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4-8-1993

### April 8, 1993

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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# ARKANSAS BAPTIST



Volume 92, Number 7

April 8, 1993

*And the angel answered and  
said unto the women, Fear not  
ye: for I know that ye seek  
Jesus, which was crucified.*

*He is not here: for*

**He is risen,**

*as He said. Come, see the place  
where the Lord lay.*

*(Matt. 28:5-6)*

## Swaim named WBC interim president

Jerol Swaim has been named interim president of Williams Baptist College, according to Wendell Ross, chairman of the WBC board of trustees. Jimmy Millikin resigned as president of WBC, effective March 15 to return to Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary in Memphis, Tenn., where he had previously taught for 18 years.



Swaim

"Dr Swaim was a logical choice for interim president in light of his leadership," Ross said. "The board of trustees is confident that the college will continue to grow and develop under Swaim's successful leadership."

Swaim, who has served as WBC's executive vice president since 1989, was initially named acting president following

Millikin's resignation. As interim president, Swaim also will continue his responsibilities as academic dean/registrant.

"It is a privilege to serve as interim president in such an exciting time in the life of Williams Baptist College as it continues to add baccalaureate degree programs to its curriculum," Swaim said. "Even now, the college is working toward implementing a baccalaureate degree in physical education this fall."

Swaim joined WBC in 1964 as an instructor in the department of history and social science. In 1973, he was named academic dean.

Since 1984, when WBC became a four-year college, Swaim has played a key role in the implementation of baccalaureate degrees in art education, business administration, elementary education, Christian ministries, psychology and music education.

Swaim is a graduate of Union University, George Peabody College of Vanderbilt University and Memphis State University.

## Deacons, pastors and wives retreat slated

Deacons, pastors and their wives have an opportunity for fellowship and encouragement during Arkansas Baptists' 1993 Deacons, Pastors and Wives Retreat at DeGray State Park May 7-8.

The event, sponsored by the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Church Leadership Support department, is designed to move participants toward the biblical ideal of deacons and pastors as servants, according to conference coordinator L.B. Jordan. Conference leader will be Robert

Sheffield, Baptist Sunday School Board retired writer and consultant on deacon ministry.

The wives' conference will be led by Sheffield's wife, Barbara, who is a school teacher, deacon's wife, author and conference leaders. Mrs. Sheffield's book, *Help! I'm a Deacon's Wife*, will be the chief resource for the conference.

For more information, contact the ABSC Church Leadership Support department at 376-4791, ext. 5148.

## Cover Story



## Easter Celebration 5

"And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye; for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here, for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay." (Matt. 28:5-6)

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# ARKANSAS BAPTIST

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# 1993 projects reflect 'Grow Churches' theme

By Colleen Backus

Arkansas Baptist

"Grow Churches," Arkansas Baptists' 1993 statewide emphasis, is part of a larger five-year convention emphasis on "Building God's Family." The leadership of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention announced the ambitious five-year series of goals and projects in 1990.

"Building God's Family" has at its core seven major emphases: missions, ministry, evangelism, church growth, family, Cooperative Program and prayer. The emphases were all proposed by a committee composed of "grassroots" members, according to Jimmie Sheffield, associate executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. Pastors, laypeople, directors of missions and Baptist Building personnel all had a role in its planning.

Two of the emphases were "basic and foundational," according to Sheffield. "The Cooperative Program and prayer are intrinsic to all the other parts," he explained. Each of the other emphases is being highlighted during a specific year, although priorities and goals related to each area continue from year to year.

The 1993 "Grow Churches" emphasis has two distinct goals, Sheffield pointed out. "Each year the departments, as they plan their work for that particular year, plan their projects and goals. Some of these projects are lifted up out of all that we do and these are priority for the year."

This year there are several things that Sheffield hopes the priority projects accomplish. "One goal is to heighten the awareness of churches and leaders to the point of church growth; to sensitize them to the possibilities of growing.

"We are not just talking numerical growth," Sheffield commented. "Spiritual growth, kingdom growth, growth in the number of individual churches we have in the convention and growth in leadership skills — it's a multi-faceted emphasis."

Another goal, Sheffield continued, is to impact churches that are plateaued or declining. "In Arkansas, 68 percent of Baptist churches have been declining or plateaued for at least a five-year time span. That's a lot of churches.

"We hope to help the churches that have a desire and are interested in turning that pattern around," Sheffield said.

ABSC executive director Don Moore commented, "With a growing population and growing spiritual needs within the population, it is inconceivable that the church of the living God would be content to stay as it is.

"The fact that two-thirds of our churches

in Arkansas are plateaued or declining is alarming. It is a wake-up call to intentional intervention. This year of special effort, we pray, will be used of God to turn things around," Moore explained.

Sheffield voiced particular concern for two of the priority projects emphasized this year: the Southern Baptist Church Growth Plan and the Great Commission Breakthrough.



The church growth plan is a "new process" that Arkansas Baptist leaders are helping teach

churches how to use, Sheffield explained. The plan provides explanation and resources to aid in balanced church growth.

The Great Commission Breakthrough is a custom-designed consultation approach, focused on the spiritual, attitudinal, relational and practical program changes needed, especially in plateaued and declining churches. The breakthrough plan focuses primarily on Sunday School.

Other priority projects include the Authentic Worship Workshop, to be held Aug. 19, which will focus upon practical planning and resource material to guide worship leaders in preparation for the worship experiences.

The Discipleship Growth/Enrichment project is a consultant-led DisciplesALL Weekend designed to assist churches to enlarge and strengthen Discipleship Training. Another Discipleship Training prior-

ity is the New Start Projects, which features personal consultations designed to assist churches in beginning Discipleship Training.

Total Church Life is the strategy of the evangelism department for church growth. Associational seminars will be conducted in each association to train pastors and staff members in how to use the program.

Church Arkansas, conducted through the ABSC missions department, has two primary components — new church starts and missions ministries.

A February seminar already has been conducted on one of the priority projects, Redreaming the Dream through Long-Range Planning Regional Seminar. The seminar focused on enabling local churches to state a mission, discover needs, write goals and plan action for a three- to five-year period.

A final priority project is one that is being emphasized every year — TTEOTE (To The Ends Of The Earth). Partnership evangelism, construction and medical projects for sites all over the world are an ongoing emphasis for Arkansas Baptists as they seek to help build God's family.

"It is a well-established truth that when God's people set out to do something that pleases God, they have His blessing. Our hope is that every pastor, staff person, deacon and organizational leader will pray, plan and work together to develop a strategy that God will use to help their church grow, not just this year, but in succeeding years," Moore encouraged.

Churches and individuals interested in additional information about specific priority projects may contact Sheffield at P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203; phone 376-4791, ext. 5103.

## Volunteers needed for Australia project

As Arkansas Baptists help spread the gospel around the world, efforts are under way to recruit volunteers for a mission project in Australia set for July 28 through August 9. The trip is part of the state convention's ongoing TTEOTE (To The Ends Of The Earth) missions emphasis.

According to TTEOTE coordinator Glendon Grober, director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Brotherhood department, the Australia project will emphasize outreach and evangelism. Lay witness evangelism in many informal, small-group settings will be coupled with evangelistic Sunday worship services.

Laypeople, pastors, youth ministers and ministers of music are needed to participate in the missions effort. Teams will vary in size from three to eight members, depending on the requests of Australian congregations. Grobersaid a total of 50 to 60 volunteers is needed.

The basic cost of the trip is approximately \$1,600 per person, including airfare, insurance, visa fee and domestic travel in Australia.

Individuals interested in participating in the project may obtain additional information by contacting Grober at the ABSC Brotherhood department, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203; phone 501-376-4791, ext. 5158.

## YOU'LL BE GLAD TO KNOW



By DON MOORE  
ABCS Executive Director

Where do we go from here? All kinds of situations can be imagined that might cause you to ask such a question of your church. You've completed a building program; closed a successful revival; or maybe reached a new high in Sunday School. You might have experienced one more of those horrible fuses or splits; run off your third pastor in five years; or suddenly realized that for 10 straight years your church has suffered decline. Where do you go from there?

The old gospel song addresses that question. "Where could I go, oh where could I go, seeking a refuge for my soul? Needing a friend to help me in the end, where could I go but to the Lord?"

Whether it be an individual or a church, seeking the face and favor of God is paramount. We often turn to each other. We more often rely upon human judgment and human resources. We sometimes turn to the denomination. Tragically, we sometimes turn to the world's methods and the world's resources. Politics, money and deception are used to force what we want. The church withers, the lost perish and undiscerning members wonder "what has happened to our church."

Only one good option exists in answer to the question, "Where do we go from here?" The church goes to her head to find out what to do next. If she doesn't do that, she will begin to resort to other counsel. Jesus Christ knows you, your church, your community and the resources He has given you to get His work done. Your church doesn't have any business being in business if it is not going to take directions from the head of the church.

God told Moses that a prophet like him would be raised up "from among your own people; you must listen to everything He tells you. Anyone who does not listen to Him will be completely cut off from among the people" (Acts 3: 22-23).

Can we be honest enough, courageous enough and spiritual enough to call our churches back to total dependence upon God?

BOBBI DeBUSK

## Woman's Viewpoint

### Family



The word "family" has always given me a warm feeling. That is because the Lord allowed me to be born into a large extended family. My daddy was the second oldest of 13 children, and my mother was the third child of four. Some of my happiest memories are the holidays and Sunday afternoons that were spent at the grandparents'.

My parents and grandparents have taught me a great deal. My paternal grandmother taught me that even with 13 children and 40-odd grandchildren you can love each one equally because each one has his or her own unique qualities that make them lovable. Last November my maternal grandparents celebrated their 75th wedding anniversary. Watching them through the years has taught me that love and commitment, not possessions or circumstances, are the grounds for a happy life together. One thing my parents taught me is the importance of loving people and treating everyone kindly. But they also instilled in me the importance of being a part of another family: God's family.

Our church family is full of individuals, but we can love each one in a

special way because God has made them special. We love them for who they are and treat them with the kindness the Father has shown us. Happiness within that family is not dependent upon where the building is located or what kind of program is there. Happiness within God's family is based on a love and commitment to serve the Father and bring others into the family.

With three children of our own, we go home to visit the grandparents and great-grandparents as often as we can. But I am thankful that we can regularly be with God's family and experience the joy of serving together.

"Father, thank you for the blessing of a wonderful biological family. And thank you for the blessing of the spiritual family that is mine because I am a child of yours."

**Bobbi Medford DeBusk**, the wife of J.R. DeBusk, pastor of South Side Church in Pine Bluff, is immediate past president of Arkansas Baptist Ministers' Wives. She teaches fourth, fifth and sixth grade music at Coleman Elementary School in the Watson Chapel School District. DeBusk is the mother of Rachel, Matt and Holly.

## Personal perspectives

"Tears may stream as I pray for the starving world, but am I willing to act by personally feeding those children?"

—Joyce Miller, associate executive director,  
national Woman's Missionary Union

"The world becomes more lost as each day passes and we as God's people have an obligation to make a difference."

—Julia Ketner, executive director,  
Arkansas Woman's Missionary Union

"Be alert, be sensitive to reach out to others and be their friend and seek God's leadership in anything new He might want to show you."

—Betty Alexander, Southern Baptist missionary to Thailand

# Celebrate the miracle of Easter

The sky was still pitch-black as we rolled out of our sleeping bags at 5 a.m. and made our way to the waiting shuttle bus. Anticipation and excitement hung thick in the brisk April air. The brief journey was quiet, reverent, with fellow travelers speaking in hushed tones.

Within minutes, we had reached our destination. As we filed off the bus, we joined 2,000 others who had braved the chilly morning to gather in this spot.

As the first rays of the morning sun began to filter across the walls of the Grand Canyon, the crowd stared in awe. Perched on a ledge of the canyon was a solitary cross, strategically placed behind the choir and minister leading the Easter sunrise service.

I don't recall the specific words spoken or the hymns sung on that beautiful Easter morning. But I do recall the sense of wonder. Those moments of worship spent with my wife and hundreds of other pilgrims on the rim of the Grand Canyon will always be among my most cherished Easter memories.

The sense of our risen Lord's spiritual presence was overwhelming. It was a vivid reminder of what Easter is truly all about—a celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and a time for personal spiritual reflection and renewal.

## STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



By TRENNIS HENDERSON

The essence of Easter is captured in the familiar hymn which enthusiastically declares: "Up from the grave He arose, with a mighty triumph over His foes.... He arose! He arose! Hallelujah! Christ arose!"

Yet we sometimes have a tendency to take Easter for granted. We get caught up in the tradition of new spring outfits and Easter egg hunts. We attend elaborate Easter pageants without shedding a tear as Christ's betrayal, beating, crucifixion and death are depicted. We can sing "Christ the Lord is risen today," without a hint of wonder or celebration.

The reason is obvious. We have grown so accustomed to the account of Christ's death, burial and resurrection that we

have allowed the details to become commonplace and emotionless.

Yet, down deep, I'm confident that all Christians are deeply moved by the miracle of Christ's resurrection when we take time from our hectic schedules to truly ponder what that first Easter morning means in our lives today, tomorrow and throughout eternity.

Among the most captivating words in all of Scripture is the angel's announcement recorded in Matthew 28:6 that "He is risen." Pause for a moment and read again the Easter passage printed on the cover of this week's Newsmagazine. Permit those verses to speak to you with fresh excitement and challenge.

As Easter approaches each year, my mind goes back to that Grand Canyon Easter experience. It helps me recapture the sense of jubilation that my Savior set in motion nearly 2,000 years ago. Those memories help me prepare for authentic, awe-filled worship.

What are your favorite Easter memories? How will you prepare this week to observe the miracle of Christ's victory over death? Don't allow resurrection Sunday to be just another holiday on an already-crowded calendar. Take time this Sunday to truly celebrate the miracle of Easter.

## Cooperative Program Day affirms generosity

By James Austin

SBC Stewardship Commission

It is a joyous privilege to be a part of the mission support system called the Cooperative Program and to help Southern Baptists do what they have always wanted to do: share the gospel of Jesus Christ with everyone, everywhere.

An informed people tend to become an involved people. A part of equipping Southern Baptists for global ministries is sharing information about the Cooperative Program.

Cooperative Program Day, set this year for Sunday, April 18, is designed to help accomplish this objective.

Cooperative Program Day concentrates the efforts of a church toward informing members of how Southern Baptists faithfully proclaim God's Word and win the lost through the missionaries they support.

Cooperative Program Day inspires God's people to be involved in His redemptive work by becoming more aware

of the nature and purpose of Cooperative Program supported ministries.

Cooperative Program Day provides opportunity for the church to demonstrate an example for giving to its members.

Modeling is very important. If churches are generous in mission support, members become more generous in giving to their church. Churches that are miserly in mission support generally have less money for local interests.

The Cooperative Program has been described as a channel, a rope of sand, with strength of steel, the glue that holds Southern Baptists together, the extended ministry of the local church, and a partnership in everything Southern Baptists are doing worldwide.

Voluntary cooperation has been a major factor in the growth of the Southern Baptist Convention from 4,100 churches with 352,000 members in 1845 to more than 38,000 churches and 15 million members in 1993.

Gifts through the Cooperative Program

plan of doing God's work support some 9,000 missionaries and thousands of ministries nationally and internationally. We support educational institutions, children's homes, homes for the elderly, hospitals; we broadcast the gospel on radio and TV; we publish state papers, church literature and books; we minister through home and foreign mission fields.

Pastors, church staff and millions of dedicated lay members work as partners with the denominational employees endeavoring to bring the lost to God through Jesus Christ.

Each year over 200,000 persons are baptized in more than 125 countries because you and your church support foreign missionaries through Cooperative Program giving.

"Physically speaking," said Jimmie E. Harley, former commissioner of the Stewardship Commission, "all of us are not able to go to all the world, but financially and spiritually all of us can go."

The way, through the Cooperative Program.

# State WMU members urged to follow God's leadership

By Millie Gill  
Arkansas Baptist

"Lead Me, Lord" was the theme of the 104th session of the Arkansas Baptist Woman's Missionary Union held March 19-20 at Beech Street First Church in Texarkana. The annual meeting, which attracted more than 500 participants, focused on being led by God through listening, confronting, growing and acting.

"Our actions are what the world sees," emphasized Joyce Mitchell, associate executive director of national WMU. "Tears may stream as I pray for the starving world, but am I willing to act by personally feeding those children?"

Mitchell used a telephone, a tape measure and other props during missionary prayer sessions to illustrate the necessity of not only talking to God at home, but to listen for ways of aiding a hurting world.

"If you really listen, rather than putting God on hold, He will confront you with the necessity to meet the needs of those around you," Mitchell declared. "Meeting these needs might be accomplished by developing programs for 'latch key children' or for younger Christians who are seeking to grow through Bible study."

Using dramatic monologues and parables which he had created, Lonnie Latham, director of missions for Bartholomew Association, led theme interpretations, reiterating the theme of personal involvement.

Portraying Saul of Tarsus following the removal of the scales from his eyes, Latham shouted, "Lord, you told me to preach that Jesus saves and changes all men and all women into His perfect image. What would you have those here today do?"

Latham shared a parable of water-filled daffodils to illustrate the importance of becoming filled with the Holy Spirit and bowed to overflow.

"It is only when we are filled to the brim and overflowing with the Holy Spirit that we can grow in service to others through the Lord," Latham emphasized. "When we try to minister in our own spirit, we only stand arrogant before God."

He used the dramatic portrayal of the deaf man seeking help from Jesus to encourage the need for listening for the needs of others with both the ears and the heart.

Beverly Coad of Fort Worth, Texas, directed musical sessions for the annual meeting. Coad, an Arkansas native and a former missionary to Burkino Faso and Mali, was assisted in congregational musi-

cal sessions by pianist Charles Barnette and organist Lyndon Burton, members of Beech Street First Church. Special music was presented by GloriSound and Jamie Gilbert from the host church.

Julia Kettner, state WMU executive director, moderated a "Led into Partnerships" interview session which highlighted the need for the personal involvement of Arkansas Baptist women.

Glendon Grober, ABCS Brotherhood director, spoke concerning TTEOTE (To The Ends of the Earth), stating that the partnership will involve Arkansas Baptists ministering in 20 countries in 1994-96.

He noted that WMU leadership training, camping and the establishment of new churches are ministry areas in which Arkansas Baptists can get involved. "Pray that we might sign up 3,000 people who are willing to become involved in this partnership," Grober requested.

Iowa WMU director Jean Hulse, a former Arkansan, listed leadership training for local church WMU workers and church planting assistance as needs in the Iowa-Arkansas partnership.

## Workshops highlight ministry

Other ideas for ministering to a lost and hurting world were shared in Friday afternoon conferences.

"Did you know that 86 percent of convicted rapists are users of pornography?" asked Joyce Mitchell as she led a conference dealing with pornography.

"We also have an increase of sexually transmitted diseases because of increased rape," she said. "I challenge you to make pornography one of your deepest prayer concerns, to educate your Baptist Women and Baptist Young Women on this issue, to voice concern to your local and state lawmakers about this issue, to stop purchasing in stores where these pornographic materials are sold and to minister to the victims of abuse and violence because of the use of pornography."

Tommy Goode, ABCS missions department associate, listed food, clothing, education, construction, health issues, unemployment and family relationships as needs that could be met through the Mississippi River Ministry project.

"There are 44 Arkansas counties where one-third of the population lives in extreme poverty and you can assist in meeting their needs," Goode pointed out.

John Ross, director of development for Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries, requested prayers for workers in emergency relief homes and

ABN photo / Millie Gill



Lonnie Latham, director of missions for Bartholomew Association, presented dramatic monologues and parables as theme interpretations for the state WMU meeting in Texarkana.

that the necessary funding would be provided to meet the needs of children placed in the agency's care.

A 1993 Dixie Jackson State Missions Offering goal of \$650,000 was established and an offering of more than \$3,500 was taken that will be used to provide magazines for Arkansas missionaries.

Other program features included a special report from Arkansas Acteen panel members Leslie Pevytoe of Benton, Kristyn Ross of North Little Rock, Rochella Werschem of Central City and Michelle Wright of Little Rock. Each panelist shared her commitment to Acteens and her desire to serve daily as a witness for the Lord at home, school and elsewhere.

Acteens Activators Angela Galucki of Cabot, Wendy Hoag of Batesville, Rebecca Holt of Sparkman, Leah Orman of Little Rock, Jan Roberts of Searcy, and Monica Thompson of Searcy presented a skit to illustrate their efforts as part of the Iowa-Arkansas Partnership.

Vickey Lloyd, a member of University Church of Fayetteville who played the role of a church janitor, concluded meeting sessions in what WMU president Majorie Grober termed "godly laughter," recapping session happenings and encouraging participants to listen to Jesus. "Listen with your heart to those around you, but especially listen to Jesus," Lloyd urged. "Don't be a sponge, or wait to be patted on the back, but just keep on keeping on for Jesus and others."

# State WMU director issues call to action

By **Trennis Henderson**

Editor, Arkansas Baptist

Acknowledging the confusion surrounding recent actions by the national Woman's Missionary Union, Julia Ketner offered Arkansas WMU members a detailed assessment of recent events. Ketner, executive director of Arkansas Baptist WMU, shared her report during the closing session of the state WMU meeting in Texarkana.

Emphasizing that "Bold Mission Trust was given to all Southern Baptists, not a select few," Ketner said the vision statement, core values and recommendations adopted by national WMU leaders in January are designed to help WMU "be relevant as a national missions organization in the 21st century."

Ketner said she and state WMU president Marjorie Grober voted for the proposals "only after sensing God's leadership in the work of the committee and in the direction that WMU, SBC should take to be true to her purpose as a missions organization for Southern Baptists."

She said the January meeting "was a time of recommitment to missions, to give total allegiance to God's command to go, teach and make disciples. It was a time of taking a stance for missions, not sides in the convention controversy. It was a time of embracing all Southern Baptists for the cause of missions, a must if a lost and hurting world is to be reached with the gospel and touched by His love through those of us who know Him."

Noting that the January actions relate specifically to the national organization, Ketner added, "Arkansas WMU work has not changed. We are still in the business of missions as promoted and supported by Southern Baptists."

While "rumors and accusations have surfaced, ranging from the ludicrous to insulting," Ketner said others have described WMU's actions "as being visionary and on target for the world in which we live."

Describing the widespread responses, Ketner asked, "Have you wondered why we have become the 'battered and bruised' WMU, why our efforts to pray and dream toward the future were not received as well as similar efforts by the Sunday School Board and the president of the Southern Baptist Convention?" Responding that "the issue is control," she quoted an SBC Executive Committee member who said, "It is an unhealthy relationship not being under the control of the Southern Baptist Convention."

Issuing a four-point call to action among Arkansas WMU members, Ketner said:

■ "I call you to a year of concerted prayer for your WMU, SBC and state WMU leadership, for all WMU members, that we might undergird one another with prayer as together we lead out for the cause of missions. Satan would like that we, too, become sidetracked with confusion and threats, but the God we serve is greater than any who may seek to deter us from the mission He has given."

■ "I call you to become informed.... We have served the convention because of love for missions and for nearly 105 years, it has been a healthy relationship, effective and productive." Participants responded with applause as Ketner declared, "We cannot let those who seem to have little interest in what we're about take away what has been effective for all these years."

"If there were no controversy in the Southern Baptist Convention or if the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship did not exist, the committee's report would not have made anyone's headlines," Ketner remarked. "It would have been business as usual."

■ "I call you to stand up for the value and purposes of WMU.... Just as we share our faith in Christ, so we, too, must share our belief in the need for missions education in every church in Arkansas. Be proud

to belong to an organization that has missions as its heartbeat, that makes a difference in the world and in the lives of individuals, that desires to be an even greater missions force in the years to come."

■ "I call you to remain faithful to your missions service.... If WMU had not led out in the promotion of missions, in the initiation of the missions offerings and continuation of promoting those offerings for all these years, there would not be a Southern Baptist missionary force of over 9,000; there would not have been raised \$502,308,859.64 for home missions through the Annie Armstrong Offering; there would not have been raised \$1,244,572,986.81 for foreign missions through the Lottie Moon Offering—and don't let anyone tell you otherwise."

Declaring that "what we can still accomplish as laborers together with God is yet to be seen," Ketner added, "The world becomes more lost as each day passes and we as God's people have an obligation to make a difference. We can do that through Woman's Missionary Union."

"Truly we are laborers together with God," Ketner concluded. "It is His cause, His work that we are about. May we press on, keeping our eyes focused on the One who is our reason for being, Jesus Christ."

WMU participants responded to Ketner's report with a standing ovation.



**WMU officers** - Elected as 1993-94 Arkansas Woman's Missionary Union officers were (right to left) president Marjorie Grober, a member of Immanuel Church of Little Rock; vice president Ina Miller, a member of First Church of Jonesboro; and recording secretary Donna Fine, a member of Immanuel Church of Fort Smith.



## Williamson encourages WMU members to 'make a difference'

Blending humor and candor, home missionary Dottie Williamson challenged Arkansas Woman's Missionary Union members to "do something for Jesus." Williamson, who ministers in multihousing communities in Jackson, Miss., spoke twice during the March 19-20 state WMU meeting in Texarkana.

Recalling her years as a child and youth when her mother prayed and encouraged her toward missions service, Williamson said she refused to heed her mother's advice.

"I never had an interest in missions because as a child all I ever heard about was mud huts and people I knew nothing about," she acknowledged. "I guess I was one of those good sponge members, never squeezing anything out."

After working as a secretary and then a schoolteacher, Williamson made a commitment at age 39 to serve as a youth minister. "I went to seminary looking for a preacher-husband," she remarked, "but found they all married piano players."

What she did discover is that "Christ certainly was not a sponge; He walked the roads. We must do the same and do something for Jesus wherever we are."

Following seminary, she was appointed as a home missionary by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, recalling that her mother finally was able to say, "Praise God, my prayers have been answered."

When she moved to Jackson, Williamson found 179 apartment complexes and designed a survey she sent to apartment managers, seeking their coop-

APR photo/Mills Gill



*"God has a mission field for you and I pray that you will hear His call," Dottie Williamson told state WMU members.*

eration in beginning ministry efforts there. Within a year, 39 managers have responded positively to the survey.

"Visitation is a vital ingredient in whatever we do," she emphasized. "Jesus said to 'go tell,' not for people to come and hear....Volunteers are needed in God's business. God has a mission field for you and I pray that you will hear His call."

During her second message of the conference, Williamson said Christians "can make four different decisions as to what they're going to do with their lives."

"The first decision they can make is to just keep on doing what they've always done—nothing," she remarked. "They just say, 'I'm a Christian,' or they can get all excited about working for Jesus and just work, work, work and take every job in the church and then just quit."

She said the third option is to "let people or things influence you to not do anything."

Williamson said the fourth option is to be "a continually committed Christian who has a burden inside to do something for Jesus. When the burden gets in your heart," she added, "it will not go away."

"What is your burden?" Williamson asked. "Do you have one? Where are you in the realm of Christianity? Are you willing to do missions?"

Pointing out that "America has over 175 million lost people," she said, "They're all around you. Can you try to reach just one?"

Williamson said every church should have four outreach teams: a visitation team, a telephone team, a letter-writing team and a prayer team that prays specifically for requests from the other teams.

"When we work together, we can get something done for Jesus," Williamson declared. "Do something for Jesus. Make a difference in the world."

The conference's closing message was delivered by Glendon Grober, Arkansas Baptist State Convention Brotherhood director. Describing characteristics of Mary, the mother of Jesus, he affirmed "her willingness to share what she knew about Jesus."

He noted Mary also is an example of silence, "seeming to know when she ought to hide things in her heart and when to share things with those around her."

Grober said Mary also demonstrated Scriptural knowledge and submission to God which reflected her willingness to respond in faith. Noting Mary's response to the angel, "Be it unto me according to thy word," Grober added, "That is the real springboard for 'Lord, lead me to act,' the theme of the conference session."

Emphasizing that "God does speak to us in His Word," Grober read several passages from the prayers of David in Psalms 42-72.

"The God we serve combines mercy with His power as we say, 'Lord, lead me to act,'" Grober declared. "I hope you realize what your godly heritage is in WMU. It is a wonderful, godly heritage from the Lord....God can use you to speak to the coming generation and His power can be known by every one of them."



*More than 500 people attended the 1993 Arkansas Woman's Missionary Union meeting held March 19-20 at Beech Street First Church in Texarkana.*

## 'Act on God's Word,' challenges Clendinning

Leading a series of Bible studies related to the conference theme, "Lead Me, Lord," Monte Clendinning taught from Psalm 119 during the recent state WMU meeting.

Clendinning, conference coordinator at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary's World Mission and Evangelism Center, urged participants to listen to God's Word, confront its truth, grow through His Word and act on it.

Emphasizing that "all Scripture is God-breathed," Clendinning challenged WMU members to open their eyes, ears and hearts to God's Word. "God has a plan to give us and a hope for the future," she added. "When we seek Him, He will find us and lead us in the plans He has for us."

During the conference's second session, Clendinning focused on confronting the truth of Scripture. "Our purpose in life is to praise God," she pointed out. "At one time in our lives we were lost but were saved because Christ died for us."

"It is imperative that we confront and follow the total Word, maturing in Christ, allowing His Spirit to lead us to reach out to all people, loving them as He would," she emphasized. "Let us come to His Word each day, asking Him to make us and mold us with His love."

Reading Psalm 119:11 and 105 during



Bible study leader Monte Clendinning

the Friday evening session, Clendinning noted, "Our goal in growing through His Word as Christians is to become like Jesus...One way in which we can grow through God's Word is by hiding God's Word in our hearts."

"When we hide God's Word in our heart," she continued, "it can come back to us when we need it."

Other suggestions for spiritual growth included making time every day for Bible study, keeping a record of personal Bible reading, turning to God's Word in times of trouble and sharing with others about discoveries in God's Word.

"Growth takes time," Clendinning cautioned. "You and I live in an instant world where we want everything immediately. Growth and maturity in the Lord take time."

"Why do we want to grow in the Lord?" she asked. "So that we can be complete and can be more usable by Christ."

Clendinning spoke from Psalm 119:129 during the conference's closing session. Noting that acting on God's Word is educationally sound and emotionally stirring, she said, "The educational process is not complete until we have exercised our volitional response."

Pointing out that "the Bible is filled with accounts of people who have obeyed God," Clendinning asked, "Have you ever felt God calling you and you say, 'Who me, Lord?'"

"God says, 'I will be with you.' What is your response? Are you ready to act on God's Word?...Keep in mind that the process is not complete until we respond and act on God's Word."

## Alexanders help personalize foreign missions

Max and Betty Alexander, Southern Baptist missionaries to Thailand since 1962, helped personalize world missions during the recent Arkansas Baptist Woman's Missionary Union annual meeting.

Alexander, who grew up in Jonesboro, recounted how "God gave me wonderful Christian parents as I was growing up." Despite their influence, he acknowledged, "I gave little regard to God's leading of me."

That changed, however, during his years as a Baptist Student Union member while attending the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville. "God began to lead me to some growth," he recalled. "As the Lord led, I listened more and more."

As Alexander prepared to finish college, "God began to speak to me and led me to enter the ministry." Although "missions was not a part of my agenda" as a pastor, Alexander began to sense God's specific call to foreign missions. Noting that he "had a lot of excuses," Alexander added, "By God's grace, I was willing to go" as a foreign missionary to Thailand.

Contrasting life in the United States and Thailand, Alexander said, "As Americans we have so many opportunities. There are so many openings that God gives to us to grow as Christians."

"This is not entirely true for Thai Christians," he continued. "They face, oftentimes, obstacles that are unheard of in many places in America." He said such obstacles include ostracism, persecution, lack of resources and the "baggage" of living in a nation that is 94 percent Buddhist.

"There are obstacles," Alexander reiterated, "but God opens

the way for Christian growth even in cases like this."

Concluding with a word of personal challenge, Alexander said, "With all the opportunities we have, shouldn't we avail ourselves more often of the ways that God is leading us to grow in our Christian life and to respond as He leads us in matters related to missions?"

During the conference's closing session, Mrs. Alexander described some of the ministry opportunities she had experienced during three decades of serving in Thailand.

"As I went to Thailand, I prayed, O God, show me where I am to plug into this society. It is so different," recalled Mrs. Alexander, a native of Walcott. "I said, O God, let me have the prayer of Paul; let me be all things to all people, especially the women and children, that I might be able to at least win some."

As her love grew for the Thai people, "God helped me to listen, to learn," she noted. As friendships gradually developed, "we began to win some of these ladies to Christ and to disciple them."

Echoing her husband's call for effective ministry in the U.S. as well as around the world, Mrs. Alexander urged Arkansas WMU members to "ask God to personally show you what you can do differently...We're going to have to find new, innovative ways to reach American people today."

"As you go today," she added, "be alert, be sensitive to reach out to others and be their friend and seek God's leadership in anything new He might want to show you."

## Trustees elect Al Mohler to head Southern Seminary

ATLANTA (BP/ABF)—R. Albert Mohler Jr., a 33-year-old conservative theologian and Baptist editor, was approved by trustees of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary March 26 as the seminary's next president.

Mohler, editor of Georgia Baptist's *Christian Index* newsjournal since 1989, received a 46-5 vote from seminary trustees during a special March 25-26 closed meeting at the Atlanta Airport Marriott hotel.

As successor to Roy L. Honeycutt, Mohler will become the seminary's ninth president since its 1859 founding.

Honeycutt, 66, Southern's president since 1982, has moved his retirement date from Dec. 31 to July 31, with Mohler to assume office Aug. 1, the start of the seminary's academic and financial year.

Mohler has earned two degrees from Southern, the master of divinity in 1983 and the doctor of philosophy, specializing in systematic theology, in 1989. He worked under Honeycutt as coordinator of foundation support from 1983-87 and director of capital funding from 1987-89.

During a brief news conference in Louisville hours after his election in Atlanta, Mohler was introduced to reporters by board chairman W. Wayne Allen, a suburban Memphis, Tenn., pastor who also chaired the trustee presidential search committee. He praised Mohler's Christian commitment, his love of the seminary and his intellect. "I think he's the most brilliant man I've ever met," he said.

When asked about criticism that the seminary community had been left out of the search committee's work, Allen said he would "plead guilty" to that charge. "This is a trustee responsibility solely," he explained.

Mohler told reporters, "The denomination is looking to Southern Seminary as a model institution for the future of the Southern Baptist Convention."

He said he and the trustees are committed "to see Southern Seminary take the lead in terms of the theological renewal which must come to this people of God" and in "accepting and meeting the incredible mission and ministry challenges God has given us at the threshold of a new century."



Mohler

Mohler described himself as an inerrantist, but said inerrancy "isn't the only word I would use of Scripture."

"I believe the Scripture is without error, ... but the most important thing to say of Scripture is that it is God's Word."

In response to questions, Mohler presented his views on a variety of subjects including:

- Women in ministry. He interprets Scripture as prohibiting women serving as pastors. Yet he affirmed their right to serve in other ministerial roles and enroll in any degree program at the seminary.

- Questions of prospective faculty. The trustees and the administration have a right to know where potential faculty members stand on abortion, homosexuality and other "issues of concern to the churches," he said.

- Academic freedom. The Abstract of Principles, the seminary's confessional statement, sets the parameters on theological matters, Mohler said.

When asked if any current faculty are in jeopardy of losing their jobs due to the change of administration, Mohler replied, "Every elected member of the faculty by signing the Abstract of Principles has indicated their commitment to it."

According to trustees, Mohler told the board some faculty members were teaching outside the parameters of the Abstract during his days as a student, which ended in 1990. However, he declined to discuss current personnel issues with the board at this point, the sources said.

Faculty found to be teaching outside the parameters of the Abstract will either recant those teachings or retire, the trustee sources said Mohler promised.

Allen cited Mohler's adherence to the Abstract as the reason five trustees voted against him. "I sensed some people were uncomfortable with his commitment to the Abstract of Principles," Allen explained.

Honeycutt, in a statement released after Mohler's election, said Mohler "brings to the presidency the fidelity of an alumnus, a limitless love for the seminary, an exceptional awareness of its heritage, the intellectual excellence of a distinguished doctorate in theology from Southern Seminary, a sensitivity to the changing patterns of denominational life and personal qualities necessary for effective relationships with friends who support the seminary."

In denominational life, Mohler chaired the SBC Committee on Resolutions in 1992 and was a member the previous year. He also has served on the SBC tellers committee and public affairs advisory committee.

## Baptists oppose Clinton's Vatican appointment

WASHINGTON (BP/ABF)—President Bill Clinton's decision to name Boston Mayor Raymond Flynn as the next U.S. ambassador to the Vatican has drawn sharp criticism from Baptist and civil-liberties organizations.

Flynn, an active Roman Catholic and a Democrat who opposes abortion, announced that he had accepted Clinton's offer to fill the post.

Richard Land, executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, said the CLC is "saddened and chagrined" by Clinton's decision—a decision made worse by Clinton's Baptist background.

"Such a decision by any president is bad, but coming from a Baptist president, it is even worse," Land noted.

Barry Lynn, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, said in a written statement his organization was "deeply disappointed" and called the policy an "entanglement between the institutions of church and state."

Both the Christian Life Commission and Americans United wrote Clinton in early December asking him to rescind the policy. The CLC, joined by the National Association of Evangelicals and three denominations, sent a Feb. 15 letter to the president reiterating the request.

The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs also expressed disagreement with Clinton's decision. The BJCPA earlier had said it chose to express its concerns "verbally and directly to White House officials," rather than through a joint letter.

"Such an appointment is a clear violation of the principle of church-state separation, a dangerous and divisive precedent of government meddling in church affairs, and the occasion for practical problems for all those engaged in the far-flung missionary venture in developing countries," said BJCPA executive director James Dunn in a written statement.

By appointing its fourth consecutive Catholic to the post, the government may be establishing, in essence, a religious test, AU's Lynn said.

"Article Six of the Constitution forbids any religious test for public office," Lynn said.

# Triune God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit

By Herschel H. Hobbs  
Special to the Arkansas Baptist



The Bible does not seek to prove the existence of God. It assumes that He is. "In the beginning God" (Gen. 1:1).

Also the Bible limits itself to two verses in specific reference to the atheist. "The fool

hath said in his heart: There is no God" (Psa. 14:1; 53:1). A fool is an unthinking person who does not reason out a matter to its logical conclusion. Even so, many years ago E.Y. Mullins pointed out that the fool said it in his heart, not in his mind. In his mind he knows there is a God. In his heart, the seat of the will, he wishes there were no God to whom he is responsible.

God is one (Deut. 6:4). But He reveals Himself as three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Thus we speak of the tri-unity of God. But the word "Trinity" does not appear in the Bible. It was first used by Tertullian in the second century to express a truth taught in the Bible.

The finite human mind cannot comprehend the mystery of the three-in-one Godhead. If we could understand God we could not worship Him. For our minds would be greater than He is. We accept by faith that which we cannot understand.

No human illustration can explain the Trinity. For my own satisfaction the nearest I can come to it is the relationship I bore to my wife. When she was living I was her husband, pastor and the father of her son. I was not three people but one person bearing three relationships to her. So God is one, bearing three relationships to us.

The triune God was active in creation (Gen. 1:1-2; John 1:3; Heb. 1:2). The same is true of redemption. The Father proposed it; the Son provided it; the Holy Spirit propagates it and makes it permanent in the life of every believer. In Romans 8:9 Paul calls the Holy Spirit the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ.

**God the Father:** God reigns supreme in His universe. The God of history, though not responsible for the evil of men and nations, works within the context of history to guide it toward the accomplishment of His full redemptive purpose. Fatherly in His nature, He longs to be the Father of all people. But He is Father in truth only to those who become His children through faith in His Son.

**God the Son:** God is Spirit. The natural eye cannot see a spiritual thing. Hence the incarnation of God as Jesus Christ of Nazareth, that we might behold the full revelation of God as Redeeming Love. Literally, "In the beginning always was the Word (Logos, Christ), and the Word always was equal with God, and the Word, always was God Himself" (John 1:1). "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

Note the change from the verb "to be" to "to become." The eternal Christ, yea, God Himself, became a flesh and blood man (something He had never been before). We say that Jesus of Nazareth was God. And so He was (John 10:30). But to me a more thrilling thought is that God became a flesh and blood man for me!

The purpose of the incarnation was that Jesus might show that God was "just" in His demands upon man and that He is the "justifier" of those who believe in Jesus (Rom. 3:26). Virgin born, Jesus was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin. He demonstrated that God is just in His condemnation of sin and lost sinners. Then He mounted the cross, paid the price for our sins, and was raised from the dead for our justification. Thus in Him God is the justifier of all who receive Him as Savior.

He is seated at the right hand of the Father, making intercession for us. He is reigning in His mediatorial kingdom. At the end of the age He will return to receive His own, followed by the final judgment.

In the meantime He is subduing all

things unto Himself. Ultimately He will present a subdued natural and spiritual universe to the Father, that God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) "may be all in all" (I Cor. 15:25-28).

**God the Holy Spirit:** The Holy Spirit is God's Spirit sent forth to do His work. In the Bible the Holy Spirit is always associated with power: natural, physical and spiritual.

The Holy Spirit was the conceiving agent in Jesus' virgin birth. At Jesus' baptism He anointed Him as the Messiah. Jesus worked in the power of the Spirit. The Scriptures record no miracle of Jesus until after His anointing by the Spirit. He went to the cross in the eternal Spirit (Heb. 9:14). He was raised from the dead by "the spirit of holiness (Holy Spirit)" (Rom. 1:4).

The Spirit convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgment. He effects the new birth of believers and indwells them. And He comforts, exhorts, encourages and guides believers. He equips believers with spiritual gifts through which to serve the Lord. And He administers the work of believers. In Acts every new development in the spread of Christianity was either at the command of or approved by the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit was and is active with regard to the Scriptures: revelation, inspiration, illumination and interpretation.

Any system of religion or theology which magnifies the Holy Spirit above Jesus is not of the Holy Spirit. For Jesus said, "He shall glorify me" (John 16:14).

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## Nine nations 'more Christian' than U.S.

PRINCETON, NJ (ABP)—While Christianity remains the primary religion of choice in the United States, residents of at least nine other nations claim a higher level of identification with Christianity.

However, Protestantism has its third-highest following in the U.S. among 19 countries surveyed by Gallup International last year.

The survey, reported in the latest newsletter of the Princeton Religion Research Center, measured religious preferences in the Americas, Western Europe and parts of Asia and Africa.

In the U.S., 82 percent of the population identify Christianity as their religious preference, the survey found. A detailed breakdown shows 56 percent of the population Protestants, 25 per-

cent Roman Catholics, 1 percent Orthodox, 2 percent Jews, 5 percent other faiths, 2 percent agnostics, 2 percent atheists and 7 percent with no preference.

Countries with a higher proportion of residents identifying with Christianity are the Philippines (97 percent), Bolivia (84 percent), Chile (89 percent), Mexico (93 percent), Denmark (88 percent), Finland (86 percent), West Germany (85 percent), Ireland (96 percent) and Portugal (87 percent).

Among the countries studied, India and Turkey stand out as nations having very few Christians. India's population is 90 percent Hindu and 4 percent Muslim. Turkey's population is 97 percent Muslim.

## Arkansas All Over

MILLIE GILL

## Staff changes

**Bill H. Lewis** has announced his retirement as director of missions for Harmony Association, effective June 1. In recognition of his more than eight years of service, the association has given him the month of May off with pay. Lewis also has served as pastor of North Main Church in Jonesboro, Central Church in Bald Knob and First Southern Church of Bryant, as well as serving churches in California. He will be available for limited revivals, interims and supply work. Lewis may be contacted at 406 Elaine Place, Bryant, AR 72022; phone 247-5155 or 534-1021 until June 1.



**Jerry Jones** was called March 7 to join the staff of Second Church in Hot Springs as minister of media. He will assume his position in June, coming there from Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Mo., where he is serving as assistant professor of telecommunications. In addition to his duties at SBU, he serves as the minister of media for Second Church, Springfield, Mo. He also has worked with the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission in Fort Worth, Texas. Jones and his wife, Melvina, have two children, Jason and Jarrett.

**Ken A. Dalton** will begin serving April 18 as pastor of Pulaski Heights Church in Little Rock, coming there from Highland Village First Church of Lewisville, Texas. A native of Texas, he is a graduate of Howard Payne University, Brownwood, Texas, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Dalton also has served as pastor of other Texas churches. He and his wife, Vanessa, have three children, Benjamin, Jennifer and Mikaela.

**Jeff Dial** is serving as pastor of Beech Grove Church, Paragould. He had been serving there as interim pastor.

**Phillip F. Miller** has joined the staff of Cullendale First Church in Camden as minister of youth and children. A graduate of Ouachita Baptist University, he had been serving as interim youth minister for Hillside Church in Camden. Miller and his

wife, Katrina Lynn, have a daughter, Alyssa Dawn.

**Randy Wilcox** has joined the staff of Second Church in Little Rock as part-time minister of married young adults. He previously was serving as associate pastor at Pinnacle Church. A former member of Second Church, he is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and serves as a claims adjuster for AllState Insurance. Wilcox is married to the former Christy Klutts. They have three children, Kaileigh, Kelsie and James.

**Larry Beatty** is serving as pastor of Saline Church, Hermitage. He previously was pastor of Bethel Church, Gould.

**Aaron Harvie** has joined the staff of First Church in Warren as children/youth intern. He is a student at Ouachita Baptist University.

**Shannon Hultt** is serving as youth director of Hermitage Church. A member of the church, she has been serving as church organist.

**Phillip Dunn** has joined the staff of First Church in Perryville as music/youth director. He was serving on the staff of First Church of Smackover.

**William Merritt** has resigned as pastor of Center Ridge Church. Merritt, who has served as pastor of Conway-Perry Associa-

tion churches for approximately 15 years, resigned because of health problems that have resulted from injuries received in an accident three years ago.

**Coy Sample** is serving as interim pastor of Central Church in Hot Springs. He has been serving as a Southern Baptist foreign missionary to Nigeria.

**Joe Hall** is serving as pastor of Baugh Chapel at Austin. He previously was pastor of Temple Church, Benton.

**Richard Roberts** is serving as pastor of Humphrey Church. He moved their from Manila where he was pastor of Westside Church.

**Stephen G. Hatfield** has announced his resignation as pastor of Baring Cross Church in North Little Rock, effective April 11. He and his wife, Marcie, and their five children, Mikel, Haley, Lindsey, Brooke and Grayson, will move to Lewisville, Texas, where he has accepted the call to serve as pastor of First Church, located in the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex.

**Jerry Neal** is serving as pastor of First Church of Leslie. He will be ordained to the ministry April 25 by the church. Neal is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Cheryle, and their four children, Jeff, Jay, John and Jana, moved to Leslie from Oklahoma.

## ARKANSAS BAPTIST STATE YOUTH CONVENTION

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visit will be just full of fun, and most of all, pleasant surprises!

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**Bryan and Kathy Cook** have joined the staff of Oakwood Church, North Little Rock, coming there from First Church of South Bend. He will serve as music director and she will serve as youth director. The Cooks have two children, Jacob and Kera.

## Church news

**Lakeshore Heights Church** in Hot Springs commissioned Elva Rhodes March 21 for service in Yemen. Rhodes, who has been the church secretary for more than four years, will be serving with the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's International Service Corps. Her two-year assignment is with the 80-bed Jibla Baptist Hospital as the patient accounts coordinator and ward clerk.

**Rogers First Church** set a record high in Sunday School attendance March 7. The attendance of 1,256 surpassed the previous high of 1,239 set in November 1979. Overnight youth parties and recognition of junior high and senior high school boys and girls basketball teams were used to encourage youth attendance, resulting in

250 youth present. Children were given kites in keeping with "High Flying Sunday," the theme for the day. Ben Rowell is pastor and Raleigh Lane is minister of education.

**Lakeshore Drive Church** in Little Rock celebrated homecoming March 28 with a noteburning service that marked the early retirement of indebtedness on a sanctuary renovation program. Fred Ball, newly installed pastor of the church, preached the morning worship service. A noon meal for members, former members and friends preceded the 1:30 p.m. noteburning in which former pastors and staff members, Ross Woodbury of Smackover, Jerry Wilcox of Trumann, Curtis Honts of Benton and Ed F. McDonald of Little Rock, participated.

**Beech Street First Church** in Texarkana held a two-day evangelistic crusade March 15-16 that resulted in 148 professions of faith and 22 other decisions. On Monday evening, 650 teenagers came out in pouring rain for a pizza blast and to hear evangelist Kelly Green's personal testimony. Approximately 150 decisions were made in that one service. "Beech Street First Church has never witnessed a move of

God of this proportion in its history," reported David Welch, pastor. He said that he attributed the results to two months of burdened prayer by young people in the church, followed by extensive personal invitation to their friends and classmates.

**Lakeside Church** of Hot Springs observed Care Week March 21-24 with a revival that resulted in 54 professions of faith, 30 rededications and one addition by statement. William Blackburn of Fort Smith was evangelist. The Jay McKay Family was music evangelists. Ronnie W. Rogers is pastor.

## Obituaries

**Wallace G. Cresswell** of Heber Springs died March 21 at age 61. He had served as pastor of Brownsville Church in Little Red River Association from 1976-1986. His funeral services were held at First Church of Heber Springs and memorials may be made to Tumbling Shoals Church building fund. Survivors are his wife, Lois A. Cresswell; two sons, Gary Cresswell and Dale Cresswell, both of Heber Springs; two daughters, Wanda James of Heber Springs and Wrenetta Ghent of Quitman; three brothers; three sisters; and seven grandchildren.

**John Chester Tipton** died March 20 at age 79. A retired Southern Baptist minister, he had served as pastor of churches in Liberty Association. Memorials may be made to the building fund of Second Church in El Dorado. Survivors are his wife, Doralee Burgess Tipton; two sons, John C. Tipton Jr. of Beaumont, Texas, and Jerry L. Tipton of Little Rock; two grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

**Charles Thomas Goodwin** died March 12 at age 64. He was a member of Rehobeth Church in Moorefield. Survivors are his wife, Shirley Goodwin; two sons; two daughters; nine grandchildren; two sisters; and one brother.

## Ordinations

**Clarendon First Church** ordained James Boston, Wichita Coleman and Carlton Self to the deacon ministry March 7.

**Valley Church** of Searcy recently licensed Blake Betts to the gospel ministry.

**Eastern Heights Chapel** of Van Buren ordained Jimmie Brown to the deacon ministry Feb. 7.

## Statewide

# DEACONS, PASTORS, AND WIVES RETREAT

May 7-8, 1993 • DeGray State Park

### Deacons & Pastors Conference

Led by  
**Bob Sheffield**

Consultant  
Growth Leadership Dept.,  
Baptist Sunday School Board  
Author,

*The Ministry of Baptist Deacons*

### Wives Conference

Led by

**Bonbara Sheffield**  
Author and Conference Leader  
Contributing Author,  
*Help, I'm a Deacon's wife*

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Begins Friday with supper at 8:00 pm and ends with lunch on Saturday

**Cost Per Couple: \$100**

Payable To: CLSD,

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(Includes three meals, lodging and conference materials)

**You must make your own room reservations by April 22, 1993.**

(Room cost must be paid to lodge, but will be deducted from \$100 conference fee.)

DeGray State Park Lodge:  
1-800-737-8355

**A block of rooms is being reserved through April 22.**

(Any remaining rooms will be made available to the general public after this date.)

## Ouachita Baptist University

**Performing Artists competition** – The OBU School of Music will host its annual Performing Artists Competition for high school juniors and seniors on Thursday, April 22 beginning at 3:30 p.m. Three divisions – keyboard, voice and instrumental – comprise the competition for which monetary prizes are given to the top three finishers. High school seniors desiring to pursue a degree in music at OBU may use the performance as their music scholarship audition. For more information, contact Charles W. Wright, OBU P.O. Box 3771, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001; phone 245-5129.

**Rankin wins Miss OBU title** – Beth Anne Rankin, a 22-year-old senior, was named as the new Miss OBU at the recent pageant held on campus. She is the daughter of David and Toni Rankin of Magnolia. Rankin will represent the school at the Miss Arkansas Pageant to be held June 23-26 in Hot Springs.

**Yearbook honored** – OBU's "Ouachitonian" yearbook has been named a 1993-94 National Marketing Sample Book by Walsworth Publishing Co. The sample books are showcased at promotional events as examples of the best yearbooks produced by the company's clients. The yearbook is edited by Rachael Ward, a

junior from Texarkana. Deborah Root is the yearbook faculty advisor.

**Ouachita music winners** – Three OBU music students received first place finalist position, while 10 others received high recognition for performances at the annual meeting of the Arkansas Chapter of the National Association of Teachers of Singing held recently at the University of Arkansas-Fayetteville. The three receiving finalist honors were: Leslie Tapson, a Cabot freshman; Jon Rushing, a Woodlawn junior; and Bryan Bolton, a Little Rock senior.

**OBU receives \$100,000 gift** – Ouachita has been named the recipient of a \$100,000 gift from the Roy and Christine Sturgis Charitable and Educational Trust of Malvern. The gift will be directed to enhance acquisitions for the Riley-Hickingbotham Library.

## Williams Baptist College

**WBC offers scholarship** – A dean's scholarship to high school students who excel in academic performance is being

offered by WBC. The scholarship's selection is based on the student's ACT score of 20-23, and a total grade point average of 3.00 on a 4.00 scale. The amount of the scholarship varies. For more information, contact the WBC Admissions Office, P.O. Box 3665, Walnut Ridge, AR 72476; phone 1-800-722-4434. Deadline for application is May 1.

**Pickett named distinguished alumnus** – Dr. Karen P. Pickett recently was honored as WBC's 1993 Distinguished Alumnus. Pickett, a 1974 WBC graduate, is a physician in family practice with the MarketPlace Medical Clinic in Little Rock.

**Lady Eagles win NCCAA** – The WBC Lady Eagles recently won first place in the National Christian College Athletic Association women's basketball tournament in Ann Arbor, Mich. Angela Adams, a senior and daughter of Bobby and Emma Adams of Trumann, was named the tournament's Most Valuable Player. The Lady Eagles coach, Carol Halford, was named Coach of the Year in the NCCAA.

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## Missionary Kathy Lloyd dies of cancer

HENDERSON, KY (BP)—Former missionary Kathy Lloyd, 37, died of liver cancer, March 24, at her home in Henderson, Ky.

Her death came two years after her first malignancy was detected and almost a year after Southern Baptists began a widespread prayer effort on her behalf.

She is survived by her husband, Skip, and two daughters, Heather, 14, and Kristin, 6.

On March 16 she gave her final missions speech at the Virginia Woman's Missionary Union annual convention. "She gave them a challenge,...who will go in my place," her husband said.

The Lloyds were missionaries to South Korea before her breast cancer forced them to return to the United States. Bone cancer came next, and most recently she was diagnosed with liver cancer.

## Baptists in Russia watch and wait

MOSCOW, RUSSIA (BP)—Baptists in Russia are staying neutral in a fight for control between President Boris Yeltsin and communist hardliners, according to Southern Baptist missionary George Lozuk.

"We're praying that the Lord will bring about the right thing for Russia, because the needs here are so great," said Lozuk, a veteran missionary. The American-born son of a native Russian, Lozuk transferred to Moscow with his wife, Veda Rae, two years ago to work with Russian Baptists and clear the way for other Southern Baptist personnel. Three other Southern Baptist missionary couples live in Moscow, and others live in St. Petersburg, Minsk and Kiev.

Russian Baptists "have been through many years of difficulties and hardships, and they're very tough and very hardened to this, and they don't get frustrated easily," Lozuk said. "They look at it and say we'll live through this difficult time, also."

As Russia's constitutional battle widened, the head of the powerful Russian Orthodox Church appealed to the nation's leaders to put aside personal and political

motives "for the sake of the people."

"This conflict is fraught with dangerous consequences which could ruin Russia," said Alexei II, patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church. The dispute has paralyzed the government and threatens to spread chaos throughout Russia and even beyond to other former Soviet republics.

Alexei II pleaded with the combatants to "give up their ambitions, overcome their inner motives and even sacrifice their political careers for the sake of the people," according to United Press International.

"Our people, who are at an historic crossroads, are experiencing much suffering," he stated. "Poverty, ethnic conflicts, crime, the plight of refugees and social tensions are making people's lives almost unbearable."

The statement, also signed by other Orthodox leaders, did not take sides in the struggle, but seemed to lean toward the reformers by calling for "a state which will not allow us to return to the past, to dictatorship and suppression of freedom. We need a form of state administration which will make it possible to solve key issues of the life and renewal of Russia."

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## Arkansans seek to help fund FMB projects

For the second time in three years, gifts to the annual Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions will fall to equal giving in the previous year, according to Foreign Mission Board projections.

The projections, which have proven extremely accurate in the past, indicate that receipts will total \$79.84 million which is \$4.2 million below the \$84 million goal and a \$1.5 million decrease from the previous year's offering. The area hit hardest by the shortfall will be capital needs such as new construction, equipment and mission vehicles, according to FMB interim president Don Kammerdiener.

FMB officials have sought to bridge the financial gap in recent years through regional development councils which fund specific overseas capital needs projects. Three Arkansas Baptist couples will host a

meeting April 20 in Little Rock to explore the possibility of establishing a regional development council in the state.

Jim and Jan Gattis, Roger and Libby Harrod and James and Jay Sawyer are serving as a coordinating committee to strengthen a foreign missions project fund established with the Arkansas Baptist Foundation. They have mailed 250 letters of invitation to the April 20 meeting which will be held at 7 p.m. at the Baptist Medical Center's Gilbreath Conference Center.

According to a monthly newsletter published by the FMB, "Regional development councils play an increasingly important role for the Foreign Mission Board." Organizers indicate the councils are designed as a supplement to Cooperative

Program and Lottie Moon gifts, not as competition.

"There are always a large number of projects that remain unfunded even after the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering," pointed out Roger Harrod, a member of Park Hill Church, North Little Rock. "We want to support projects identified by foreign missionaries in the field."

Harrod said the purpose of the meeting is to "enlist additional people to help fund a project that together we will choose." He said the fund was established through the Arkansas Baptist Foundation "to ensure that Arkansas people will have the final say on where the funds are utilized," adding that the April 20 meeting is open to all interested Arkansas Baptists.

### MK prayer calendar

Missionary kids attending college in Arkansas with birthdays in April:

4/19 - April Lee, sophomore from Japan, OBU Box 4527, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001.



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## Religious Freedom Act moves in House, snags in Senate

WASHINGTON (BP/ABP)—The Religious Freedom Restoration Act recently took a leap forward in the U.S. House of Representatives but met with delay in the Senate.

The Judiciary Committee's 35 members approved the bill unanimously March 24, sending it on to the full House. RFRA is likely to be considered on the House floor after the current congressional re-

cess, a committee staff person reported.

House committee members expressed enthusiasm and support for the legislation that would restore a high level of protection for religious practices. In 1990, the U.S. Supreme Court said that in most instances government no longer had to demonstrate a compelling interest, such as public health or safety, before it could restrict religious exercise.

"We cannot let the Smith decision further chip away at the freedom to exercise religious beliefs," said Rep. Don Edwards, D-Calif.

A vote by the Senate Judiciary Committee was scheduled for March 25, but it was delayed at the request of Attorney General Janet Reno. Although she has expressed support for RFRA, Reno asked for time to review the legislation in response to concerns raised by the Bureau of Prisons.

As a result, RFRA, which has widespread support in Congress and the endorsement of President Bill Clinton, was not passed before the recess. The next date for a Judiciary Committee vote appears to be April 22.

He does not "think the postponement is any cause for alarm," said Oliver S. Thomas, general counsel of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs and chairman of the nearly 60-member coalition supporting RFRA. It appears the delay by Senate sponsors was agreed to as a courtesy to Reno, he said.

"So, I think it means a delay, but I don't think it means anything more than that," Thomas said.



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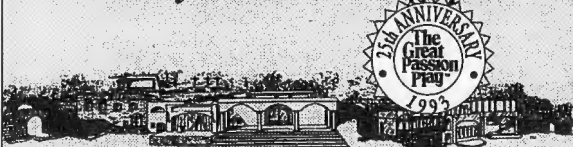


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**Baptist Medical Center seeks volunteers**

Baptist Medical Center and Baptist Rehabilitation Institute in Little Rock are seeking volunteers to participate in their '93 in '93' program. BMC/BRI volunteer coordinator Jim Gibbons noted the aim of the program is "to find 93 dependable, dedicated individuals who will volunteer on a regular basis at our hospitals in 1993."

Some volunteers may work directly with patients and their families in nursing units while others play behind-the-scenes roles as receptionists and clerical workers in such areas as personnel, medical records, the medical library and admissions. Volunteers wishing to work with children or rock babies may find their niche in the childcare department or on the pediatric unit. Others may wish to explore opportunities in the varied activities of the BRI

therapeutic recreation department.

Recruitment for the Junior Volunteer Program at Baptist Medical Center and Baptist Rehabilitation Institute also is under way. In order to be considered for participation, a young person must be 14 years old by June 1 or have been a volunteer in good standing during last summer's program.

Each prospective junior volunteer may pick up an application in the volunteer office on the first floor of Baptist Medical Center or call 227-2847 to request an application by mail. The deadline for applications is May 7 or whenever available positions are filled.

To learn more about the "93 in '93" program or the Junior Volunteer Program, call Gibbons at 227-2847.

**Reservations available for summer conferences**

NASHVILLE, TN (BSSB)—While some weeks have been filled, reservations are still being accepted for many conferences at Glorieta (N.M.) and Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist conference centers.

At Glorieta room reservations may be made for the following conferences: Summer Youth (June 5-11), Sunday School Leadership 1 (June 12-18), Discipleship and Family Development (July 3-9), Woman's Missionary Union (July 23-29), Home Missions (July 24-30), Jericho (July 31-Aug. 6), Bible/Preaching/Administration (Aug. 7-13), Student Ministry (Aug. 14-20) and Small Sunday School (Aug. 23-27).

At Ridgecrest, conferences for which room reservations are still being accepted include: Summer Youth (June 12-18), Home Missions (June 26/July 2), Jericho (July 3-9), Bible/Preaching/Administration (July 10-26), Sunday School Fast Track 2 (Aug. 10-14), Student Ministry (Aug. 14-20), Centrifuge (Aug. 14-20) and Woman's Missionary Union (Aug. 21-27).

RV and camping spaces are open for all conferences at both conference centers.

For more information, write Glorieta Baptist Conference Center, P.O. Box 8, Glorieta, NM 87535 or Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center, P.O. Box 128, Ridgecrest, NC 28770.

**Accepting** — resumes for minister of music and youth position. Send to Youth Search Committee, c/o First Baptist Church, 511 Church St., Pochontas, AR 72455.

**SBC Houston** — SuperSaver airfare: from Little Rock: \$143. (Sunday Afternoon/Thursday afternoon) Quality hotel packages: as low as \$160/person. Christian Travelers: 1-800-972-8952.

**Wanted** — Youth and activities director. Mountain Springs Baptist Church, located on Hwy. 5, 6 miles from Cabot. Send resume to Rt. 4 Box 193C, Cabot AR 72023; phone 843-4289.

**Pews Needed** — Need 16 pews that are 11 or 12 feet long at a reasonable price. Must be in excellent shape. Call 368-7345.

**Seeking** — First Baptist Church of Lebanon, Missouri, is seeking Minister of Youth and Education with seminary degree. Would prefer 5+ years experience. Send resume to: Search Committee, c/o First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1180, Lebanon, MO 65536.

**Church Furniture For Sale** — Pulpit, chairs, table, 8-foot pews (16). More. Oak. Excellent. \$4,200. 326-5520.

**BSU Van Wanted** — Van for BSU at Notre Dame University, South Bend, Indiana. Please call DOM Neal Stevens, 219-264-4012 or Doug Dieterly, 219-233-1171.

**Pastor Position** — A pastor is being sought for a newly-established 150 member church in Jacksonville, Arkansas. Prospective candidates should immediately submit a resume with cover letter and photo; taped sermon; and schedule of upcoming preaching appointments to: Pastoral Search Committee, c/o Gary D. Moore, RR 1, Box 21aa, England, AR 72046

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## Day camp, child care and RV sites available for SBC

HOUSTON (BP)—A number of changes will mark this year's SBC Missions Day Camp for children of messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention, June 15-17.

"Children attending this year's day camp will be able to visit two Houston attractions, the NASA Space Center Houston and the Houston Children's Museum," said Tim Seanon, SBC Missions Day Camp coordinator. "We wanted to let the children experience something unique to the SBC host city, and both of these attractions have been open less than one year."

Another change is pre-registration, which is being offered for the first time. To pre-register a child, parents should write SBC Missions Day Camp, Brotherhood Commission, 1548 Poplar Ave., Memphis, TN 38104, or call 901-272-2461. Parents will receive a registration packet. Pre-registration forms must be received by the Brotherhood Commission no later than May 1.

Parents or guardians of children who attended the 1992 day camp in Indianapolis will receive registration packets automatically.

Missions Day Camp is for boys and girls who will have completed grades 1-6 this year and whose parents are attending the annual SBC meeting. It is sponsored by the Children and Youth Division of the Brotherhood Commission, with assistance from Texas Baptist Men and the host association.

The cost for the day camp on Tuesday is \$19 per child, which includes admission to Space Center Houston, plus transportation, accident insurance, lunch, snacks, learning materials and a day camp T-shirt. The cost for Wednesday and Thursday is \$9 per day per child. A T-shirt purchase of \$5 is required for children attending day camp on Wednesday and Thursday only.

Missions Day Camp will be offered during all daytime sessions of the convention, Tuesday 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Wednesday 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m., and Thursday 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m., or earlier if the convention adjourns early.

Children in the seventh grade and older are eligible to serve as assistant counselors for the day camp. Contact Tim Seanon at the Brotherhood Commission by May 1.

### SBC child care

Registration for on-site child care for preschool children of out-of-town messengers to the 1993 Southern Baptist Convention is now being accepted.

Registration material is available by writing to SBC Preschool Child Care, Betty Herrington, 4300 W. Bellfort, Houston, TX 77035.

The material will include information about child care policies, hours of operation, fees and registration forms.

Child care registration will be confirmed on a first-come, first-served basis. Parents are urged to write for registration materials immediately.

### Campground facilities

Reservations are being accepted by the official campground for operators of recreational vehicles attending the June 15-17 SBC meeting in Houston.

Reservation requests, noting intention to attend the SBC, should be directed to Pine Shadows RV Park, 8080 S. Main, Houston, TX 77025; phone 713-664-4371.

The cost is \$17 per rig, plus \$1 for each person over two in an RV, per night.

Pine Shadows can handle RVs up to 40 feet in length. The RV park offers restrooms, shower and laundry facilities and phones, with restaurants, grocery stores and drugstores nearby.

SBC shuttle bus service will be available from Pine Shadows to the downtown George R. Brown Convention Center.

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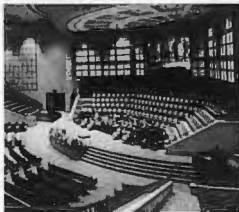
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## Convention Uniform

### Restored

By Floyd Lewis, pastor, First Church, El Dorado

Basic passage: John 21

Focal passage: John 21:15-17

Central truth: Jesus restored Peter to usefulness and we can do the same for others.

Have you ever refinished old furniture? I remember my wife's first project. She wanted me to see an old sideboard she had found in a junk shop. She said, "It's covered with layers of black paint but it's solid and it could be beautiful."

When we got to the shop, she asked, "Well what do you think?" There were no tires to kick, so I walked around it and replied, "It looks like a piece of junk to me." We discussed the matter a bit and she convinced me of the potential of the piece. We bought it and in the weeks after I watched beautiful hardwood peek through as the paint was removed. When it was finished, there set an exquisite walnut sideboard with a beveled mirror. My wife had seen potential where I could not, and restored the beauty which was marred.

In a sense that is what happened to Peter when Jesus spoke to him after his denial. Jesus restored him to usefulness. In John 21:3, we find that Peter decided to return to his former business of fishing. Several of the other disciples joined him. Jesus found them and spoke to Peter.

First Jesus asked, "Do you love Me more than these?" (v. 15), perhaps reminding Peter that he had boasted that he would stand by Christ though all others deserted Him. When Peter responded positively, Jesus said, "Feed my lambs." Jesus questioned Peter two more times and each time He told him to shepherd or feed the sheep.

According to verse 17, Peter was unsettled by the repeated questioning. Jesus had gotten Peter's attention. We miss a bit of the impact because English has only one word for love. This Greek text, however, uses two different words.

Twice Jesus asked Peter for sacrificial love which expects nothing (*agape*), then Jesus used a less elevated word for love, meaning brotherly love which expects mutual response (*philia*). Jesus seems to be saying, "Peter, you can't love me with the type of love you boasted of earlier, but you can still love. Stop fishing for fish. Even you who denied me can be restored and used in my work."

## Life and Work

### Empowered for witness

By David Moore, pastor, Immanuel Church, Pine Bluff

Basic passage: Acts 2:1-33

Focal passage: Acts 2:1-6, 8, 11b, 15-17, 32

Central truth: The Holy Spirit empowers us for witness.

The Pentecost experience is a marvelous phenomenon; but after all, the coming of the Holy Spirit in a permanent way should be a marvelous demonstration of power. The noise, the visuals and the manifestations all bear evidence that something extraordinary is happening in Acts 2!

We are not certain about the miracle of tongues in Acts 2, whether it is a miracle of hearing or a miracle of speaking. Yet we are certain about this — each person heard in his own dialect or language (v. 8). The "unknown tongue" of I Corinthians 12:14 is not to be found in Acts 2.

Rather there is an extraordinary endowment of power as the mighty acts of God were communicated to the people at Pentecost who came from all over the known world.

While others saw this power as a sign of abnormal behavior (and thus the appeal to drunkenness in v. 15), Peter is quick to tell them that this is the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy that the Holy Spirit would come. Peter then illustrates what he is preaching — namely, that he is a witness to this power.

Our study in Acts reveals the powerful witness of an early church. Many of us long for the day when Baptists will again recover the witnessing life.

We have the power for witness, because the Holy Spirit has come. He now lives in us. We have the opportunities for witness, because this is a world filled with lost souls. Over half of our state is lost, if statistics are any indication.

So what is the problem? Do we need to return to Pentecost and experience again the fresh breath of God's Spirit? Are we still back in Acts 1:8 waiting for the Spirit to come?

Well, He has come! He now lives in us and wants to empower us for witness. When we understand that truth, it takes the pressure off of us. We are not called to be successful or powerful in witness. God simply asks us to be faithful. His Spirit will provide the power if we will only provide the witness.

## Bible Book

### God's intervention

By Woodrow W. Dishongh, ABSC/HMB chaplain, Little Rock

Basic passage: Isaiah 71-12:16

Focal passage: Isaiah 71-2, 10-17; 9:2, 6-7

Central truth: God's intervention in a crisis demonstrates that God supports His faithful followers.

God is on His throne, He is master of the universe and His children constantly face crises. We need the assurance that God does intervene on our behalf.

Ahaz faced crisis in that he had a choice of an alliance with God or an alliance with Assyria. In a sense his behavior in crisis was a fatal mistake. Like Ahaz, we often make decisions that are irrevocable. Somewhere along the way all of us make decisions, the result of which is of vital importance. We need and can have God's guidance in these times of decision making. Through the prophet, God seeks to strengthen Ahaz's faith by giving him a sign and allowing him to name the sign.

Ahaz's rejection of God's offer gives evidence of his acceptance of the alliance with Assyria. At some moment in time we will be called on to decide for or against Christ and that decision will in all probability be irrevocable. The foretelling of the coming of the Messiah gave consolation for the present and assurance to the "House of David." The promised leader is described as "God with us." He is with us in that He gives His Spirit to every true believer and is with every believer until the end of the age. He is present with His church, strengthening it continually. God does equip leadership to accomplish His purpose. Isaiah warns of God's judgment. As judgment comes upon Israel and Syria, they will be forsaken by their kings. Somehow these thoughts help us to balance God's love and mercy with His justice. Israel's judgment was deserved and was a lesson for Judah. Assyria was God's instrument for punishment.

Though the tree of David may have fallen, the branch will come from the stump (I Samuel 17:12) in the person of the Messiah. He will reign and there will be a highway for the remnant coming out of Assyria just as there was a road coming out of Egypt. We have confidence that God's promises are for real. He judges and punishes, yet sustains and strengthens. God hears and answers prayer. He comes to us at the time of decision making.

## Convention Uniform

### *Satisfying your hunger*

By Floyd Lewis, pastor, First Church, El Dorado

Basic passage: John 6

Focal passage: John 6:26-35, 48-51, 53

Central truth: Spiritual hunger must be nurtured.

How often do you think about food? For starters, I think about food at least three times a day: breakfast time, lunch time, and supper time. But that's not the only time I think about food. When I drive past a bakery I think about cakes. When I drive past a Chinese restaurant I think about fried rice and when I drive past a Mexican restaurant I think about fajitas. Then if I watch any television commercials that show a close up of a sizzling steak, it can make my mouth water.

I guess I think about food quite a bit. Apparently I'm not the only one. The newspaper is filled with advertisements for weight loss programs, clinics and pills. The same newspaper advertises my favorite brand of ice cream. It's a conspiracy!

Now let me ask you a second question. How often do you think about spiritual food? To be sure, there's no media campaign which tells us to go out and look for spiritual food. If you're like me, you think more about physical food than spiritual food.

The same was true of the Galileans who saw Jesus multiply the fish and the loaves. They thought more about physical food than spiritual food. In fact, after the miracle they wanted to make Jesus a political king (v. 15). Apparently a king who could multiply free bread was just what they were looking for. When they finally found Jesus, He rebuked them for looking for Him for the wrong reason (v. 26). He suggested that they were primarily interested in Him because He had filled their bellies. They didn't understand that He had come to fill their souls.

In contrast, Jesus focused on spiritual hunger. He called Himself the "bread of life" (v. 35) and taught that He could satisfy the deepest of needs. These Galileans apparently were not aware of their deepest needs. They were locked into physical hunger. Jesus proclaimed that the physical bread they sought could sustain physical life, but not spiritual life (v. 49-51). The spiritual bread which Jesus brought was His own flesh given as a sacrifice. No spiritual life is possible for one who rejects this sacrifice.

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## Life and Work

### *Facing life's challenges*

By David Moore, pastor, Immanuel Church, Pine Bluff

Basic passage: Acts 3:2-16

Focal passage: Acts 3:2-16

Central truth: We face life's challenges in the power of the Spirit.

Peter and John meet a challenge in our passage. Our world, like theirs, is filled with challenges. These obstacles can trip us if we are not ready to face them in the power of God's Spirit.

The lame man made an obvious request from these apostles. He wanted some cash. It reminds me that we are taught that we do not know how to pray. We often do not even know what to ask for in prayer. That is why the Holy Spirit has to pray for us at times in groanings that are too deep for words. (Rom. 8:26)

Peter offers the lame man, not the silver and gold that he wanted, but the power to walk. God had bestowed on the early apostles the power to perform miraculous signs and wonders. This miracle would help to validate their message.

The miracle resulted in praise to God. Too often today the miracles that are performed (or alleged miracles) result in praise to the miracle worker. I often say that I believe in faith healing, but I am real suspicious of faith healers.

Peter was quick to give the credit and praise to God. He makes explicitly clear the fact that it was not by his own power that he could give a lame man the power to walk.

In the power of the Holy Spirit, Peter points to God the Father and His Son Jesus. He says in essence, "I did not do it - They did!"

Whenever we encounter challenges in life, we as Christians have a source of power to help us face those encounters. When we are able to do so, the danger is to take all the credit ourselves.

From a human standpoint, it is tempting to accept the praise of men. As a pastor, I have received accolades of men. But the real question is this - how often do I point to the source within me? How often do I point people to the One who gave me the ability to cope with and to face that challenge?

You may face a new challenge this very week. If you are clothed with your spiritual armor (Eph. 6:10-20), then you will be ready to face those obstacles. Don't forget to honor Jesus!

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## Bible Book

### *Against foreign nations*

By Woodrow W. Dishongh, ABSC/HMB chaplain, Little Rock

Basic passage: Isaiah 13:1-23:18

Focal passage: Isaiah 13:17; 14:1-4, 12-15, 24-27

Central truth: God's messages against foreign nations declare that God is sovereign over all nations.

Some 10 nations are mentioned in this section of the background material. Sometimes it is called the "Book of Foreign Prophecies" since it addresses their relationship to Judah and Israel.

God is at work in our world. He determines the destiny of our nation. God stirred up the Medes for the destruction of Babylon. The Medes' values were different from those of Babylon. The Medes were interested in revenge rather than wealth. Hopefully we will realize that God is concerned about the United States. As we respect God, He will respect us. Our destiny as a nation may be determined by our concerns for values greater than material things.

The focal passage describes the feeling of joy and relief that comes to Israel as a consequence of her release from Babylon. This applies to man's search for God. As each soul searches for God he experiences a period of conviction, possibly even anguish. This feeling of being bound by sin is relieved when God gives "rest from sorrow and fear" by removing us from the terror of the law with His grace leading us into the fullness of the gospel. This portrayal of Israel being brought to her port can possibly guide us to rely on God to somehow implement His plan for us and give us direction in our lives. In God's dealing with Israel we learn and are assured that God, who is in control, will humble those who are proud and will discipline those who are unruly or vile. The assurance that we have is based on God's purpose and character.

Isaiah 14:24-27 lets us know God's intentions and plans will stand. This gives us some assurance in our dependence upon God for salvation. We really can rely on God's promise for He keeps His Word. God's hand is truly the "outstretched" hand. The fall of the Assyrian and of Babylon do not stand alone for it is part of a scheme to embrace all nations. We are a part of "all nations" and may we pray for God's intervention in the difficult situation our world is experiencing.

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## NEWS DIGEST

### Baylor regents to move forward with Truett Seminary

WACO, TX (BP)—The Baylor University board of regents voted March 23 to move forward with plans to activate the George W. Truett Theological Seminary, perhaps as early as the fall of 1994.

The decision is contingent upon a further positive review of proposed funding and facilities at the May 21 regularly scheduled board meeting, according to Baylor president Herbert H. Reynolds.

The vote allows preparations to begin for the opening of the seminary. Enrollment will be limited to 50 students each year with a maximum enrollment of 150 after three years, Reynolds said.

The Baylor regents named Robert B. Sloan, the George W. Truett professor of evangelism at Baylor, as dean of the seminary. His responsibilities associated with the seminary will begin immediately but will not be full-time until the May board meeting.

### Baylor regents' unanimous vote cancels nude art class

WACO, TX (BP)—Bowling to a deluge of complaints from Texas Baptists, including a request from the state convention's executive board, Baylor University's board of regents voted unanimously March 19 to cancel a nude figure drawing class scheduled to be offered this fall.

The regents scrapped the class, previously approved by their academic affairs committee, after the university administration and public relations office and the offices of the Baptist General Convention of Texas and *Baptist Standard* received an avalanche of phone calls and letters in protest.

Michael E. Bishop, vice president for communications and marketing, announcing the regents' decision to cancel the class, said, "We have heard clearly the voices of Texas Baptists and many others, and we have canceled any plan to offer the proposed course.

"We appreciate the viewpoints that have been expressed concerning this course. Our first commitment is to a Christian ministry in higher education, and we are not going to permit a single course to divide us from our Baptist family."

### CLC trustees seek \$300,000 for D.C. site, honor Rogers

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission trustees voted unanimously to send a letter to the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee asking for the \$300,000 originally designated for an SBC building in Washington, D.C.

If the money is given to the CLC, trustees said they would probably use it for the down payment on an office building in Washington. The trustee action, during their recent semiannual meeting, calls for CLC trustee chairman Jim Richards of Baton Rouge, La., to write a letter to the Executive Committee requesting the money.

In presenting the recommendation, CLC trustee Liz Minnick of Austin, Texas, asked trustees to personally and individually communicate with Executive Committee members in their home states about the CLC's request.

The trustees also voted unanimously to award the CLC's 1993 Religious Liberty Award to Adrian Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis and a former SBC president.

### Pachecano elected president of Hispanic Baptist Seminary

SAN ANTONIO, TX (BP)—Omar H. Pachecano of El Paso, Texas, has been elected president of Hispanic Baptist Theological Seminary by the Baptist General Convention of Texas' State Missions Commission. He became president-elect April 1, succeeding Joshua Grijalva who retires May 31.

Pachecano, director of missions for the El Paso Baptist Association since 1988, has long been associated with Hispanic Seminary, having served on the school's board of trustees and as chairman of that board.

In denominational service he was twice president of the Mexican Baptist Convention of Texas, in 1972 and 1979; vice chairman of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board trustees; and currently is a trustee of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

### Stewardship Commission adopts budget reduction

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—The Southern Baptist Stewardship Commission adopted a \$2,097,429 budget for 1993-94, a decrease of \$268,623 from the current budget, at its annual meeting in Nashville March 18-19.

The reduced budget, 11 percent below 1992-93, follows several expense reductions announced earlier by the Stewardship Commission, including a reduction in staff of three people and salary cuts. Commissioners voted to delay the effective date of the layoffs until Dec. 31 instead of June 1.