Gosben Mission.

ABN photo / J. Everett Sneed



The Ebenezer Church in El Dorado held a dedication for an education and fellowship building on Nov. 7. The 7,800-square-foot facility was constructed at a cost of \$237,000 with the use of some volunteer labor. The new building contains a fellowship hall, a kitchen, nine classrooms, four bathrooms, a pastor's study, church office and equipment room. The dedicatory message was delivered by furloughing missionary to Peru and former pastor Doyné Robertson. C. Pbelan Boone is pastor.

Briefly

Floral Church has completed renovation of its auditorium. The project included installation of new pews.

Northside Church at Batesville has completed an improvement program which in-

cluded the installation of both a baptistry and carpets.

Rehobeth Church at Batesville, the oldest continuous Baptist church in Arkansas, recently celebrated 163 years of service.

West Church at Batesville is renovating its educational building, installing a sound system, and re-decorating its auditorium.

Greenway First Church will celebrate its 100th anniversary Nov. 19 with activities that begin at 10 a.m. and conclude at 4 p.m.

Former pastors will be featured speakers. David Richey is pastor.

Meridian Church at Crossett recently recognized Pastor Dan M. Webb in recognition of 17 years of service when members honored him and Mrs. Webb with a 40th wedding anniversary reception. The church has completed a 42,000 square foot, debt-free sanctuary and educational building. Plans are being made to begin another building program which will include a kitchen, fellowship hall, library, and additional educational space.

Lakeshore Drive Church in Little Rock began the James C. Dobson "Turn Your Heart Toward Home" five-week film series Nov. 6.

Monticello First Church held a special Sending Service Nov. 6 for Gerald and Catherine Taylor who have been appointed by the Foreign Mission Board for service in Dakar, Senegal, West Africa.

Bakers Creek Church in Russellville observed homecoming Oct. 30 when a 1,800 square foot educational building which houses nine classrooms was dedicated. Jeff Cheatham, director of missions for Arkansas River Valley Association, was dedication speaker. Former pastors present were Clyde Vire of Paris, Bobby Loyd of Perry, Jerry Rigdon, retired, Roger Shields of Russellville. Raymond Palmer is pastor.

Shepherd Hill Church at Pine Bluff Brotherhood is sponsoring a barbecue with funds to go toward the financing of the church's tape ministry. Acteens are making pouches to be used by nursing home patients.

Little Rock Second Church recently observed the 20th anniversary of its Lake Nixon recreational ministry.

Dermott Church observed homecoming and Fall Festival Day Oct. 30 with a morning worship service, noon luncheon, and afternoon program. R.H. Dorris of North Little Rock was featured speaker.

Morning Star Church at Marshall ordained James Durham to the preaching ministry Oct. 23. Ordination council members were Troy Melton of Mountain Home, Keith Byrd of Tomahawk, Amos Treadwell of Morning Star, and Wayne Helms, Paul Huskey, Doug Huskey, and Millo Wilbur, all of Lone Rock. Jane Byrd of Tomahawk presented special music.

Pulaski Heights Church in Little Rock observed Faith Alive weekend Nov. 11-13. Focus of the weekend was "Wellness and Being Christian" with Drs. Jim and Annette Florence of Nashville, Tenn., serving as seminar leaders.

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Recognitions, New Officers

During the state convention annual meeting Nov. 1-2 at Park Hill Church in North Little Rock, a number of extracurricular meetings were held, in addition to the pre-convention auxiliaries. Among these meetings were the annual Cooperative Program breakfast, the ABSC Executive Board, and the Arkansas Baptist Foundation board of directors.

The Cooperative Program breakfast was held on Nov. 2. Those receiving plaques for outstanding CP participation included (top photo, left to right) Bruce Tippit, pastor of the Fianna Hills Church, Fort Smith, first in membership per capita giving (\$136.17); Al Sparkman, pastor of First Church, Crossett, first among churches with a membership of more than 1,000 (per capita gifts \$97.45); Len Blaylock Jr., layman from the Nimrod Church, Conway, first in percentage giving among churches with a membership of less than 300 (the church gave 83 percent of its budget); Brian Harbour, pastor of Immanuel Church, Little Rock, first in total CP gifts (\$404,985); Richard Stiltner, pastor of the Fulton Church as well as pastor of First Church, Hope (the Fulton Church, with a membership of less than 50, was first in per capita giving of \$143.75). Recognized but not pictured was Calvary Church, Harrisburg, first in percentage giving among churches with a membership of 300 to 1,000 (31 percent of budget).

Executive Board officers elected (middle photo, left to right) were Greg Kirksey, Hillside Church, Camden, vice-president; Randel Everett, First Church, Benton, president. They are pictured conferring with Jimmie Sheffield, associate executive director of ABSC, concerning the December executive board meeting.

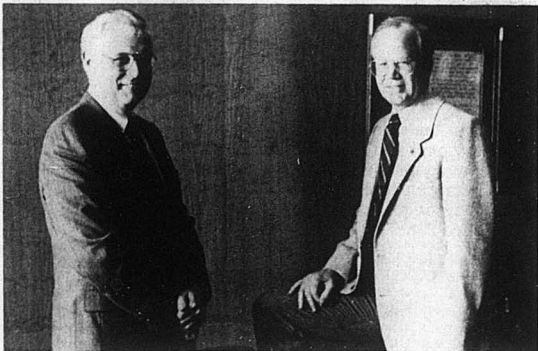
Arkansas Baptist Foundation Board of Trustees met at the close of the 1988 Arkansas Baptist State Convention, electing as 1988-89 officers (bottom photo, left to right) Barry Crow of Pine Bluff, president, and Allen Smith of Little Rock, secretary. Larry Kinard of El Dorado (not pictured) was elected vice-president.



ABN photo / Millie Gill



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Step By Step . . .

by Mark Kelly

Managing Editor, Arkansas Baptist

James Guthrie knew he was on to something. The chorus of amens from the balcony was his first clue.

He had just shared with the congregation of West Helena Second Church his burden that a new mission should be started on the west edge of town.

It was an area the church had tried to reach, but without success. One day, in the spring of 1986, while Guthrie was visiting in the neighborhood, a woman told him she thought it would be nice to have a church there in the community.

The thought stuck with the pastor, and as he prayed, it deepened into a burden. He decided to sound out the congregation about sponsoring a mission.

"It was a really positive response," he recalls. "There were four or five amens up in the balcony. Three of the best families in our church came out to the mission to help. Two of them were deacon families."

After conducting a preliminary census to confirm the need for a new church in the area, Second Church launched the project with a tent revival in May 1986.

The revival heightened community awareness of the new work, called West Acres Chapel. The mission immediately began holding services in a vacant building on the same lot where the tent had been pitched. Carl Fawcett, director of missions for Arkansas Valley Association, served as interim pastor.

When an adjacent lot came up for sale, Second Church and the association pool-

ed their funds and bought it, and a mobile chapel was placed on the land.

In a few weeks, however, the mission was needing more space. Attendance was averaging 40 or 50 each week, straining the mobile chapel, which Guthrie says "seated 60 uncomfortably."

The state convention was ready to retire the mobile chapel, so the church purchased it outright, and members of the mission set out to remodel and expand it. Fred Garrison, a mission member, rewired the building, and Carroll Edwards, a member of Second Church, handled the plumbing.

Now another conviction was growing in Guthrie's heart. The mission was going well, but, if it was to really take off, a full-time pastor was needed. They began trying to put a package together.

Two developments opened the door.

First, two other congregations—Whitehall First and Greenlee Memorial in Pine Bluff—joined as associate sponsors under the Macedonian Mission Plan, which unites three congregations in support of one mission for a period of three years. One of the congregations takes the role of primary sponsor; the other two serve as associate sponsors.

The second development was the discovery that Mike Fowler, part-time director of the Baptist Student Union at Phillips County Community College, was interested in serving as pastor.

With everyone's cooperation, it was going to work. Fowler's part-time salary from the BSU combined with Church Pastoral Aid from the state convention. Second Church provided housing. The two associate sponsors made their contributions, along with two other Arkansas Valley churches—the Marvell and Turner churches—which also had joined the project. In August 1986, three months after the launch, Fowler took the field as pastor.

Individually, none of the sponsors could have supported the mission. But together, through the Macedonian Mission Plan, they were able to accomplish what many churches never would have attempted.

Guthrie cautions congregations which reject the idea of starting a new mission because they believe they cannot afford it.

"It's foolish, even dangerous, to let your circumstances determine whether you are going to do the Lord's work or not," he says. "We had to follow our hearts, and we knew the work was needed. Though we gave some of our best families to the mission, we have continued to grow and reach people.

"This whole effort has been a matter of faith," he concludes. "We believe the Lord has put it together. All the pieces have fallen in place, step by step, when we needed them.

"It's been apparent the Lord is in it."

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Politics, Christian Style

by Cary Heard

Park Hill Church, North Little Rock

With the national election only one week away and because our own denomination's "politics" is a topic of interest to all of us, I have chosen the theme "Politics, Christian Style."

Paul discusses such "politics" in Philippians 1:27-30, where he uses a verb found nowhere else in the New Testament: *politueo* = to be (act as) a citizen. How does a Christian citizen act? What are the distinctives of "politics, Christian style?"

The first loyalty to Christ's Gospel (1:27 a). The verb form used in the phrase "Let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ" is a present imperative of *politueo*, from which we derive our word "politics." Thus Paul considers the most distinctive quality of Christian conduct, or politics, to be loyalty to the gospel of Christ. The Christian's commitment to his Lord and to the good news of salvation through his death and resurrection in our behalf should be our number one priority in life, taking precedence over self, family, nation, denomination or anything else which might lay claim to our highest allegiance. In Ph. 3:7-21, Paul offers a vivid contrast between a lifestyle which is consistent with this

gospel priority and one which makes its participants enemies of the cross of Christ. Essentially, this passage is a contrast between heavenly and earthly citizenship (*politueuma*).

A second distinctive of "politics, Christian style" is unity with Christ's people, fellow citizens of heaven (1:27b). That unity is one of spirit, mind, cooperative labor and faith. All Christians are indwelt by the same Holy Spirit, have the mind of Christ, and are to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. (1 Co. 12:13, Ro. 8:9, 1 Co. 2:16; Jude 3). We Southern Baptists traditionally have cherished our emphasis on the priesthood of the individual believer and the autonomy of the local church, but to give proper balance to these doctrines we also should give equal emphasis to the doctrine of the church as the body of Christ and the spiritual oneness of all members of that body. This God-given oneness mandates that we strive together for the faith of the Gospel. Indeed, our Lord himself teaches us that maintaining our oneness in him is vital to our witness in the world (Jn. 17:20-23).

The third distinctive of "politics, Christian style" is bravery before Christ's enemies (1:28-29). To take an uncompromising stand for Christ, his Gospel and his Church is bound to create enemies for his people, and of course enemies sometimes try to hurt you. But the Christian who remains loyal to his Lord need not be frightened by his adversaries. And why not? Because our salvation is from God. We serve him

who has all power in heaven and on earth (Mt. 28:18). Since that is true, we can say "with Paul, "If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Ro. 8:31b)

With the all-powerful Christ to sustain us and his promise of salvation and ultimate victory over the world to encourage us, we can throw ourselves into the conflict as Paul challenges us to do in 1:29-30. This is not a battle between Republicans and Democrats to determine who will control the White House, or a battle between "fundamentalists" and "moderates" to determine who will control the Southern Baptist Convention. It is a battle between God and his enemies over who will possess the souls of men for eternity (Ep. 6:10-13).

The fourth and final distinctive of "politics, Christian style" is conformity to Christ's example (2:1-16). I believe that the most positive and helpful thing we can do in the midst of a denominational controversy which has distracted our attention away from our traditional evangelistic and missionary zeal is to resolve to be like Jesus, to conform to Christ's example of humility which Paul so beautifully describes here. If we all would follow Christ and, like him, take the form of a humble servant, we would fulfill our salvation (12), please God (13), develop more positive attitudes toward one another (14), shine as lights in the world (15) and be faithful to the word of life (16).

Such indeed would be conduct worthy of the gospel and the highest expression of "politics, Christian style."

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Bright Lights In A Dark World

by Ron Herrod

First Church, Fort Smith

In John 9:5 Jesus said, "As long as I am in the world I am the Light of the world." Then in John 12:35, "Then Jesus said to them, yet a little while is the Light with you. Walk while you have the Light lest darkness come upon you. For he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While you have the Light, believe in the Light that you may be children of the Light. These things spake Jesus and departed and did hide himself from them." Then in I Thessalonians 5:5 we read, "You are all the children of Light and the children of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness."

In Philippians 2:14 God's Word says, "Do all things without murmurings and disputings that you may be blameless and harmless, the songs of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom you shine as lights in the world."

I. The Eternal Presence of the Light

When you go all the way back to the book of Genesis we are told in the beginning of creation God moved upon the darkness and said, "Let there be light and there was light." Then John tells us immediately at the opening of his gospel that the Light has always been. He tells us that Jesus is the *logos*, the Word. He is the Light—not bios, physical light, but *zoe*, spiritual light, and then that he is the Light. So I speak first today of the eternal presence of the Light. God did not come into being at Christmas. That is the problem with the cults of our day. They have the theology that Nicodemus had—that Jesus is a great teacher sent from God. They don't understand that Jesus Christ is God sent to teach. God, sent to die and God, sent to save.

The Lord Jesus himself claimed to be that Light—that eternal Light. It is cast in a beautiful context in the 8th chapter of John. It is a beautiful account. The Lord Jesus was in the court of the women—the middle court or intermediary court between where the Gentiles could go and where the Jewish men could go. He was teaching the Word there. It was here they brought to him the woman taken in adultery. It was against this dark background that paganism and religious philosophy and of sin that Jesus announced, "I am the Light of the World." This is one of the six times Jesus said, "I am in the gospel of John."

In John 6 he said, "I am the bread of life."

In John 10 he said, "I am the door and the good shepherd."

In John 11 he said, "I am the resurrection and the life."

In John 14:6 he said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life."

In John 15 he said, "I am the true vine."

But here in John 8 he says, "I am the Light of the world." Ladies and gentlemen, he is not saying what he was or what he will be. He said, "I am the Light of the world." Then as the country preacher said, "Then he am the Light and now he am the Light and tomorrow he am the Light." Any time you hear Jesus he can say in the contemporariness of his time, "I am the Light

of the world."

It's interesting that Jesus renews this analogy during the Feast of the Tabernacles. At this time they brought the great candelabras and those candelabras lighted the courtyard of the Temple. They were huge things and their light could be seen all over Jerusalem. The purpose of the candelabras during the Feast of the Tabernacles was to remind the Jewish people of the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night that guided them through their wilderness wanderings. Jesus, on this occasion, was most likely pointing to one of those huge candelabras and he was saying, "This one is temporary, I am eternal. This one is for Jerusalem and the Jews. I am for the whole world. This one is for time. I am for eternity. This one is temporal. I am eternal." Jesus was saying, "I am unlimited." These candelabras reminded the people that the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night provided for them the presence of God and provided for them the protection of God. It covered them from the heat of the day and the cold of the night. It reminded them of the purpose of God, leading them on to the Promised Land.

Jesus was saying in that middle courtyard that day as He pointed to that candelabra, "This is limited. I am forever. I am the Light of the world. I am your purpose, I am your protection, I am the very presence of God in your midst. I am the Light of the world."

Jesus was saying that he was the fulfillment of everything foreshadowed by that light and that cloud. To the darkness of falsehood he is the Light of truth. To the darkness of ignorance he is the Light of wisdom. To the darkness of impurity he is the Light of holiness. To the darkness of grief he is the Light of joy. To the darkness of death he is the Light of life. And so we must speak of the eternal presence of that Light.

Jesus did not suddenly become Light, he has always been Light. And with his birth in Bethlehem's manger Jesus brought Light into this world and for every dark corner of this earth for every hour of every day Jesus can still say, "I am the Light of the world."

II. The Enemy to be Penetrated by the Light

Then we must speak of the enemy to be penetrated by the Light. Our world seems to be getting darker and darker and we should be troubled today by the darkness that surrounds us. We are surrounded by the darkness of a Christless world. More than half of the world's people walk in unlit paths. I want our young people to realize that as you enjoy the blessings of a Bible-belt city and a church where the Gospel is preached, that in China and India today, in two nations there are more than three times the total population of the earth when Jesus walked this earth and gave the Great Commission. At the rate the Christian church is winning people to Jesus, if no one else was born—if there was not one more birth—at our current rate it would take us 5,600 years to reach the people of this earth for Jesus Christ.

In 1830 nominal Christianity represented 25 percent of the world's population. Today just those who claim to be Christians represent 7 percent of the world's population. By the year 2000 at our current rate nominal Christianity—not evangelical—nominal Christianity will represent only 2 percent of the world's population.

General McArthur asked for 10,000 missionaries to be sent to the Orient. We did not

send them. History would have been written differently if we had. We sent few missionaries to Indo China. If we had sent more, perhaps some 40,000 boys would still be alive and perhaps \$30 billion could be spent for humanitarian and missionary purposes.

More than one-half of the population of this world walk unlit paths. Most of them believe Communism actually offers hope. There are 1 billion young people, 1 billion teenagers living in Asia today. Almost none of them know Jesus Christ. One-third of the world is now closed to missionaries. India is no longer giving visas for missionaries to return to India. That means that soon one-half of the world's population will be cut off to Christian missions. They are walking unlit paths because we walk unlike Paul.

Dr. Keith Parks just announced that for the first time in history the Southern Baptist Mission Board may have to cut back appointments because of the lack of money to send missionaries. That should break your heart. But you say, "Preacher, we can send them Bibles and Gospel tracts." But you forget that 30 percent of them can't even read. Bibles have not been translated into many of the dialects of this world. The only way to touch this world for Jesus Christ is for men and women and young people to say, "Here am I, send me," to go to the dark corners of the earth and share the Light of the Gospel of Jesus. They walk unlit paths because we walk unlike Paul.

We should weep over a dark world today, 83 souls per second, 6,000 per hour die without Christ. We should weep, Southern Baptists, because 20,000 of our 35,000 churches baptize less than 10 people every year. We ought to weep about a dark and Christless world. I want to confront you with a question today.

A question that we must confront! A question we must face. Here's the question: Has God called me to leave the boundaries of the Bible Belt (and maybe even the United States) to plant my life in a strange culture and maybe even die there for the cause of Christ? You have to face that question because today 90 percent of the world's Christian witnesses are ministering to 6 percent of the world's population, while 94 percent receive less than 10 percent of our resources and manpower to share the Gospel. The darkness of a Christless world.

B. The Darkness of a Calloused Nation
And then we must consider the darkness of a calloused nation.

There is no question that God has raised up this land, the United States, to be a bright light in a dark world. The very Mayflower Compact began with six words, "In the Name of God, Amen." And it says of those brave souls that sailed from England, you sailed from England, having undertaken for the glory of God and the advancement of the Christian faith.

1. The Darkness of Humanism

The founders of our Constitution, for the most part, were Christian men who wanted a nation built upon the Word of God. Our first schools in this country were Dane schools for the very purpose of teaching children to read for the purpose of reading the Bible. They used the Bible to teach them to read! This land is becoming dimmer with every passing day. Darkness is moving in upon America—the darkness of humanism—a movement that tries to do away with spiritual absolutes. Things like a sovereign God, an aggressive church, an authoritative

Scripture, the freedom to pray in a public place, to pray in our public schools, to put "In God we trust" on our coinage, to say "under God" in our Pledge of Allegiance. Some day America that God has blessed with every great natural resource, America that God has smiled upon, America that God has honored will have to answer to God for the way that we shared our Light with a dark world.

We've become a calloused nation. You can bury your head in the sand if you want to but America does have a state religion. In it humanism and it is expressed in the Humanist Manifestos 1 and 2. When you ask the major questions, "Who am I?" "Where did I come from?" "Why am I here?" "Where am I going?" "How can I get there?" the Bible and humanism are axiomatic the opposite. We live in a day when 270,000 outspoken humanists control the educational philosophy and processes in this country. You can't get the Bible read in public schools, you can't have the children voluntarily pray in public schools—that's terrible. But you can have evolution taught, which is the lame brain philosophy and hypothetical conjecture of ignorant men and it is taught as fact. Don't tell me we don't have live in a humanist nation!

Don't tell me we don't live in a nation controlled by a state religion called humanism. I promise you we do. What ought to shock and sadden us is that they are able to sue the media, government and organizations such as ACLU, the NEA and the NOW and list goes on an on, then they scream when Christians seek to penetrate society using the same vehicles. We live in a dark, calloused nation.

Consider just for a moment the matter of prayer in public schools. Why not allow prayer in the public schools? This is supposed to be a Christian nation. It was based upon Christian foundations. "Oh," but you say, "we are a democracy." No, we are a republic. I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and we call it a republic. It's a republic! Our government leaders make the laws and we are governed, not by the rule of the majority,

but governed by the laws that we have set into place in this country. This country is a Christian nation, founded on Christian principles. Why shouldn't we have the opportunity for our children to pray and to read the Word of God? It is because we are a nation now controlled by the philosophy of humanism, not Christianity.

Our religious freedom is not based on democracy but based on the law of religious freedom. That's the very thing that keeps our church doors open. I want to say to you that we can no longer leave this nation to humanists, secularists, materialists, liberals and socialists. I say no, I believe the Word of God says no, I believe the Christian church ought to rise up in this hour and say no, we will not allow it to happen. The darkness of a calloused nation.

2. The Darkness of Sexual Immorality and Perversion

Proverbs 29:2 tells us when the righteous are in the majority the people rejoice but when a wicked man rules the people groan. I could speak to you of the darkness of sexual immorality and perversion, prostitution rampant in America. If I would have told you 10 years ago that you could tune in to a television talk show in prime time hours during the day or night and you could hear discussed the things that are discussed on shows like Rivaldo and Phil Donahue and some of these others you would have said, "Preacher, you are crazy!" But now watch it, we are entertained by it, we absorb it, and we are taught that prostitution and pornography and sexual promiscuity is epidemic across this land. It is so epidemic word comes to us almost every week of a Christian leader, a church, a ministry that has fallen because of sexual immorality and there is a virus today, a pestilence, that threatens to destroy our very nation. It is called AIDS and it is a result of sexual promiscuity and immorality. We live in the darkness of an immoral and perverted land and world.

Romans 1 warned us of it. Romans 1:27 says, "Likewise the men, leaving the natural use of the woman burned in their lust for one another. Men with men committing what is shameful and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due." You can go all the way back to Sodom and you will discover that the bottoming out of any society, that which just precedes the judgment of God is perversion in the population and the acceptance of such perversion as being okay.

3. The Darkness of Abortion

We could talk about the darkness of abortion in this nation. Can there be any doubt in the mind and heart of any Bible-believing Christian what abortion really is? If we had time today we could turn to passage after passage in Psalms 139, Isaiah 49, Job 10, Psalms 51 and discover that before you were formed in the womb God knew you. Jeremiah said, "Before you formed me in my mother's womb, you knew me." From a biblical perspective there is no qualitative difference between a fetus and a living, walking human being. The only difference is quantitative. It is time. I don't need to give you the statistics. You know about the development of the fetus. You know that that one and one-half million babies are born in this country every year. In America we are now number one in the world in abortions performed. We say in the law of this land that a mother has absolute authority over whether her child lives or dies and, sadly

enough, the National Council of Churches has sanctioned an abortion of convenience and expedience.

History will record that Hitler's extermination of the Jews was a Sunday afternoon picnic compared to America's holocaust of the unborn. Frances Schaffer said, "If the Christian church will not stand on the abortion issue, where will it stand?" You see, what we are saying today is—it's okay to kill a person before they are born and the longer we tell people it's okay to kill before birth the more they will believe they can kill after birth. How hypocritical we have become! On the statue in New York Harbor it says, "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free. Send these, the homeless, the tempest tossed to me. I lift my lamp beside the golden door." Then we fill garbage cans with the chopped-up bodies of five, six, seven-month old pre-born infants. If we don't stand on this issue, God will hold us accountable.

President Reagan pointed out that most people who are for abortion have already been born. I sat in one of the rooms at the White House when I met President Reagan and then heard at length Dr. Edward Koop, our Surgeon General, speak on what he called, "The Domino Factor." He said, "The first step is abortion. Once that domino is knocked over the next is Infanticide" (and we are already experiencing that). But then he said, "Next comes Euthanasia, and ultimately the extermination of anyone declared not perfect and not fit to live in whatever society is in existence at the time."

An old man in Germany said this: "They came for the old government heads and I said nothing because I was not a government leader. They came for the old policemen and I said nothing because I was not an old policeman. They came for the Jews and I said nothing because I was not a Jew. When they came for me, nobody said a word."

A lot of folks think the answer is in the White House. It is not. The answer is in God's house. They think the answer is in government but it is not. The answer is in God. Frankly I don't care who becomes President as long as he is not pro-abortion and anti-prayer in the schools and anti the values that I hold dear and that God's church holds dear.

C. The Darkness of a Compromising Church

The darkness is made even darker by a compromising church. The devil's out of his rightful place. He should be in hell and he walks around like a roaring, wounded lion seeking whom he may devour. The Lord himself is out of his rightful place. He's King of Kings and Lord of Lords but he has become the butt of dirty men's jokes and the church is out of her rightful place. God intended for the church to be a mighty, marching, militant army claiming her world for Jesus Christ. Instead she has become a weak, anemic, puny mutation characterized by complacency, corruption, carnality and controversy.

We ought to be brought to our knees because the Bride is ill. The church is sick. The church is not healthy. The church is sick. Oh that God would make us well again so we could see the fields that are white unto harvest, so we could hear the command of our Lord, the tender pleadings of our Savior, so we could feel once again the broken heart for a dark world, so we could move again with power to this world that is so dark and share the light of the Lord Jesus Christ!

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Let's be honest. We've become better known in the church for our politics and our power, for our battles than our baptisms, for our superstars than our Savior, for our denominational machinery than our divine mission, for our corruption than for our commission.

III. The Exciting Potential of the Light
I must speak in this closing time of the exciting potential of the Light. Look at that passage with me in Philippians, chapter 2, where he talks about the Light. He says, beginning in verse 14, that there are some things that hinder the Light and there are some things that help the Light. He says, "Do all things without complaining and disputing." Why? Because he says, "You are to shine as lights in the world." Hear me carefully. I won't belabor this point but the church will never be much of a Light as long as it is more known for its murmurings and disputings than it is its witness for Jesus. That's putting out our Light. It's extinguishing our Light. "Do all things without murmurings and disputings that you may become blameless and harmless children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in this world."

A. Light Shines.
Ephesians 5:8 says, "You were once darkness but now you are Light in the Lord. Walk as children of Light." Let me tell you some things about light. Light shines. It is the nature of light to shine. If your life and your conversation and your churchianity is marked by murmurings and disputings, you are not shining. It is the nature of Light to shine and it is the nature of Light to share. It is impossible for Light to shine without sharing. God has deposited his Light in three places. In his Son, Jesus, in the Scriptures, and then in the saints. The Bible says John was not that Light but he was sent to bear witness of that Light. He was a reflector of that Light. That's why the Psalmist said, "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, a Light unto my path." And so the saints of God are to share with the Scriptures the Son of God and they are reflectors of God's Light. Light shines and Light shares.

C. Light Sacrifices.
But Light also sacrifices. When you read on there in Philippians 2:17 he says, "Yes, if I'm being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith I'm glad and rejoice with you all." But it seems like he changes figures of speech. He likens himself not just to a Light but to a libation. You know why? Because if a Light is going to shine, that Light must sacrifice. When that libation was poured out on the sacrificial altar it was consumed totally. Paul is saying, "If the Light is going to shine, if the Light is going to share, then the Light must sacrifice."

Consider the simple candle. For the candle to give light it must burn itself out. The candle is giving itself up so it can be a light. For a light to shine it must sacrifice. You cannot shine until you burn. Henry Martin went as a missionary to India. Two days after he went there he said, "Now let me burn out for God." And as he burned he blessed. Adronian Judson became one of the great bright spots in Baptist history. He wanted to go to India but God sent him to Burma. He was in Burma six years with not one single convert! Think of it! Six years characterized by ill health and loneliness. He lost a baby son, he was in prison for two years, he lost his wife, Ann, and a daughter, Maria, with spot-

ted fever and his friend said, "Adronian, why don't you come home? It's hopeless!" But he was a Light shining, sharing, sacrificing, and he said, "I'll not leave Burma until the cross is planted here forever." And he stayed.

Thirty years after the death of Judson there were 63 churches, 7,000 converts in Burma. If you want to shine, you must learn to sacrifice. This church wants to shine. We must learn to sacrifice.

III. The Enduring Power of the Light
My final point is this: The enduring power of the Light.

Make no mistake about it—the enemy, the devil, fights the Light. Satan wants to keep the Light from men and to do it he will wear many cloaks and disguises. He will put on the garments of religion, carry men down the paths of humanism, liberalism, and even apostasy. He will put on the garb of the "New Morality," when he represents nothing but the old immorality. He will even call it "gay" when it is perversion. He will disguise himself as the great protector of the rights of women even when his motive is to destroy the lives of the unborn. Satan is opposed to the Light.

Satan is opposed to this church. He will do everything and anything he can do to destroy the witness of it. Satan is opposed to our worldwide mission efforts and he will do anything he can to keep those missionaries off the fields where they can share the Light of Jesus. The devil is opposed to you when you take a stand for Jesus Christ. Satan is opposed to the Light because he is the Prince of the Power of Darkness. Satan is opposed to the Light.

Probably the poorest translation of any phrase anywhere in the book of John is right here in John, chapter 1, verse 5. "And the Light shines in the darkness and the darkness comprehends it not, or did not comprehend it." That is a poor translation. The word there is the Greek word *katalambano*. It means to "down take" or to "pull down." He is saying there that the darkness cannot downtake or pull down the Light. The word was used most often in ancient times for a city that had a wall. Every city had its wall. When a conquering army would come and take over that city, many times—to add insult to injury—they would make the citizens of that town take down, pull down the wall. Of the stones in the wall they would make pavement on which the conquering army could walk and march and flaunt their victory. So it was a great insult—it was a great "taking down" when the wall, the protection, the security of the city had to come down and the enemy stomped on the wall of that city. That was *katalambano* for the city.

That's the picture here. When Jesus came into this world Zoroastrianism gripped the earth. From Malachi to John the Baptist there had not been a word from God for 489 years Zoroastrianism taught there were two gods—the god of the light and the god of the dark. The whole universe was a battleground in this eternal cosmic conflict between the light and the dark. They taught that if a person died on the day when the god of light won the wrestling match he went to heaven. If he died on the day when the god of darkness won, he went to hell. There was no truth in the world. It was into such a dark time that in the fullness of time Jesus came. That struggle went on. I believe the struggle was still going on in the Garden of

Getsemane when the Lord Jesus Christ knelt to pray and the flesh, the part of him that was fully man, rose up as Satan moved into the flesh and Jesus said, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me—this cup of death, this cup of the cross. If I can avoid it, let it pass from me."

But oh, thank God, that was no mere man in the garden. That One who was fully man was fully God. He cried out, "Nevertheless, not the will of my flesh but Thy will be done." The Son of God went all the way to the cross and there He hung and died, taking your sins and mine on himself. They laid him in a grave—this Light, this life, and sealed it. Total darkness in that grave. I can almost hear the giggles of glee from hell as the great enemy said, "He's dead. We've put him in the grave. He's dead." The Roman emperor said, "He's dead." The Jewish leaders said, "He's dead."

But oh, thank God, from out of that granite womb he burst forth alive! He left an empty grave and an empty cross. Why? Because the darkness cannot *katalambano* the Light. The same devil that tried to take down the Light in Jesus was defeated and that same devil cannot take down the Light in our day. The Light shines in darkness and the darkness *katalambano* if not. Darkness cannot *katalambano* the Light.

I say to you discouraged Christians, I say to you, pressured young person, I say to you, dear persecuted believer, I say to you, faithful saint going through great turmoil and difficulty in your life, darkness cannot *katalambano* the Light. He is the Light of the world and has shared that Light and life with us and we can walk and talk and move and share and live, knowing that the darkness cannot downtake the Light.

The preceding sermons were published in response to a motion passed at the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, Annual Meeting Nov. 1-2 at Park Hill Church, North Little Rock.

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October CP Below Pace

NASHVILLE (BP)—Southern Baptists' combined ministry budget started its fiscal year below its pace for the previous year.

October receipts for the conventionwide Cooperative Program totaled \$10,951,615, announced Harold C. Bennett, president and treasurer of the convention's Executive Committee.

The October receipts were 0.48 percent, or \$53,315, below receipts for October 1987, Bennett said. The current fiscal year began Oct. 1.

The October receipts set the Cooperative Program about 4.5 percent behind the U.S. inflation rate, which hovers at about 4 percent.

Average monthly receipts of slightly more than \$12.1 million were needed to reach the annual Cooperative Program goal. Due to the October shortfall, average receipts for the remaining 11 months must be more than \$12.24 million. Only three monthly receipts—the last three Januarys—have met or exceeded that amount.

Bennett expressed "keen disappointment" in the drop in Cooperative Program gifts. "Our world mission program could be hurt even more if such a trend were to continue," he said. "On some mission fields, the inflation rate is far greater than it is in the United States."

James Clark To Retire

NASHVILLE (BP)—James W. Clark, senior vice president for publishing and distribution at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, has announced his intention to retire in 1989.

Clark, a 34-year employee of the board, told members of the board's trustee executive committee, "The effects of stress are evident in my life, and it is time for me to make a change."

Clark, 57, said he "will be working in religious publishing as an independent contractor." He said the work "will require less than half my time, so I will be able to do many of the things I've never had time for—from church and mission service to writing and reading and from developing some new skills to playing golf and racquetball."

A native of Greenville, Texas, Clark is a graduate of Wayland Baptist College in Plainview. He has done graduate study at North Texas State University in Denton and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth. He also received an honorary doctorate from Wayland.

TO PROTEST 'LAST TEMPTATION'

Boycott 'E.T.'

by Marv Knox
Baptist Press

NASHVILLE (BP)—Christians should continue to protest "The Last Temptation of Christ" by boycotting the just-released video version of "E.T.—The Extra-Terrestrial," according to a statement signed by leaders of more than 25 denominations and religious groups.

"We Believe: A Call to Concern and Action" outlines the latest in a series of protests that have raged against "The Last Temptation," a film based on the novel by Nikos Kazantzakis.

Conservative Christians have criticized the movie, particularly citing their impression that it portrays Jesus as indecisive and that it inaccurately recreates numerous New Testament events. Concerns have been directed at Universal Studios and Cineplex Odeon Films, which produced and distributed the movie, and MCA, Inc., the parent company of both organizations.

The religious leaders' statement calls on Christians to take five actions:

— "Pray for those responsible for the film, that they become sensitive to and develop respect for the religious beliefs of others.

— "Express appreciation to those theaters which elected not to show 'The Last Temptation of Christ.'

— "Boycott the movie 'The Last Temptation of Christ' and those theaters which show the movie.

— "Boycott the video release of 'E.T.—The Extra-Terrestrial.' . . .

— "Write MCA to express displeasure at the release of 'The Last Temptation of Christ' and express the intention to boycott the movie and the video 'E.T.' Letters should be addressed to Mr. Sidney Sheinberg, President; MCA, Inc.; 100 Universal City Plaza; Universal City, Calif. 91608.

The latest protest was unveiled just prior to the Oct. 27 release of the video version of "E.T." MCA reportedly expects to sell a record 12 million tapes by Christmas, taking in \$300 million.

Planners of the protest met Sept. 8 in Nashville to discuss strategy. A letter they have sent to religious leaders across the country says: "The major concern of the group was what the release of ('The Last Temptation') represented; namely, a callous indifference to the Christian faith. It was felt, therefore, that such intolerance and insensitivity should not go unnoticed and that those responsible should be held accountable."

Signers of the protest statement have in-

cluded leaders of several conservative denominations, as well as heads of such organizations as Campus Crusade for Christ, Citizens for Decency through Law, the American Family Association and the National Association of Evangelicals.

Southern Baptist signers are convention President Jerry Vines of Jacksonville, Fla., and Larry Braidfoot, general counsel of the denomination's Christian Life Commission in Nashville.

Braidfoot explained the group's plan: "The leaders signing the original statement determined to avoid publicity in the secular media and to communicate principally with their own constituents. The goal was to encourage Christians and others offended by the movie to refrain from buying the highly advertised product which MCA expected to contribute hundreds of millions of dollars to its corporate income.

"E.T.' had been selected as the most visible product of Universal which might appeal to those Christians who were offended by 'The Last Temptation of Christ.'"

"The Last Temptation" has "fared poorly in the American movie market," Braidfoot said. Through early October, it had played in less than 130 of the country's 13,000 theaters, he added, noting it had netted Universal about \$3.5 million, compared to costs of up to \$17 million.

In addition to the content of the movie, the religious protestors have found fault with at least three aspects of its promotion, Braidfoot said:

— They feel Universal produced and distributed the movie "in a manner calculated to heighten the controversy around it and to portray opponents of the movie in a biased way."

— They have said Universal's screenings of the film have ignored some elements of the religious community and highlighted others who were "considered most likely to be supportive of the movie."

— Universal funded and had approval rights to a glossy "discussion guide" about the film. It was sent to 200,000 people but did not mention its relationship to the studio that produced the movie.

The protestors' statement notes: "We believe that religious tolerance is an integral part of an enlightened society.

"We believe strongly in freedom of expression for all human beings.

"We believe that it is a blatant abuse of that freedom to desecrate any group's religious beliefs or customs, as we believe the movie 'The Last Temptation of Christ' has done."

Silers' Return Sought

by Marv Knox
Baptist Press

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)—The faculty of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary has called for Mahan and Janice Silers' return to the classroom.

The Silers have been adjunct professors at the Wake Forest, N.C., seminary for six years, team-teaching a marriage enrichment course. He is pastor of Pullen Memorial Baptist Church in nearby Raleigh, and she is a marriage and family counselor.

Southeastern trustees met in a closed session during their Oct. 10-11 meeting to discuss the Silers' situation. Afterward, Chairman Robert Crowley announced the trustees had upheld their instruction committee's decision not to continue the Silers' adjunctive status. They were scheduled to teach again next spring.

The reason for the Silers' discontinuation has not been made public, since the session on the Silers was not open and trustees have declined to make public comments on their deliberations. However, comments made by several parties in the case indicate the action was taken because of statements made by Mahan Silers outside the

classroom, not because of the Silers' teaching.

The Southeastern Seminary chapter of the American Association of University Professors, which includes all the seminary's full-time faculty, some adjunct professors and some staff, now has called on the trustees to reverse their decision.

A statement issued by the AAUP chapter notes it "expresses outrage and deep regret and perceives that the board of trustees has acted in a capricious and arbitrary manner to dismiss Mahan and Janice Silers, noted professionals, from the instructional staff of the seminary."

The statement continues: "The following aspects of their dismissal concern us:

— "The dismissal of the Silers from the instructional staff after approval by the full faculty and with recommendation of President Lewis Drummond.

— "The dismissal of the Silers with no explanation. . . .

— "The lack of consideration of the impact on approved pastoral care course offerings for spring 1989.

— "The loss to students of this important course on marriage enrichment. Stu-

dent evaluations have stated that this course has, in many cases, strengthened and, in some cases, saved their marriages.

— "The intrusion of the board of trustees into administration in violation of standards of accreditation.

— "The future implications of this action upon other adjunctive faculty as well as elected faculty."

James Bryant, chairman of the instruction committee and pastor of Grand Avenue Baptist Church in Fort Smith, Ark., issued a prepared statement that said: "Adjunctive professors at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary are contracted to teach one semester at a time. There is no obligation morally, legally or from the standpoint of educational propriety for the seminary administration to continue automatically a contract to teach for any adjunct professor, simply because he or she has taught at the seminary in the past.

"Dr. and Mrs. Silers are not presently under contract, nor have they been offered a contract to teach next semester. Therefore, the suggestion put forward by the AAUP that the Silers were 'dismissed' is both ludicrous and false.

"I will have no further comment. As far as I am concerned, it is now a closed issue."



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Top of the Agenda

by Kathy Palen

Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (BP)—When Congress returns in January, child care will be a top agenda item, legislative observers have predicted.

Two Southern Baptist attorneys already are working on ways to help shape possible legislation on the issue.

Larry Braidfoot, general counsel for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, and Oliver S. Thomas, general counsel for the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, agree legislation should take a comprehensive approach to the nation's child-care needs.

They plan to work with aides to Southern senators in an effort to develop a constructive alternative to a child-care bill that died recently in Congress.

Both Braidfoot and Thomas opposed the Act for Better Child Care Services, which would have authorized the distribution of \$2.5 billion in federal funds to states for child-care services.

"We will be working with Southern senators who opposed the ABC bill but do not oppose child care," Thomas said. "We want to address the child-care problem in a comprehensive fashion, but at the same time maintain a healthy church-state separation."

A major controversy surrounding the ABC bill involved a provision relating to child-care centers operated by religious institutions. The bill would have allowed church-related providers receiving federal funds to exercise religious preference in hiring employees and to use federal funds to repair or renovate facilities.

"The bill would have given millions of dollars of direct financial assistance to churches and pervasively sectarian institutions," Thomas said. "The Supreme Court

in June 1988 restated its position that any public financial assistance to a pervasively sectarian institution—including churches, synagogues and parochial schools—is unconstitutional even if that assistance is for secular social services, such as child care.

"If the ABC bill had passed in its present form, it would have been struck down as far as its funding to churches. By that time, the momentum for a child-care bill might have ebbed, and parents who place their children in church child-care centers would be left without any assistance."

Thomas, who predicted child care will be the biggest church-state issue during 1989, said the real challenge before Congress is determining how to provide public support for child-care services when one-third of those services are provided by religious institutions.

"For most of the families—middle- and low-middle income—you are going to have to look to the tax code," he said, explaining that such legislative action could provide both relief for families with preschoolers and incentives for employers to provide on-site child care.

Meeting the needs of low-income families would be more difficult, he said, but suggested "beefing up" existing programs, such as Head Start, and utilizing public schools more effectively.

Braidfoot pointed out several other problems with the ABC bill that he and Thomas hope to see corrected in future legislation.

"It did not target sufficient efforts at relieving the problems of the most needy," Braidfoot said. "It also called for federal regulation of child care as opposed to state and local regulation."

In addition, Braidfoot said most Southern Baptists strongly prefer tax incentives—rather than direct federal

funding—for couples to deal with child-care needs within the family context.

Citing conflicting opinions as to whether the shortage of child-care services is nationwide or only in specific geographic areas, Braidfoot said any kind of program should be based on demonstrated need.

"Child care will be one of the most important legislative issues of the 1989 session of Congress," he said. "It is extremely important to try to work towards some comprehensive alternatives."

Sharing Is the Evidence of Caring



Gambling Measures Approved

WASHINGTON (BP)—Two gambling-related bills were among a landslide of legislation Congress approved before adjourning in late October.

Members passed legislation to allow private gambling enterprises run by non-profit organizations to use broadcast and mail advertising.

Federal law had allowed only government-run gambling operations, such as state lotteries, to advertise on radio and television and through the mail.

The Lottery Advertising Clarification Act requires that advertised activities—such as private lotteries and church-sponsored bingo games—be legal in the

state in which they are conducted. In addition, the measure—which will not go into effect until 18 months after being signed by the president—allows states to enact their own restrictions against such advertising.

The legislation does not lift a federal ban on interstate advertising of casino gambling or prohibitions on the mailing of lottery tickets, money or other paraphernalia related to lotteries.

Congress also passed legislation to regulate gambling on Indian lands.

The measure divides gaming activities into three classes and prescribes a particular form of regulation for each class.

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Child-Care Debate Continues

by Kathy Palen

Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (BP)—Republicans and Democrats alike have said a growing national debate over child care—an issue in both presidential and congressional campaigns—will continue despite Congress' failure to enact a controversial proposal in its recently concluded session.

The failed measure was but one of more than 150 child-care bills introduced during the past two years. Although many legislators noted a federal child-care program should be developed, they did not

agree on what form the program should take. Proposed approaches ranged from federally funded and regulated programs to tax-credit and tax-incentive plans.

The concluding weeks of the 100th Congress saw the Senate deadlocked over one specific child-care proposal, the Act for Better Child Care Services. After days of partisan maneuvering, a failed attempt to force a vote on a package that contained the ABC bill resulted in the proposal's death for the year.

Throughout the Senate debate, Democrats and Republicans defined and defended their parties' commitment to child care and the American family.

Senate Majority Leader Robert C. Byrd, D-W.Va., charged that a Republican-backed motion to delay action on the legislative package made "it clear which party is the party that cares about the future of the American family. Democrats are the party of the family."

Rejecting Byrd's claim, Minority Leader Robert J. Dole, R-Kan., said, "I do not want tomorrow morning's headlines, written by the liberal media that cover this place, to report that Republicans are frustrating the efforts of Democrats on child-care legislation."

Minority Whip Alan K. Simpson, R-Wyo., said Republicans refused to be "painted as slaving poops who do not like parental leave or child care."

But in a statement following the failed attempt to act on the measure, Byrd concluded: "We have heard for quite some time that everybody in this chamber supports child-care legislation and everybody wants to do something for the American family. Today we had that chance, but we

did not succeed. . . .

"Today, they (American families) have heard the minority say, 'No.' They got lip service, but no helping hand. I must acknowledge to my friends on the other side of the aisle that their filibuster was successful. They have won today, and America's families have lost."

Debate in the Senate also served as a reminder of the child-care issue's influence on the presidential contest between Vice President George Bush and Massachusetts Gov. Michael Dukakis.

Senate Republicans called the Democratic handling of the ABC bill "a ploy to play games, to embarrass George Bush." But Democrats argued they were giving the vice president an "opportunity to put his money where his mouth is" concerning child care.

In announcing his support for a federal child-care program, Bush proposed a \$2.2 billion plan to offer low-income families a \$1,000-per-child tax credit to help cover the cost of child care, whether by a parent, relative or neighbor or in a licensed or unlicensed day-care facility.

Meanwhile, Dukakis endorsed "in concept" the ABC bill, which called for \$2.5 billion in federal funds for child-care services. That proposal, which would have distributed funds through the states, also called for development of federal child-care regulations.

Despite their disagreements concerning specific legislation, congressional members of both parties agreed the child-care issue will not disappear.

"If it is President Bush or President Dukakis, child care is part of the national debate," Dole said.

"These issues will be back again," said Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, D-Mass. "The votes will be taken on these issues."

Corrections

Last week's coverage of the ABCS annual meeting at Park Hill Church in North Little Rock misspelled the name of a messenger who presented a resolution. The article should have said Phillip Maine of Lakeside Church in Hot Springs proposed a resolution opposing production and distribution of the new "day after" abortion pill.

A book review in the Aug. 11 ABN incorrectly indicated that *The Olive Tree* by Lela Tisdale would be available through the Baptist Book Store. The book may be ordered through Tisdale at: 310 S. Second, Rogers, AR 72756.



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Riders Attached To Bill

WASHINGTON (BP)—Congress' last-minute passage of an omnibus drug bill has resulted in the enactment of several unrelated measures, including child pornography and alcohol-labeling legislation.

At the core of the drug bill is the provision of \$500 million in federal funds this fiscal year for increasing drug enforcement efforts, stiffening criminal and civil penalties for drug

sellers and users, and expanding drug education, treatment and rehabilitation programs.

But the measure also gave Congress an opportunity to act on other pieces of legislation by attaching them to the bill.

A child pornography amendment, sponsored by Sen. Strom Thurmond, R-S.C., bans the buying and selling of children for use in child pornography. It also stiffens penalties against people convicted of selling or possessing with intent to sell child pornography and other obscene materials.

Thurmond also sponsored a measure that makes illegal the manufacture, import, bottle for sale or distribution in the United States of any alcoholic beverage unless its container bears a label stating: "Government Warning: (1) According to the Surgeon General, women should not drink alcoholic beverages during pregnancy because of the risk of birth defects. (2) Consumption of alcoholic beverages impairs your ability to drive a car or operate machinery and may cause health problems."

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

Curriculum Coalition

by Kathy Palen

Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (BP)—In an effort to help the nation's schools feel their way through a "minefield of controversies" surrounding the question of religion and education, a diverse coalition of educators, scholars and religious leaders has joined forces to develop curriculum on religious liberty and its role in a pluralistic society.

The group—working in cooperation with the Williamsburg Charter Foundation, a non-partisan, non-sectarian, non-profit project concerned with the place of religion in public life—is working to develop a five-lesson curricular unit titled "Living with our Deepest Differences: Religious Liberty in a Pluralistic Society."

During a news conference announcing the curriculum project, Ernest L. Boyer, chairman of the project's editorial review board, said: "For far too long, we've had a remarkable silence on teaching about religion in the nation's public schools. This silence is not because of a conspiracy, but because of confusion about what such a curriculum should include and a genuine concern that to discuss religion in the classroom might be viewed as indoctrination or a violation of the conscience of students, as well as a violation of the fundamental principles of the Constitution.

"The problem is that this silence has led many to conclude that public schools are, at the very least, indifferent to religion or, at the very most, actively opposed. Most importantly, perhaps, the failure to include systematically the study of religion in the school curriculum has reduced the quality of the education we are providing to our children."

Project leaders said the curriculum will be developed around three goals:

— To explain the history and significance of the First Amendment religious liberty clauses and their decisive contribution to individual and communal liberty and to American democracy.

— To examine the advantages and responsibilities of living in a modern pluralistic society and to demonstrate how practical dilemmas can be answered in terms of tolerance and mutual respect rather than bigotry and violence.

— To deepen each student's appreciation of the principles of religious liberty for peoples of all faiths or none and to establish a strong civic commitment to the groundrules by which all citizens can contend robustly but civilly over religious differences in public life.

Special RTVC Meeting Called

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—The executive committee of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission has set a special meeting of the commission for Dec. 13, 1988 to complete transfer of the ACTS network to a for-profit corporation, commission President Jimmy R. Allen announced.

Friends of ACTS, a San Antonio, Texas, corporation, contracted to assume operation of ACTS in an agreement signed June 9, Allen said. The contract calls for Friends of ACTS to continue the programming policies currently in effect for the network and provide up to 35 hours per week of

time for commission-produced programs for 30 years.

In addition, the commission is to be paid \$11 million at closing, Allen noted. The network is to purchase programming from the commission to be used on the network at the rate of \$2 million per year for 11 and one-half years, and pay a 3 percent override on advertising income for 30 years, he added.

Friends of ACTS is to continue to bear the cost of a satellite transponder for use by ACTS in return for rescheduling the closing, he said. Oct. 31 had been set for closing because of a requirement of the former transponder owners, but the present owners have eliminated that restriction.

The change of date was voted at the request of Friends of ACTS, Allen reported.

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A Challenge

by Jim Box, Central Church, Bald Knob
Basic passage: Jeremiah 37:1-38:13

Focal passage: Jeremiah 38:4-13

Central truth: A challenge to be faithful to God in spite of opposition.

During the reign of Jehoiakim, Babylon began to assert itself as the new world power. After Nebuchadnezzar became king of Babylon, he resumed his campaign in Palestine about the time Jehoiakim died. His son, Jehoiachin, succeeded him, but reigned only three months after which he was taken captive to Babylon. The conquerors made his uncle, Zedekiah, king, though the people of Judah continued to regard the deposed Jehoiachin as their real monarch.

Jeremiah was seen leaving Jerusalem at this time and was arrested. His captors were enraged by the prophet's pronouncement of doom and were looking for an occasion to confine him to prison. After abusing him, they locked him up "in the house of Jonathan the scribe" where a temporary prison had been created. The princes of King Zedekiah tried to persuade him to have Jeremiah "put to death" (v. 4). As a result of the king's yielding to the demands, Jeremiah was put into an unused cistern, with an accumulation of mud at the bottom. The prophet could not have survived long in this situation.

When Ebed-Melech the Ethiopian, one of the eunuchs which was in the king's house, heard that they had put Jeremiah in the dungeon, he went to speak to the king. His concern was that Jeremiah would starve to death because of the shortage of food. The prophet's enemies were unlikely to share their reduced rations.

In accordance with the prophet's warnings, the city fell in 586 B.C. The difficult names in Jeremiah 39:3 affirm the completeness of the conquest, for when these men "sat in the middle gate" they were occupying the seat of authority from which Jerusalem was governed.

The terrible fate of Zedekiah is described in the beginning of chapter 39. The principal buildings and many homes were burned and the city's defensive wall broken down. Most of the people were deported to Babylon, leaving a residue to care for the land. Jeremiah's life was spared (v. 11-14). He made his home for a time at Mizpah, but later went to Egypt where it is believed he died.

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Life and Work

Opportunities

by Stephen Pate, Second Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: Acts 16:6-13; Romans 1:8-15; 15:18-24; Colossians 4:2-4

Focal passage: Acts 16:10; Romans 15:18-24; Colossians 4:2-4

Central truth: As believers we are to seek opportunities to share the gospel.

We have learned through recent studies that nine out of 10 of the adult convert's closest friends are lost. But in just one year the same study has shown us that nine out of 10 of that same convert's best friends are now fervent believers. That is why a weak hardly goes by without someone stating, "I don't know anyone who does not go to church."

It is our responsibility not to only share with those when the opportunity arises but to make opportunities!

Seeking opportunity to share must come with God's guidance. Acts 16:10 shows us that after Paul received his orders he and the missionary team immediately went to Macedonia to preach the gospel. It's important to remember that Paul had just previously experienced two closed doors to places he wanted to go before God's guidance became clear to him.

But not only does God guide us to where and who, but he also empowers us. In Romans 15:18-19, Paul was not going to speak about doing anything in his power. "By word and deed" was Paul's way, preaching God's word and performing miracles as he sought to share the gospel.

Paul also was willing to go anywhere. Romans 15:19b indicates he went from Jerusalem to Illyricum which was more than 1,000 miles. After fulfilling God's will there, "fully preached," he wanted to move on. Spain was in his heart. Spain was playing an important role as a tourist and commercial center for the Roman Empire.

Paul also was seeking those who had never heard (Ro. 15:20-23). He was a "trail blazer." He wanted to be the first into an area. It wasn't desire that was prohibiting Paul from going, it was hindering circumstances that befell him.

He urged others to pray for him (Co. 4:2) for prayer opens doors that would otherwise be closed. Prayer supports and strengthens those seeking to share the good news with a lost world. Opportunities for witnessing are right before us. Go out and share this week!

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Bible Book

God's Covenant

by Bradley A. Rogge, Forest Tower Church, Hensley

Basic passage: Exodus 19,20

Focal passage: Exodus 19:4-6,8a; 20:3-8,11-17

Central truth: The foundation of faith is obedience.

In our lesson today we shall come to grips with a most difficult problem at least it is a difficult problem for many. Are the Ten Commandments still important in today's world?

At Sinai, Moses was given a set of codes by which the people of Israel were to live. God reminded them of all that he had done to them. It is not a bad idea for you and I to stop and reflect upon what God has done for each of us.

There is no question that from time to time life gets tough, but without God life could become a lot tougher. After a time of reflection, Israel said they would obey God in his laws.

The first four commandments deal with our relationship with God. Nothing must come between ourselves and God. One of the biggest problems today is that our 'sabbath' has little value to many people. Sunday has become a day when we recreate. Do not misunderstand, we all need rest from the world of work. We may even need time free from God's work. Jesus suggested to his disciples to withdraw and rest. But our leisure must not become our most important activity.

The last six commandments deal with our relationship with each other. Though our society may have changed its view on several subjects, God has not. Sex outside of marriage is still a sin. God calls it adultery. A lie is still a lie. There is no such thing as a white lie in God's sight. Stealing is still stealing. Murder is still murder even if the Supreme Court of the United States says it isn't. It is still sinful to be greedy for all that the Jones' may have.

Society has said that the list of codes in Exodus 20 are good moral standards on how the world should be. We as God's children need to remind the world we were better when these codes were taken for what they were, the Ten Commandments, not the ten suggestions.

Each of us should look at each commandment. When we find we are weak in one, we should do all that we can to comply with it.

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FOREIGN MISSIONS

She Gave It All

by **Erich Bridges**

SBC Foreign Mission Board

Lottie Moon died 76 years ago, her body broken and her heart weary.

"I hope no missionary will be as lonely as I have been," she once wrote.

Toward the end of her nearly 40 years as a Baptist missionary in China, she saw people she loved with all her heart starving because of famine. She gave them her own food, and began to starve with them.

When she finally left China at age 72, she was too weak for the ocean journey home. She died Christmas Eve of 1912 on board a ship in a Japanese harbor. Yet, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board still gets an occasional letter addressed to Lottie Moon.

In the last century, Southern Baptists have offered \$925 million to foreign missions in her memory. Young people who volunteer as missionaries regularly cite her as their greatest influence.

Who was this 4-foot-11-inch woman who towers above Baptist history? Why does she still motivate so many people, so many years later, to give their money and their lives to foreign missions?

For one thing, she was brilliant. John A. Broadus, the renowned 19th century Baptist preacher who led Moon to Christ, once called her the "most educated woman in the South."

Born in 1840 near the home of another great Virginian, Thomas Jefferson, she scorned religion as a schoolgirl and devoted her talents to mischievous pranks. But all that changed in 1858 when she encountered Broadus and his spiritual challenge at First Baptist Church in Charlottesville, Va. She gave her life to Christ.

Her wit and sense of humor stayed keen, but she concentrated her forceful mind and personality on serving God. A scholar of languages, she earned a master's degree (extremely rare for women in those days) and then taught school. The mission call to China came to her, she said, "as clear as a bell."

Some Baptists said God did not call single women to be missionaries. Others, including missionaries, said no foreign woman could survive alone in China. Still others lamented the fact that so great a talent as Lottie Moon intended to "waste" her life on the barbaric Chinese. But in 1873, Lottie Moon became one of the first single women appointed as a missionary by Southern Baptists.

The Chinese, like some of their American counterparts, regarded foreigners as barbarians. But throughout four decades, Lottie Moon, the "heavenly book visitor," gained the respect and love of the people in her corner of north China.

Her thundering epistles to preachers and Baptist women back home also set the stage for the creation of Woman's Mis-

sionary Union, as well as for the annual foreign missions offering which would later be named for her.

"I would I had a thousand lives that I might give them to the women of China!" she wrote 100 years ago. "As it is, I can only beg that other women, and many of them, be sent."

Her sad death on the sea was no disgrace. She simply had given everything she had to give — soul, mind and strength. Her creator must have decided there was no need for her to return to Virginia on the way home to heaven.

WMU, SBC photo



The Last Frontier

2,000 'People Groups' Are Largely Unevangelized

by Erich Bridges

SBC Foreign Mission Board.

TEHRAN, Iran (BP)—It was a slow news day, so the TV networks picked up a story from the long, faceless Iran-Iraq war: the near destruction of a Kurdish village.

Who are the Kurds? They are an ancient, close-knit, fiercely independent tribal mountain people, possibly descended from the Medes of Old Testament times. Most of them live in areas now recognized as parts of Iran, Iraq, Turkey, Syria and the Soviet Union. They lost control of their homeland, Kurdistan, when maps of the Middle East were redrawn after World War I.

The Kurds number about 24 million people—the world's largest nationality without a nation. They also may be the largest single people-group virtually untouched by Christianity.

Nearly all the Kurds are Sunni Muslims; probably no more than a few hundred are Christians. A Kurdish translation of the New Testament was completed in 1872, but it is practically unavailable where most Kurds live. Kurdish Christian broadcasts and Christian literature do not exist. All five countries where they live are closed to missionaries.

Although numerous, the Kurds are only one of thousands of distinct ethnolinguistic people groups in the world. An ethnolinguistic group is a people tied together by name, language, race, heritage, culture and sometimes geography, though many groups extend across national boundaries.

Among the world's 5.1 billion people, Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board researchers have identified as many as 11,500 ethnolinguistic groups. Information about each group can be found in the board's computerized World Evangelization Database. Of that number, researchers say some 2,000 people groups, plus more than 1,000 closed cities and 30 countries—representing a total of 1.3 billion people—are largely unevangelized by any acceptable definition. That's more than one of every four people on earth.

Narrowing further, research reveals as many as 500 of those people groups are totally unevangelized. That means "No Christian disciples, no churches, no missions, no missionaries, no evangelists, no visiting evangelists, no radio, no television, no Bible, no portion of the Bible," says David Barrett, British missionary researcher who is working with Foreign Mission Board strategists. "And they continue in that state from one year to the next."

The modern missionary movement first

docked at the great coastal cities. From there it moved inland. But to finish evangelizing the world, a "third wave" of Christian workers must reach the one-fourth of humanity still untouched by missions. And to reach the unreached peoples, Christians must understand who they are, where they live and why they remain strangers to the gospel.

National borders mean little to many of these people. They have seen their historic homelands divided and subdivided by international politics, wars, and the rise and fall of empires.

"The emergence of political nations is a fairly recent historical phenomenon," ex-

(BP) photo / Joanna Pinneo



One in four is cut off from the gospel.

plains David Garrison of the Foreign Mission Board. "Oftentimes these artificial political boundaries imposed from the West completely disregarded ancient demographic ties of race, language, culture and religion. Since the collapse of Western colonial power after World War II, these contrived nations have begun to unravel like cheap woven cloth."

The same could happen in the future among the increasingly restive peoples of the Soviet Union and its satellites, experts say.

"What does this mean for Christian missions?" Garrison asks. "It may mean we need to readjust the lenses through which we view the world. Instead of clinging to

colonial models of national boundaries, we should see the peoples of the world as they see themselves, as distinct ethnic and linguistic people groups.

Unreached peoples can be found throughout the world, but most of the larger groups live behind political, religious or geographical barriers, such as those erected by communist countries and Islamic states, where the ruling ideologies regard Christianity and general openness to the outside world as a threat.

Political and cultural barriers have stymied Christian outreach to such peoples. But mission researchers also point to self-inflicted wounds among Christians themselves: ignorance, parochialism, lack of cooperation, a sense of helplessness, stubborn reliance on traditional methods that won't work in restricted areas and inequities in distribution of mission resources.

Still, the vision and desire to reach all the world, not just the "open" parts of it, have been around since the beginning of the Christian mission. "Anybody who reads a bit of church history can see that it's always been there," says Barrett. "Perhaps it hasn't been articulated to the same degree, and people didn't use computers to compile lists of peoples and show what needs to be done, but it's been there."

What has been lacking until now is accurate, reliable information that all evangelical mission groups can use to determine strategy and take action. The advent of the information age is changing that.

The Foreign Mission Board is spearheading ongoing efforts to link up with world Baptists and other Christian groups committed to fulfilling Christ's Great Commission to carry the gospel to all people. This year the board is exploring strategies to reach 25 unevangelized groups, six restricted countries and unreached people groups in 50 countries where Southern Baptist missionaries or overseas Baptists already work. Thousands of other Christian mission agencies have their own contributions to make.

Southern Baptists' Bold Mission Thrust and 30 or more similar plans under way in the Christian world are aimed at achieving world evangelization by the end of this century. Barrett has identified about 700 earlier plans that have failed since the time of Christ.

Yet despite the vastness of today's population and the challenge of reaching the thousands of unreached peoples, those who understand the task believe it is now actually possible—if Christians are willing to work together.

The "third wave" of Christian missions could be the final one.

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WORLD

Netherlands Work Begins

EINDHOVEN, Netherlands (BP)—Southern Baptists' first missionaries to the Netherlands will bring experience in three cultures to their new assignment.

Loren and Cherry Turnage, Southern Baptist missionaries since 1959, are transferring to the Netherlands from Scotland, where they helped launch an English-language church.

In the Netherlands, they will lead an English-language church formed earlier this year in Eindhoven, a city of 380,000 people 70 miles south of Amsterdam. The Philips electronics corporate group, which employs thousands of English-speaking workers, is headquartered there.

The Turnages worked in Colombia for 11 years. They transferred to Iran in 1973, where he led an English-language church in Tehran until 1977. They have worked in Scotland since 1978. He is from Bolivar, Mo. She is from Sapulpa, Okla.

The number of countries where Southern Baptist missionaries work remains at 113. As the Netherlands is being added, Vanuatu in the South Pacific is being dropped because authorities refused residence visas for a missionary couple appointed to work there.

Churches Grow Despite Unrest

by Craig Bird
SBC Foreign Mission Board

MBALE, Uganda (BP)—Two years of killing, looting, rape, hunger and hopelessness in northeastern Uganda have not stalled the spread of Christianity there.

Ugandan Baptist pastors in the area, at considerable personal risk, continue to travel by foot or bicycle from their homes to the town of Soroti and back, transporting Bibles and relief goods to thousands of people.

Southern Baptist missionary Harry Garvin has managed to maintain personal contact with only two of the 45 Baptist churches in Teso District because anti-government rebels roam the area. But the pastors report churches are full.

"Between September 1987 and January 1988, Issac Okwang, Augustine Opedun and others baptized 250 new believers in just eight churches near the town of Tiriri, an area of intense suffering," said Garvin of Cisco, Texas.

More than 600,000 Iteso and Kumas people live in the Teso District, with membership in Baptist churches estimated at 7,000. Since mid-1986, district residents have been the victims of rebels seeking to

overthrow the government and of raiders, mostly from their traditional enemies, the Karamojong, but also outlaws from their own ethnic groups.

"Raiders have taken most of the cattle," Garvin explained. "The planting and harvesting of crops have been eliminated in the worst-hit areas and drastically reduced in most others."

"Hunger is a gripping thing, infant mortality is staggering, malnutrition is horrifying and robbing and vandalism have taken a debilitating toll on nearly the entire population."

The violence claimed the assistant pastor of Ajonyi Baptist Church during the summer. Rebels chose a site near the church to ambush three government ministers enroute to a peace conference with a different rebel group. The government officials survived, but during a gunbattle, the assistant pastor and two of his brothers were killed.

Government efforts to meet the needs of the people are producing gradual improvement, Garvin pointed out, but progress is slow in the face of so many problems.

Government cooperation and the bravery of the Ugandan pastors have enabled more than \$65,000 in relief aid from the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board to flow into the area.

Several thousand people have received blankets, food, powdered milk, seed and hoes. The pastors distribute the goods to Christians and non-Christians.

Garvin and his wife, Doris, have worked in the Teso District since 1970 in evangelism and church development.

Centurymen In China

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—The gospel will be heard for the first time over television in the People's Republic of China when the Centurymen, a 100-voice men's chorus representing Southern Baptists, is featured on a nationwide TV broadcast in mainland China during November.

The chorus, made up of choral directors from all over the United States, left for Beijing Oct. 31, where they will produce a TV program on the new Central China Television studios.

Jointly sponsored by the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission and Cooperative Services International, the program of gospel, folk and traditional American and Chinese music will be broadcast throughout China Nov. 16. The government-owned television system claims 500 million viewers.

Several songs will be sung phonetically in Mandarin, the language understood by most Chinese.