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### October 2, 1997

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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# ARKANSAS BAPTIST



news magazine

SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL  
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Thousands of students across Arkansas and the nation gathered Sept. 17 for the 1997 "See You at the Pole" prayer emphasis. Dozens of students at Central High School in Little Rock met around their campus flagpole for prayer one week prior to the 40th anniversary commemoration of the school's historic role in racial integration.



# Teachers challenged to 'think outside the lines'

Curt Hodges

Special to the Arkansas Baptist

**W**OULD ENCOURAGE you to start thinking outside the lines," Bobby Boyles urged during the 1997 Arkansas Baptist Sunday School Convention held Sept. 19-20 at Central Church, Jonesboro.

Boyles, pastor of Eagle Heights Baptist Church in Moore, Okla., grew up in Pangburn and Searcy. Delivering the keynote address during the opening session of the conference, he emphasized that "Sunday School is super important to me. I was reached by a Baptist pastor on Sunday School outreach."

Noting that his congregation doesn't have Sunday School at the traditional time, he said Sunday School is held for two hours each Sunday evening. The first hour is reserved for Bible study, followed by a prayer time and outreach.

Sunday School at Eagle Heights is not held in the church facility, Boyles added, but in homes throughout the area. It's not traditional, he acknowledged, but "it's growing like crazy." He said more than 90 percent of the church enrollment is involved in Sunday School.

"That's because somebody is calling them and touching their life every week," he affirmed, adding that the majority of members also show up on Wednesday night.

## 'God has called you'

"My challenge to you tonight is God has called you to be a person who teaches the Word of God," Boyles declared. "You don't know who is out there in the projects, in that mobile home, in that house. You don't know who that person might turn out to be on that prospect card. But you must not become weary in well doing....It's a great calling."

During conferences on Friday evening and Saturday morning, participants had the opportunity to attend sessions ranging from "How to Effectively Teach the Bible" to "Off-the-Wall Outreach Ideas." Verlyn Bergen, leader of the church growth unit for the Missouri Baptist Convention, led a workshop on "How to Reach People in the 21st Century."

Noting that secularism - "the withdrawal of whole areas of life and thought from the church's influence" - is growing in America, Bergen cited figures showing that in 1952 only 6 percent of people surveyed reported no religious training in their background. In 1965 that figure had risen to 9 percent and by 1978 to 17 percent. "We can infer that by the turn of the century, a third of all people will have no religious training in their background," he pointed out.

The approach used in contacts with people who are secular is completely different from that used with people who have religious training or contact in their lives, he explained. He said that fact calls for a change in thinking.

"Somehow we get to thinking that the whole world looks like what we see every day," he said. Insisting that's not how life really is, he challenged the Sunday School leaders to "break the mold" and seek to find new ways of attracting unsaved people. "The rules are changing," he emphasized, and "a lot of us are having difficulty" with the changes.

The 21st century man "needs something he can tie his boat to" and it will be up to the church to provide that for him, Bergen declared. He urged Arkansas Baptist Sunday School workers to "be prepared to show (questioners) why the Bible makes sense. Let them see that it can work in the lives of people like themselves."

# ARKANSAS BAPTIST

news magazine



## Cover Story

### 'See You at the Pole'

Thousands of students gathered around school flagpoles across Arkansas and the nation Sept. 17 for the 1997 "See You at the Pole" prayer emphasis.

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# Gospel opposition

## Romanian mob forces Arkansas team to halt witnessing efforts

**A** VOLUNTEER mission team from an Arkansas Baptist association was driven from a Romanian village Sept. 21 by a mob led by a Romanian Orthodox priest.

The crowd threatened and shoved team members, who left the village when team leaders sensed the mob was becoming violent. One Romanian Baptist national was beaten by the crowd after the Arkansas team left.

When the incident occurred, the 11-member team from Faulkner County Association, along with an equal number of Romanian Baptists, was attempting to distribute copies of the gospel of John to villagers in a field located in Rusi, Dobrovat, in northeast Romania. It was Sunday, the second day that the group had been handing out the books, known as "the yellow book" to Romanians because of its color.

Ted Lindwall, a retired Southern Baptist missionary to Guatemala and volunteer with Church Starts International in Romania, said that as the team distributed the gospel and were preparing for a Bible-reading rally, "the village priest brought a crowd of some 40 supporters who shouted at the Baptists and threatened them if they did not leave immediately."

### Threat of violence

"The Baptists assured the priest that they were not there to speak badly about him or his church, but only to distribute the Bible," noted Lindwall. "When it became apparent that the crowd was becoming violent, the Baptist group gathered their equipment and left."

CSI president Bill Davis was among three CSI personnel leading the group at the time of the attack. "When we left Dobrovat in the midst of the shouting and jostling and threats by the priest's crowd, our team was shaken by this new kind of experience," he said.

Lindwall noted that following the expulsion of the mission team, a Romanian Baptist man "who lives in the village was beaten after the American-Romanian group left." The severity of his injuries was unknown.

Church Starts International is a volunteer organization based in Henrietta, Texas, which works in cooperation with the Southern Baptist International Mission Board and the Romanian Baptist Union. The group is credited with starting 80 churches in three years in the former communist country.

The Arkansas team was participating with CSI in a Sept. 17-30 crusade as part of a six-year missions partnership between the Arkansas Baptist State Convention and the European Baptist Convention.

The group included members from Happy Hollow Church in Vilonia, South Side Church in Damascus and Harlan Park, First and Zion

churches in Conway.

The team was witnessing and sharing the National Bible Reading Crusade, a CSI evangelism strategy that includes providing Romanians with copies of Scripture and encouraging them to read it.

Lindwall indicated that the persecution of the team and the attack on the Romanian may have been planned. "Earlier that Sunday morning, the priest was reported to have called on his congregation to move against the Baptists that afternoon. He reportedly said that he would burn down any house in the village where he found a copy of the yellow book given by the Baptists."

Despite the size of the mob, other villagers "were strongly divided as to whether they should support the priest or not," reported Lindwall, who characterized Romanians as "very hospitable by nature and their culture."

"The priest's actions caused great embarrassment to many in the village who failed to see that Bible distribution as a threat to the people," he added. "The fact that only some 40 people came to support the priest, out of a total population of several thousand, gives some indication of the true sentiments of the village."

Davis said the team conducted evangelistic work the next day in the capital of Iasi "in a great park and from apartment to apartment" while Faulkner County director of missions Lee Lawson returned to the site of the incident "to encourage the little Baptist congregation there."

"He found them in good spirits," said Davis, who noted that "the man who was beaten said he would go to speak to the priest and testify to him."

He emphasized that despite the unrest, many Romanians are cordial and continue to accept Christ as part of the group's efforts.

"In spite of the opposition by the priest and his crowd, we are finding that the overwhelming majority of Romanians receive us with great respect and interest," he remarked. "It is like the days of the Acts of the Apostles all over again."

In fact, added Lindwall, the priest's actions may have backfired on his intentions. "The priest's actions, more than anything else he could have done, have created great curiosity in the village about the yellow book and the message it contains."



Bill Davis (center), president of Church Starts International, witnesses to a group of Romanian women during a 1996 missions project. A similar ministry effort last month resulted in several Arkansas Baptist volunteers being threatened and shoved by a mob of villagers.

**“When we left Dobrovat in the midst of the shouting and jostling and threats by the priest's crowd, our team was shaken by this new kind of experience.”**

**BILL DAVIS**  
President, Church Starts International

## PERSPECTIVE

### A Pastor's Heart



**Emil Turner**

ABSC Executive Director

**W**ILEY SUGGS is not a well known name to Arkansas Baptists. Some of you may have known him, but not many would have. Mr. Suggs has been dead some time now. But this week he impacted all Arkansas Baptists.

We received a check from Mr. Suggs' estate. It was part of his will that a percentage of the sale price of a home he owned in San Antonio be given to state missions in Arkansas. This week the check arrived.

Mr. Suggs will help start new churches next year. He will help Arkansas Baptists cope with natural disasters that come their way. He will participate in lost people

being saved. He will help churches that struggle to reach and impact their communities.

I never met him. But I can see the impact of his life. Jesus said it was that way with the Spirit (John 3:8). God can use you, too, through your state missions offering. If you haven't given yet, join Wiley Suggs and change eternity.

■ Have you read *Renewing Your Church Through Vision and Planning*, edited by Marshall Shelley? (Bethany House, 1997). Thirty chapters of practical advice from church and business leaders make this a valuable resource. Excellent help for long-range planning and strategy groups.

#### Executive director's schedule:

Oct. 5-7 Revival, FBC, Bastrop, La.

Oct. 12 (p.m.) FBC, Decatur

Oct. 13 (a.m.) Northwest Association, pastors' conference

Oct. 14 (p.m.) Little River Association, annual meeting

Oct. 16 (p.m.) Central Association, annual meeting

Oct. 17 (p.m.) Big Creek Association, annual meeting

Nationally, literacy services reach only 10 percent of adult non-readers, which means 90 percent are still out there, waiting for someone to show they care.

I sat with a young mom one day for our first reading lesson as she shared with me, "I'm tired of pretending. I go into the doctor's office and say, 'I forgot my glasses. Can you fill these forms out for me?'" I tested her reading skills which were barely at a first grade level. I hurt for her, knowing she did not have the joy of teaching her child how to read. An astounding one-third of all children entering public schools have a parent who reads inadequately. Understandably, a child with functionally illiterate parents is twice as likely to grow up to be functionally illiterate.

I ask God to continually open my eyes to see beyond the painful embarrassment of illiteracy, that I might find one more person willing to stop pretending so that they might gain the life skill of reading. As I told my first student, "You had the courage to come. I am so proud of you." Sometimes I wonder, if we all worked together, how many people we could keep out of jail, how many we could help get off welfare, how many would be better moms and dads...how many would become Christians.

Pam Henderson serves as a literacy missions associate and teaches piano. She and her husband, Trennis, editor of the *Newsmagazine*, have two daughters, Emily and Audrey.

### quotes

**"Embrace the vision of a colorblind society....Each of us can seek and give forgiveness."**

— President Bill Clinton

**"Government can do some things, but only God can change people's hearts."**

— Gov. Mike Huckabee

**"I'd rather have a child overseas in God's will than have one next door out of God's will."**

— Sarah Haggard, missionary parent whose son, John, serves in Romania

### Woman's Viewpoint



**Pam Henderson**

First Church, Benton

**O**NE OF MY cherished memories as a mom has been when each of my girls "caught on" to reading. Trennis and I started reading to them as babies and then one day it finally made sense to them. The letters represent sounds which make certain words — like a mystery revealed. What joy! I don't know who was more excited, our girls or us.

I used to think that if you were an adult, you could read. But the hard, cold facts tell us that isn't true. One out of five American adults can't read well enough to fill out a job application or understand a medicine label. And worse yet, they can't even read the Bible. No looking up subjects in the Bible they wonder about. No devotional thought in scripture to encourage them throughout the day.

Several years ago, I became involved in our denomination's Adult Reading and Writing Ministry, one of the branches of Literacy Missions. The Bible is used in every tutoring lesson, providing a natural setting for introducing people to Jesus.

## ARKANSAS BAPTIST NEWSMAGAZINE

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# Should state convention messengers approve the proposed charter and bylaw changes, which would implement last year's reconciliation agreement between the Arkansas Baptist State Convention and Ouachita Baptist University?



## Yes

Bill Eliff

Pastor, First Church, Little Rock  
Trustee, Ouachita Baptist University

**T**HROUGH THE YEARS Southern Baptists have developed a unique methodology to accomplish their God-given task. This methodology, based on a biblical principle found in the early church, is that of "cooperative ministry." Simply put, autonomous Baptist churches with kindred theological convictions and ministry goals have chosen to cooperate in ministries bigger than themselves which are funded and directed by cooperating churches.

As opposed to other religious denominations, Southern Baptists don't operate from the "top down" but from the "bottom up" (i.e., a small denominational hierarchy doesn't tell the churches what to do - Baptist churches tell their convention agencies what to do). The system we have developed to make this operative is a series of annual convention meetings in which messengers from our churches give direction to the agencies they have developed and then select trustees who will direct these agencies between convention meetings. The trustees have the responsibility, first and foremost, to represent the wishes and desires of the cooperating churches which have selected them (the governing convention body) by carefully and faithfully giving oversight to the particular agency they serve.

It is for this reason that I support the implementation of the Ouachita reconciliation agreement and the corresponding bylaw and charter changes. I was personally saddened by the decision of the OBU board to become self-perpetuating. Why? Because it dramatically altered the proven method of cooperation that had existed for many years. It is unacceptable to Baptists to support with their funds something they have no opportunity to direct. Arkansas Baptists are proud of and grateful for Ouachita as evidenced by their generous support. We want to continue that support, but we find that difficult if we do not have the continued opportunity to give some measure of direction that will give us the confidence that Ouachita will remain true through the years to Baptist purpose and principle.

I support this agreement because it allows Arkansas Baptists to maintain this directing relationship and give confident support through the final selection of trustees. Yes, the nomination process will change. OBU's input regarding nominees, which has been given as a courtesy, will now be formalized into a process. But the final selection of the trustees will be determined on the floor of the convention annually. Arkansas Baptists can elect whoever they feel would best represent the wishes of the majority. This is as it should be.

Some fear that this agreement would set a precedent for all other Arkansas Baptist agencies. This is not so. We can do as we desire as a convention. This arrangement with OBU would be an exception caused by a particular set of circumstances. I would, personally, not support this plan being developed across the board for all our agencies.

I would encourage Arkansas Baptists to accept this reconciling agreement and the corresponding bylaw and charter changes. I would encourage Ouachita to trust that the Baptist people of Arkansas who have built her have the wisdom and ability to continue to direct her through trustee selection and oversight. I would encourage all of us to pray fervently that God would grant us direction and favor in this critical hour!



## No

Bill Hatfield

Pastor, First Church, Dierks  
Chairman, 1996 ABSC Nominating Committee

**T**HE PEOPLE IN THE PEWS of Arkansas Baptist churches deserve trustees whose ultimate loyalty is to them, not to the OBU administration. Under the proposed changes, it would be virtually impossible for men and women ever to be in the majority on the OBU board of trustees, who place the state convention's interests above those of the OBU administration.

Let me explain why, in the form of a *best-case* scenario. Assume with me that the convention president appoints people to the Nominating Committee who strongly support OBU, but who also place the state convention messengers' interests above those of the OBU administration. Assume further that everyone on the Nominating Committee is this kind of person.

Before the Nominating Committee has its first meeting, another group must meet. Half this group are members of the Nominating Committee, and the other half are current OBU trustees. The committee half will have in mind for nominees people like themselves. I am convinced that the half who are trustees will have people in mind who will place the interests of the OBU administration above those of the state convention. Note William Sutton's desire for "trustees with an *undivided* [italics added] loyalty to Ouachita," in the *Newsmagazine's* Oct. 31, 1996, issue. Consider also to whom last year's trustees were loyal when they changed OBU's charter.

When the group meets, these differences will surface quickly. Because the two sides' ultimate loyalties are different, neither will be satisfied with the other's choices. Neither will be in the majority. To avoid a deadlock, each will have to agree to give the other side, half the nominees.

Assuming the full Nominating Committee then approves them (if it does not, the committee/trustee group must meet and choose others), these nominees will be presented to the messengers at the state convention. It is theoretically possible that the messengers might choose to substitute others in place of some nominees. However, in practice this almost never happens. So these nominees, only half of whom will place the messengers' interests above the OBU administration's, will be selected as trustees. If this process went on for many years, trustees ultimately loyal to the messengers would be only half the board - not a majority. Therefore, the state convention would never actually govern OBU.

Please remember that this is a *best-case* scenario. In contrast, it is possible that messengers to the state convention might elect a president who unknowingly would appoint to the Nominating Committee, people who put the interests of the OBU administration above those of the messengers. It is also possible that these committee members might represent the committee in the joint group meeting with the trustees. If this were to happen, then to have even one-half would be impossible.

I encourage my fellow Arkansas Baptists to vote *against* these proposed changes to the charter and bylaws.

### POINT COUNTER POINT

# Central anniversary offers history lesson

## Clinton, Huckabee challenge nation to pursue equality

Trennis Henderson

Editor, Arkansas Baptist

**E**XACTLY 40 YEARS after the "Little Rock Nine" were escorted up the steps of Little Rock's Central High School by armed federal troops, the nine gathered at the same site Sept. 25 to commemorate four decades of public school integration. Rather than armed guards and jeering crowds, however, the nine were greeted by President Bill Clinton, Gov. Mike Huckabee and Little Rock mayor Jim Dailey.

Following speeches by Clinton, Huckabee, Little Rock Nine member Ernest Green and others, the nine former students again climbed the front steps of the historic school. This time the doors to the school were opened wide by the three political leaders amid cheers and applause from thousands of onlookers.

"What does what happened here 40 years ago mean today?" Clinton asked. "What does it tell us, most importantly, about our children's tomorrows?"

Noting that "we saw not one nation under God...but two Americas, divided and unequal," the former governor added, "What happened here changed the course of our country forever...The Little Rock Nine did not turn back. Forty years ago today, they climbed these steps, passed through this door and moved our nation. And for that, we must thank them."

Clinton emphasized that the nine black students "persevered. They endured. They prevailed. But it was at great cost to themselves." He said the nine "gave up their innocence so all good people could have a chance to live their dreams."

Insisting that "we really are all equal," the president affirmed that "we really do have the right to live in dignity. We really do have the right to be treated with respect. We do have the right to be heard."

Acknowledging there is still much to be done in the area of race relations, Clinton said, "After all the weary years and silent tears, after all the stony roads and bitter rides, the question of race is, in the end, still an affair of the heart.

"First, we must all reconcile," he declared. "Then we must all face the facts of today. And finally we must act...Each of us can seek and give forgiveness."

Although "segregation is no longer the



President Bill Clinton urged the nation to "embrace a colorblind society" during a Sept. 25 commemoration of the integration of Central High School in Little Rock 40 years ago.

law," Clinton voiced concern that "too often, separation is still the rule....Forty years later, we know there are still more doors to be opened," he insisted. "Will we stand as a shining example or a stunning rebuke to the world of tomorrow?"

Calling on all Americans to "embrace the vision of a colorblind society," he added, "We must be concerned not so much with the sins of our parents as with 'he success of our children - how they will live and live together in years to come.

"Let us resolve to stand on the shoulders of the Little Rock Nine and press on with confidence in the hard and noble work ahead," he concluded. "One America today, one America tomorrow, one America forever."

### A vision for the future

According to Central High principal Rudolph Howard, the Little Rock Nine will be remembered as "courageous students who threw the first punch in knocking down the wall of segregation." He told the honorees they have "given us a vision, a picture in our minds, of how the world can be."

Green, the first black student to graduate from Central High, was introduced by First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Invoking such names as Jackie Robinson, Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King Jr., Green said, "If I have learned anything in life, it is that this life is not about comfort levels." Although "the road we have chosen has been long and oft times lined with stones," he added, "We have tried to live honorably."

Citing attempts 40 years ago "to suffocate our spirits," he said, "Although the journey has not been without pain, it has been well worth it."

Affirming that "we come to confront the pain of the past, to celebrate the perseverance of some very courageous people and to continue the path to prosperity," Gov. Huckabee emphasized that racism "is not just a skin problem, it's a sin problem."

"We come to say once and for all that what happened here 40 years ago was simply wrong," he declared. "It was evil and we renounce it," he said of the three-week standoff prior to Central's forced integration.

Huckabee, a former president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, also voiced concern that "in many parts of the South it was the white churches that helped not only ignore the problems of racism, but in many cases actually fostered those feelings and sentiments." He called on "every church, every pulpit, every synagogue, every mosque in every part of Arkansas and the rest of the world to say never, never, never again will we be silent when people's rights are at stake."

Although "we've come a long way in 40 years...we're not home yet," Huckabee added. "We celebrate the progress, but now we must navigate the future.

"Government can do some things, but only God can change people's hearts," he declared. "Only God can give us the power to love each other and respect each other and share life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness with every American."

About 13,000 Arkansans gathered at the Riverfront Amphitheater Sept. 21 to hear a program of racial reconciliation that included gospel singer CeCe Winans (right) and speaker Evander Holyfield (below), world heavyweight boxing champion.



## Little Rock rally celebrates racial unity

Russell N. Dilday

Associate Editor, Arkansas Baptist

I THOUGHT it was pretty unique in that it let you realize what is important about that day 40 years ago," noted Shelly, 18, of North Little Rock. Shelly was one of thousands who attended a Racial Reconciliation Rally Sept. 21 at Riverfront Amphitheater in Little Rock.

The rally was held during the week of the 40th anniversary of the controversial integration of Little Rock schools. The city gained worldwide media attention in September 1957, when nine black students entered Little Rock's Central High School under the protection of federal troops.

"It made us realize that it doesn't matter what skin color you are," said Shelly's friend, Kim, who is black. "We're all equal. We put the division in there. There's just a little melanin (skin pigment) separating us."

The event featured nationally-known speakers and entertainers, including world heavyweight boxing champion Evander Holyfield, recording artists dc Talk and CeCe Winans and a pre-recorded message by evangelist Billy Graham.

Other featured guests included Gov. Mike Huckabee; Little Rock mayor Jim Dailey; former San Diego Charger free safety Miles McPherson; E. V. Hill, pastor of Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church in Los Angeles; and U.S. Senate chaplain Chris Halverson.

The rally drew an estimated 13,000

from the central Arkansas area and had an atmosphere that was part rock concert, part church service and part picnic.

E.V. Hill gave an evangelistic plea, telling participants that "mankind does not have to be saved. If you turn down what God has done in Jesus Christ, you can go to hell."

Alluding to the civil unrest and hate that was evident during the Central High crisis, Hill challenged the audience to "never let those events occur again," chanting, "Never again." The crowd picked up the chant in a deafening roar.

### 'Reason and righteousness'

Billy Graham joined the rally through a videotaped message. He recalled the "milestone based in history 40 years ago. As the whole world watched, love and reason and righteousness began to prevail," Graham noted.

He added, however, that "so much more remains to be done. Today, let us place another milestone....God stands ready to forgive us of our mistakes and sins because His Son Jesus Christ paid the penalty in our place.

"Today, let us take a step of faith in our hearts to commit ourselves to God and to make a new commitment to each other for the days ahead," Graham urged.

While many in the audience listened to the speakers, many of the teens and young adults were clearly there to hear Winans and dc Talk. Gospel singer Winans performed during the afternoon, while dc Talk performed as the event's

headline act later in the evening.

When dc Talk was introduced, younger audience members rushed the stage and stayed there throughout the pop-Christian trio's performance of favorites such as REM's "End of the World" and their own smash hit, "Just Between You and Me." The band also performed their new release, "Colored People," a musical comment on racism. The crowd responded most enthusiastically to the title song of their latest album, "Jesus Freak."

Rally participants also heard Evander Holyfield, world heavyweight boxing champion, who retained the title after a much-publicized fight against Mike Tyson — who forfeited the match after he bit off part of Holyfield's ear.

"Being a Christian and believing in Jesus, I know what reconciliation is all about," said Holyfield. "When you give your life to the Lord, to Jesus Christ because He has paid the price — that's what reconciliation is all about.

"Once you have Jesus within, you learn to love yourself, it is easy to love the person that's next to you," he added. "If Jesus forgave us, we should be able to forgive the people standing next to us.

"I like to talk about what forgiveness really is," he said. "I know a lot of people have seen the fight between Mike Tyson and myself and what you have to understand is that whole fight...had a lot to do with reconciliation. Just as Mike bit me on the ear, God (told me) the only right thing to do is forgive him."





# PREVIEW OF THE 1997 Arkansas Baptist State Convention

**November 4-5 • Park Hill Church, North Little Rock**

**November 4**

## Tuesday Morning

### The Church Abroad (Acts 1:4-8)

8:15	Pre-Session Music.....	Keyboard Ensemble Peggy Pearson, director
8:30	Congregational Singing.....	Rob Hewell
8:35	Scripture and Prayer.....	Cliff Springer
8:40	Call to Order.....	Rex M. Horne, Jr.
8:45	Welcome.....	Cary Heard
	Appointment of Committees.....	Rex Horne
	Enrollment of Messengers.....	L.H. McCollough
	Adoption of Order of Business.....	Steve Tucker
	Tellers Committee Instructions.....	S.D. Hacker
	Resolutions.....	Ken Startup
	Charter/Bylaws Report.....	David Napier
8:55	Announcements.....	Rex Horne
	Special Recognitions.....	Rex Horne
9:10	Congregational Singing.....	Rob Hewell
9:15	BIBLE STUDY.....	Kenneth S. Hemphill
9:45	New Arkansans.....	Emil Turner
9:50	European Partnership Report.....	Harry Black
10:00	State Missions Report.....	Jimmy Barrentine
10:15	Bold Mission Prayer Thrust.....	Dave Greenman
10:25	Congregational Singing.....	Rob Hewell
10:30	Arkansas Baptist Foundation Report.....	David Moore
10:40	Ouachita Baptist University Report.....	Ben Elrod
10:55	Congregational Singing.....	Rob Hewell
11:00	EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORT.....	Charles McAllister
11:20	Worship in Song.....	Focal Point Ladies Ensemble, First Church, Hot Springs
11:25	MESSAGE.....	Charles S. Kelley, Jr.
11:55	Benediction.....	David Hatfield

**November 4**

## Tuesday Afternoon

### The Church at Home (II Timothy 1:1-7)

1:15	Pre-Session Music.....	Master Singers Instrumentalists Glen Ennes, director
1:30	Congregational Singing.....	Barry Bates
1:35	Scripture and Prayer.....	Jerry Cothren
1:40	Worship in Song.....	Adam Langley
1:45	BIBLE STUDY.....	Charles S. Kelley, Jr.
2:15	Miscellaneous Business.....	Rex Horne
2:25	Cooperative Program Awards.....	Jimmie Sheffield
2:35	Convention Nominating Committee.....	Rodney Reeves
2:45	Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine.....	Trennis Henderson
2:55	150th Anniversary Committee Report.....	Eddie McCord
3:15	Children's Homes Report.....	David Perry
3:30	1998 Theme Interpretation - "Build the Church"	Jimmie Sheffield

3:40	Congregational Singing.....	Barry Bates
3:45	Worship in Song.....	Master Singers Women's Chorus Jean Pilcher, director Kenneth S. Hemphill
4:00	MESSAGE.....	Kenneth S. Hemphill
4:30	Benediction.....	Don Travis

**November 4**

## Tuesday Evening

### The Church in Worship (I Kings 8:54-61)

6:15	Pre-Session Music.....	Immanuel Choir and Orchestra Lynn Madden, director
6:25	Congregational Singing.....	Daniel Humble
6:30	Scripture and Prayer.....	Arliss Dickerson
6:35	Worship in Song.....	Immanuel Choir
6:45	PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.....	Rex M. Horne, Jr.
7:15	Congregational Singing.....	Daniel Humble
7:20	Williams Baptist Choir.....	Bob Magee
7:35	Williams Baptist College Report.....	Jerol Swaim
7:50	Congregational Singing.....	Daniel Humble
7:55	Worship in Song.....	Master Singers Men's Chorus Rob Hewell, director
8:10	MESSAGE.....	Emil Turner
8:40	Benediction.....	Philip Bowles

**November 5**

## Wednesday Morning

### The Church Challenged (Romans 12:15-21)

8:30	Pre-Session Music	
8:45	Congregational Singing.....	Doug Sanders
8:50	Scripture and Prayer.....	Don Phillips
8:55	CHARTER AND BYLAWS AMENDMENTS	David Napier
9:15	Congregational Singing.....	Doug Sanders
9:20	MESSAGE.....	Steven Arnold
9:50	1998 ABSO BUDGET.....	Chuck McAllister
10:10	ELECTION OF OFFICERS (President)	
10:20	Christian Civic Foundation Report.....	Larry Page
10:30	ELECTION OF OFFICERS (First Vice President)	
10:40	Southern Baptist Convention Report.....	William Merrell
10:50	ELECTION OF OFFICERS (Second Vice President)	
11:00	Congregational Singing.....	Doug Sanders
11:05	Worship in Song.....	Mark Powers
11:10	CONVENTION SERMON.....	David Miller
11:40	Resolutions.....	Kenneth Startup
12:00	Presentation of Officers Benediction by New President	

*Organist: Lynn Burton, Beech Street First Church, Texarkana  
Pianist: Steven Cole, Central Church, Pine Bluff*

# Speakers to highlight 'Build the Church'

**S**EMINARY PRESIDENTS Ken Hemphill and Charles "Chuck" Kelley will be among featured speakers during the 1997 Arkansas Baptist State Convention annual meeting. The two-day meeting, which will be held Nov. 4-5 at Park Hill Church in North Little Rock, will highlight the theme, "Build the Church."

Hemphill, president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary since 1994, will lead a Bible study during the convention's opening session on Tuesday morning. He also will preach during the Tuesday afternoon session.

Prior to serving as president, Hemphill was director of the Southern Baptist Center for Church Growth. He also has served as a pastor and staff member of churches in Virginia, Kentucky and North Carolina. He is a graduate of Wake Forest University, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and Cambridge University.

Kelley, who was elected last year as president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, previously was professor of evangelism and director of the seminary's Leavell Center for Evangelism & Church Growth. He will preach on Tuesday morning and lead a Bible study on Tuesday afternoon.

Kelley is a graduate of Baylor University and New Orleans Seminary. He has served as an evangelist as well as a pastor and assistant Baptist Student Union director in Texas.

Arkansans who are scheduled to speak during the ABSC annual meeting include state convention president Rex Horne, state convention executive director Emil Turner, Little Rock pastor Steven

Arnold and evangelist David Miller.

Horne and Turner will preach during the convention's Tuesday evening session. Horne, who is pastor of Immanuel Church in Little Rock, is serving his second term as state convention president. He is a graduate of Lyon College, Southwestern Seminary and New Orleans Seminary. He previously was pastor of churches in Louisiana, Oklahoma and Texas.

Turner has served as state convention executive director since January 1996. He previously was pastor of churches in Louisiana and Arkansas, including Mount Olive Church in Crossett. He is a graduate of Louisiana State University and New Orleans Seminary.

Arnold, pastor of St. Mark Church in Little Rock, will preach on Wednesday morning. A graduate of Philander Smith College, he previously was pastor of Pleasant Grove Church in Bald Knob and assistant pastor of St. Mark Church. He also has served as chaplain of the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff football team.

Miller, who was elected last year to deliver the 1997 convention sermon, will bring the final message during the Wednesday morning session. Describing his current ministry as "country preacher at-large," Miller is a former director of missions for Little Red River Association. He attended Southern (Williams) Baptist College and is a member of Tumbling Shoals Church in Heber Springs. He also has served as president of the Arkansas Baptist Pastors' Conference and as a trustee of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.



Ken Hemphill



Charles Kelley



Steven Arnold

## 1997 convention committees appointed

### Resolutions Committee

Ken Startup (chairman), professor  
Williams Baptist College  
Faron Rogers, pastor  
First Church, DeQueen  
Bruce Tippet, pastor  
First Church, Jonesboro  
Alan Greer, pastor  
Parkway Place Church, Little Rock  
Martha Dewbre, member  
Park Hill Church, North Little Rock

### Credentials Committee

L.H. McCollough (chairman), pastor  
Highway Church, North Little Rock  
Gayle Bone, pastor  
West Rock Church, Little Rock  
Ron Burks, pastor  
Elliott Church, Camden  
Robert W. McDaniel, pastor  
First Church, England  
David McLemore, pastor  
Second Church, Russellville

### Tellers Committee

S.D. Hacker (chairman),  
director of missions,  
Rocky Bayou Association, Franklin  
Noble Wiles, pastor,  
Guion Church, Mountain View  
Tom Williams, pastor  
Indians Springs Church, Bryant  
Gerald Nash, pastor  
Foothills Church, Mountain View  
R.B. Crotts, member  
First Church, Mountain Home  
Rudy Ring, pastor  
Walcott Church  
Wayne Kocourek, pastor  
Forest Tower Church, Hensley  
J.L. Weaver, pastor  
Martindale Church, Little Rock  
Jeff Noble, BSU director  
University of Arkansas, Monticello  
Mike Shields, pastor  
Batson Church, Alma  
Bryan Moery, member  
Wynne Church

John Gerlach, pastor  
Immanuel West Church, Little Rock  
Troy Gramling, pastor  
Southside Church, Paragould  
Brad Justice, pastor  
First Church, Hatfield  
Bert Thomas, pastor  
Valley Church, Searcy  
Bob Hopkins, member  
First Church, Fayetteville

### Order of Business Committee

Steve Tucker, minister of education  
First Church, Bentonville  
Robert Young, minister of music  
Second Church, Hot Springs  
Wes George, pastor  
Wynne Church

### Parliamentarian

Monty G. Murry, attorney  
Texarkana

# Arkansas Baptists nominated for service

## ABSC Executive Board

### Terms to expire in 2000:

Arkansas Valley.....	*J. Fulton Amonette, pastor, Clarendon
Big Creek.....	*Tom Garner, layperson, Glencoe
Calvary.....	Bill Williams, layperson, Searcy
Carey.....	*James Morgan, pastor, Camden
Central.....	*H. Lacy Landers, layperson, Benton
Central.....	Dewey Rushin, layperson, Hot Springs
Clear Creek.....	*Larry Horne, pastor, Van Buren
Concord.....	*Robert Kraus, layperson, Fort Smith
Conway-Perry.....	*Bill Brown, pastor, Morrilton
Harmony.....	*J.R. DeBusk, pastor, Pine Bluff
Harmony.....	Ray Edmonson, pastor, Pine Bluff
Independence.....	*Jackie Fendley, pastor, Mountain View
Liberty.....	Lynn Bradley, layperson, Smackover
Little Red River.....	John Evans Jr., pastor, Greers Ferry
Mississippi.....	Jim Ingram, pastor, Osceola
Mount Zion.....	*Tommy Snyder, pastor, Jonesboro
Mount Zion.....	Ron White, layperson, Jonesboro
North Arkansas.....	Nolan Brisco, layperson, Harrison
North Pulaski.....	*Scott Hinton, pastor, Sherwood
Northwest.....	George O'Neel, pastor, Bella Vista
Pulaski.....	*Ed Simpson, pastor, Little Rock

Pulaski.....	Jim Lagrone, pastor, Bryant
Red River.....	Maurice Hitt, DOM, Arkadelphia
Red River.....	*James Guthrie, pastor, Gurdon
Rocky Bayou.....	*Doyle Robertson, pastor, Melbourne
Southwest.....	*Scott Neathery, pastor, Hope
Tri-County.....	*Eugene Ray, DOM, Wynne
Trinity.....	*Don Neal, layperson, Harrisburg
Washington-Madison.....	*Cliff Jenkins, pastor, Springdale
White River.....	*Steve Martin, pastor, Flippin
District 2.....	*Helen Parman, layperson, Batesville
District 3.....	Audrey Waddell, layperson, Jonesboro
District 4.....	Teresa Greene, layperson, London

### Terms to expire in 1999:

Arkansas River Valley.....	Rick Balentine, pastor, Ola
Delta.....	Jody Gannaway, pastor, Dermott
Liberty.....	Larry Wilson, pastor, Camden
Tri-County.....	Ray Dean Davis, pastor, Wynne
Southwest.....	Allen Peebles, pastor, Mandeville

### Terms to expire in 1998:

Black River.....	Steve Corder, layperson, Walnut Ridge
Greene.....	Kim Bridges, pastor, Marmaduke
Independence.....	Mike Manning, pastor, Batesville
North Arkansas.....	Bill Griffith, pastor, Green Forest

## Baptist Children's Homes

### Terms to expire in 2000:

*Larry Thomas, Atkins
Dee Marshall, Texarkana
*Travis Stephenson, Wilmar
Ancil Lee, Conway
Scott Roussel, Searcy
*Robert Lever, Fort Smith
Term to expire in 1999:
Worth Camp, El Dorado

## Arkansas Baptist Foundation

### Terms to expire in 2000:

Wendell Van Es, Russellville
Phillip Fincher, Springdale
*James Barber, Lake City
Ron Echols, Arkadelphia
Allen Smith, Little Rock

## Historical Commission

### Terms to expire in 2000:

*A.K. Mansell, Heber Springs, District 2
H.E. Williams, Walnut Ridge, District 3
*Jack Bledsoe, Fordyce, District 8

## Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

### Terms to expire in 2000:

Rick Hyde, Malvern, District 5
*Erby Burgess, Glenwood, District 7
Sue Lady, Jonesboro, District 3
*Michael Petty, Hot Springs, Member at Large

\*Ken Shaddox, Fordyce,  
Member at Large

### Term to expire in 1998:

Fran Coulter, Mountain Home,  
Member at Large

## Baptist Memorial Health Care System, Memphis

### Terms to expire in 2000:

*Tommy Cunningham, McGehee
Bob Harrison, Jonesboro
*Marilyn Simmons, Little Rock

## BSU Advisory Committee

### Terms to expire in 2000:

*Mike McCarley, Gentry, District 1
*Mark Sadler, Jonesboro, District 3
*Tom McCone, Booneville, District 4
*A. Mark Vaughn, Brinkley, District 6
*Linda Bond, Lake Village, District 8
*James Griffin, Hope, Member at Large

## Ouachita Baptist University

### Terms to expire in 2000:

*Augusta Boatwright, Alma
Clarence Anthony, Murfreesboro
Rex M. Horne Jr., Little Rock
Elizabeth Pruet, El Dorado
*John E. Miller, Melbourne
Don Moore, Little Rock
Jerol Hampton, Booneville
Johnny Jackson, Little Rock

## Williams Baptist College

### Terms to expire in 2000:

Mark Cooper, Mountain Home
Joann H. Goatcher, Clinton
*Donald S. Moseley, Sherwood
*Speedy Shoemaker, Osceola
Theresa Kimberling, Little Rock
*Hugh Allen Quimby, Warren
*Norman Lewis, Sherwood
*Duaine Blackmore, Foreman
Term to expire in 1999:
Daniel Humble, Brinkley

## Charter and Bylaws Committee

### Terms to expire in 2000:

Christopher Lawson, Little Rock
Sam Roberts, Walnut Ridge

## Convention Program

### Term to expire in 2000:

Randy Maxwell, Crossett

## 2002 Convention

Date: Oct. 29-30, 2002

Place: First Church, Cabot

## 1998 Convention Preacher

Preacher: Rodney Reeves, pastor,  
Central Church, Jonesboro  
Alternate: Leroy Wagner, pastor,  
Pearcy Church

\*denotes second term of service

# 1997 Executive Board recommendations

## Recommendation No. 1 Celebrate Jesus 2000

**PROPOSAL:** To designate Celebrate Jesus 2000 as a major emphasis of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention through the end of the year 2000.

**PURPOSE:** Celebrate Jesus 2000 is a strategy to pray for and share Christ with every lost person in Arkansas by the end of the year 2000. In 1976 the Southern Baptist Convention voted to take the gospel to every person on earth by the end of the year 2000. In 1978 the Arkansas Baptist State Convention voted to adopt the goals and vision of Bold Mission Thrust. Celebrate Jesus 2000 gives us a track on which to run to fulfill our commitment in Arkansas.

**GOAL:** All Southern Baptist churches and associations will plan their calendars around four evangelistic priorities by the end of the year 2000.

1. Prayer
2. Personal Witness
3. Proclamation
4. Preservation

**STRATEGY:** **TIME LINE**  
**I. PRAYER** 1997-2000

For Laborers  
For Lost

**II. PERSONAL WITNESS** 1998

Saturation is the Key  
People Sharing Jesus  
How To Share the Gospel  
Without an Argument  
One Day Soul Winning Workshop  
Continuous Witness Training

## Recommendation No. 5 1998 Budget

### I. Causes

1. Administration.....	\$315,527
2. Business Services.....	132,522
3. Accounting.....	198,969
4. Computer Services.....	147,168
5. Annuity.....	24,763
6. Baptist Student Union.....	798,318
7. Brotherhood.....	144,700
8. Church Music.....	197,366
9. Cooperative Ministries with National Baptists.....	66,758
10. Discipleship Training.....	150,215
11. Evangelism.....	283,810
12. Ministry of Crisis Support.....	122,003
13. Missions.....	520,261
14. Church Leadership Support.....	123,482
15. Stewardship.....	101,570
16. Sunday School.....	311,265
17. Woman's Missionary Union.....	288,089
18. Media Services.....	75,587
19. Arkansas Baptist Assembly.....	207,858

<b>III. PROCLAMATION</b> 1999	
Revivals	
Area Crusades	
Special Evangelistic Events	
<b>IV. PRESERVATION</b> 2000	
Follow-Up	

## Recommendation No. 2 1998 Arkansas Awakening "Build the Church" Projects

The Executive Board recommends the approval of the 1998 Arkansas Awakening Projects.

In 1998 the Arkansas Awakening emphasis is "Build the Church." There are seven priority projects that highlight the emphasis:

- "Body Building"
- Super Summer Arkansas
- State Evangelism Conference
- Saturation Evangelism
- Psalm 100 Celebration
- Children in Crisis Conference
- Ethnic Church Leadership Conference

## Recommendation No. 3 ABSC Study Related to Executive Board Ministries

### MISSION STATEMENT:

The Executive Board Ministries of the ABSC exist to assist individual churches and associations to accomplish their biblical mission.

### VISION STATEMENT:

We seek to impact individual churches and associations by providing

the highest quality people, services and information that will enable our churches to evangelize the lost, start new work, worship God, develop believers and minister to people.

■ Additional information about core values, structure and implementation is available in the Jan. 9, 1997, and April 3, 1997, issues of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*.

## Recommendation No. 4 ABSC Study Related to Institutions and Agencies

### GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. We recommend that the Nominating Committee shall nominate trustees who will support the agencies and institutions with their time, talent and resources. These nominees shall be informed of the obligations and liabilities of trustee service prior to their election by the convention.

2. We recommend that the funding for the agencies and institutions continue to be determined by the convention budget process.

3. We recommend that the ABSC Inter-Agency Council meet up to three times a year to discuss items of mutual concern.

4. Because the heart of the ABSC is to win lost people to Christ, we encourage the trustees of each agency and institution to maintain this evangelistic heartbeat in their stewardship.

20. Camp Paron — Operating.....	61,769
21. Camp Paron Improvement Fund.....	15,345
22. Expanded Church Annuity Plan.....	401,913
23. Baptist Student Union — Buildings.....	144,400
24. Convention.....	137,657
25. Historical Commission.....	10,750
26. Non-Department Programs and Other Causes.....	730,567
27. Printing Services.....	52,343
28. Salary Increase Reserve.....	120,956
<b>TOTAL EXECUTIVE BOARD PROGRAMS.....</b>	<b>\$5,879,932</b>

29. Children's Homes and Family Ministries.....	467,517
30. Arkansas Baptist Foundation.....	273,690
31. <i>Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine</i> .....	233,684
32. Ouachita Baptist University.....	2,539,893
33. Williams Baptist College.....	764,981
34. Ministerial Scholarship Fund.....	137,100
<b>TOTAL STATE PROGRAMS.....</b>	<b>\$10,296,796</b>

**II. Southern Baptist Convention.....** \$7,386,179

**TOTAL BUDGET.....** \$ 17,682,975

# ABSC auxiliary meetings scheduled for Nov. 3

**M**ESSENGERS AND GUESTS attending the 1997 Arkansas Baptist State Convention annual meeting will have the opportunity to attend any of three related meetings scheduled for Nov. 3. The Arkansas Baptist Pastors' Conference, Ministers' Wives Conference and annual meeting of the Arkansas Baptist Religious Educators Association all will be held at Park Hill Church in North Little Rock, site of the ABSC annual meeting.

## Pastors' Conference

Arkansas Baptist pastors will focus on "Heralding the Baptist Faith and Message" during this year's Pastors' Conference, said conference president Ben Rowell. "It will be a time of strengthening our faith in our Baptist doctrines," he noted.

Rowell, pastor of First Church in Rogers, said he assigned the majority of the conference speakers "a subject out of The Baptist Faith and Message."

Included in the doctrinal-based speaking lineup are: "God's Purpose of Grace" by Bill Brown, pastor of First Church in Morrilton; "The Church" by ABSC executive director Emil Turner; "Baptism/Lord's Supper" by Jim

Richards, director of missions for Northwest Association; "The Scriptures" by James Merritt, pastor of First Baptist Church in Snellville, Ga.; "Evangelism" by Chuck Kelley, president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary; and "Last Things," also by Merritt.

In addition to doctrinal sermons, Robert Pitman, pastor of Kirbywood Baptist Church in Memphis, will address "The Joy of the Pastorate."

Special music during the conference will include a performance by the Adoration Trio from Bentonville.

The morning session is scheduled to begin at 9 a.m. and conclude at noon. The afternoon session will begin at 2 p.m. and conclude at 4:20 p.m. "to allow participants to attend the Rapha banquet," Rowell noted. The evening session will begin at 6:45 p.m. and conclude at 9 p.m.

There is no cost for the conference, although a love offering is generally taken to defray expenses. For more information contact Rowell at 501-636-3541.

## Ministers' Wives

"It's About Time" is the theme for the Ministers' Wives Conference, said Nancy Greer, president of the Ministers' Wives Association. "We selected this theme

because of the limited time we have for the great time demands that are pulling at us," she explained.

Greer was assisted in coordinating the conference by MWA vice president Holly Elliff and secretary Terry Guerra.

Greer noted that keynote speaker Karla Worley of Nashville, Tenn., will share with members "ways to not add more to their days but how to prioritize those things that are in it, doing the things God has called them to do."

Don Bingham, administrator of the Arkansas Governor's Mansion, will speak at the noon luncheon, sharing "20-20" ideas - 20 minute preparations for \$20 holiday parties.

The cost for the conference, which begins with registration at 9:30 a.m. and concludes at 2:30 p.m., is \$8 per person and includes a luncheon. To register, send registration fees to Terry Guerra, P.O. Box 25, Carlisle, AR 72024.

## Religious Educators

Religious educators, church musicians and other church staff members will focus on "Equal Footing: Perspectives on Ministry" during the ABREA annual meeting.

Peggy Pearson, ABREA secretary/treasurer, said the program will include the unveiling of a plan by the organization to "divide into regions, with two coordinators per region" to better meet members' needs.

Other program highlights will include a roundtable discussion about "Different Feet on Common Ground," a business meeting and a banquet.

"The banquet program will focus on laughter," said Pearson, who emphasized that the banquet is open to all convention participants. The banquet will feature comedian Chonda Pierce addressing the topic, "Ministering to the Minister's Family."

The program will begin at 1 p.m. and conclude after a series of 4 p.m. roundtable conferences. The banquet will begin at 5:30 p.m.

There is no cost for the meeting, but there is a \$9 banquet cost that is included in members' \$15 per person annual ABREA dues. The group also has initiated \$10 per person dues (\$9 banquet fee included) for college and seminary students, who also are invited to attend.

For more information about the meeting or banquet or to register by Oct. 27, contact Pearson at the ABSC church music ministries office toll-free at 1-800-838-ABSC or in Little Rock at 376-4791, ext. 5121.

## Baptist-related institutions schedule alumni meetings

### ■ Midwestern Seminary

Noon, Nov. 4  
Olive Garden, 2943 Lakewood  
Village Drive, North Little Rock  
Dutch Treat  
For reservations contact Roland  
Reitz by Oct. 22, P.O. Box  
119 Midland, AR 72945-0119;  
phone 501-639-2185

### ■ New Orleans Seminary

Noon, Nov. 4  
Highway Church, 5845 Roundtop  
Drive, North Little Rock  
Speaker: Chuck Kelley, president,  
New Orleans Seminary  
Tickets: \$5, for reservations, contact  
Highway Church, phone  
501-945-2687  
Transportation: Vans will be  
available from Park Hill Church

### ■ Southern Seminary

9 p.m. reception, Nov. 4  
Holiday Inn North, 27th and Main,  
North Little Rock

Host: Marsha Ellis Smith, associate  
vice president for academic  
administration, Southern Seminary  
Guests: Alumni and friends  
No reservations necessary  
There will be no noon luncheon

### ■ Southwestern Seminary

Noon, Nov. 4  
Park Hill Church, 201 E. C Street,  
North Little Rock  
Speaker: Ken Hemphill, president,  
Southwestern Seminary  
Tickets: \$10, for reservations,  
contact Bill Harris  
14322 Highway 107, Jacksonville,  
AR 72076; phone 501-835-2644

### ■ Ouachita Baptist University

5 p.m., Nov. 4  
Fellowship dinner  
Central Church, 5200 Fairway,  
North Little Rock  
Tickets: \$6 each, available at OBU  
convention booth  
Phil Hardin, coordinator

## Free child care available during ABSC, meetings

**C**HILD CARE for preschool-age children will be available Nov. 3-5 at Park Hill Church in North Little Rock during the Arkansas Baptist State Convention annual meeting and related meetings, but participants must pre-register their children by Oct. 27.

Child care will be made available Monday during the Ministers' Wives Conference, from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Participants must provide a sack lunch for each child.

Pastors' Conference participants may leave their preschool children Monday during any two of the three conference sessions: 9 a.m. to noon, 2 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. and 6:45 to 9 p.m. No meals will be served and no child care will be provided between sessions.

Child care also will be provided during the Arkansas Baptist Religious Educators Association meeting on Monday from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

During the convention's Tuesday ses-

sions, child care will be provided to messengers and their families during any two of the three sessions: 8:15 to noon, 1:15 to 4:40 p.m. and 6:15 to 8:45 p.m.

Child care will be available during the Wednesday morning session, from 8:30 a.m. to noon.

There is no cost for child care. No meals will be served during any of the convention sessions and no child care will be provided between sessions.

Dale Sykes, minister of childhood education for Park Hill, said the church is "glad to provide this service to those who need it."

All pre-registrations must be made through Park Hill Church. To pre-register, complete the reservation form below and send it to: Dale Sykes, Park Hill Baptist Church, 201 East "C" St., North Little Rock, AR 72116; phone 501-753-3413 or by fax 771-2978.

Sykes noted that because child care is first-come, first-served, "it is important for people to send in that form, because we do have limited space," adding that "participants will receive information following their acceptance."

The deadline for child care reservations is Oct. 27.

## Messengers invited to submit resolutions early

**R**ESOLUTIONS committee chairman Kenneth Startup, academic dean at Williams Baptist College, invites Arkansas Baptist messengers with proposed resolutions to send them to the committee for early review.

Anyone desiring to present a resolution to the committee should mail a copy of the proposed resolution to Startup by Oct. 20. He requested that each resolution be no longer than one page of typed copy. Proposed resolutions should be mailed to Startup at P.O. Box 3663, Williams Baptist College, Walnut Ridge, AR 72476.

Proposed resolutions may also be presented on the floor of the convention at the appropriate times during regular business sessions.

Churches which elect qualified messengers for the Nov. 4-5 annual meeting may obtain the appropriate number of messenger registration cards from their associational director of missions' office.

## PRE-REGISTRATION FOR PRESCHOOL CHILD CARE

Arkansas Baptist State Convention • Pastors' Conference and Ministers' Wives Conference • ABREA  
November 3-5, 1997 • Park Hill Baptist Church, North Little Rock

Preschool child care will be offered to messengers and their families during the annual meeting of the Pastors' Conference, Ministers' Wives' Conference and the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. Pre-registration for preschoolers, infants through five-year-olds, is necessary to provide quality care with a planned program. No child care will be provided for school-age children at any session.

Please complete the registration form below and mail immediately. The reservation deadline is October 27. Space is limited.

Note: Children of parents attending sessions of the Pastors' Conference and the convention need to be picked up during the breaks for meals.

Preschool child care will only be provided during the sessions listed below.

Child's Name _____	Birth Date _____
Child's Name _____	Birth Date _____
Parent's Name _____	Home Phone _____
Address _____	City _____ ZIP _____

### PLEASE CHECK SESSIONS NEEDED:

Arkansas Baptist Religious Educators Association • Monday, Nov. 3  1:00 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Ministers' Wives Conference • Monday, Nov. 3  9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. (Bring sack lunch)

Pastors' Conference • Monday Nov. 3 (You may choose two sessions.)

9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon  2:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.  6:45 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

State Convention • Tuesday, Nov. 4 (You may choose two sessions.)

8:15 a.m. to 12:00 noon  1:15 p.m. to 4:40 p.m.  6:15 p.m. to 8:45 p.m.

State Convention • Wednesday, Nov. 5  8:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Mail to: Dale Sykes  
Park Hill Baptist Church  
201 East "C" St.  
North Little Rock, AR 72116  
501-753-3413



## Witness a miracle

Despite obstacles, The Witness delivers vibrant gospel drama near Hot Springs

**T**HE WITNESS wasn't supposed to have a 1997 season. For the past 12 years the production, staged with the work of 200 volunteers from 44 Hot Springs-area churches, was performed at an amphitheater west of the city. Last winter the amphitheater underwent an ownership change and The Witness was left without a home...

**Russell N. Dilday**

Associate Editor, Arkansas Baptist

But the story of the life of Christ, told from the perspective of the Apostle Peter and a cast of 100, is now showing at a new amphitheater at Panther Valley Ranch, a guest ranch east of Hot Springs, in what many have referred to as its "miracle season."

The miracle began when Panther Valley owners Roger and Jerri Stange, who heard about the struggle to find a new location, offered the production a home. Stange, who also is a mechanical engineer, offered to supervise a small army of volunteers who went to work to carve an outdoor theater out of a hillside on the ranch.

The volunteers required just over two months to turn the wooded hill into an amphitheater that will seat 1,400 people. The first performance was given Aug. 25 and the season will run through October.

Marketing director Pat Reed said the

move to the new location "definitely was from God. It was about three months before the production when we drove out here and looked around at the quiet place and the Christian people here. We knew this was our home.

"To open on the 25th of August, we had people out here working hard in the heat," Reed said. "Men and women, First Baptist and Second Baptist, worked side-by-side."

"It's amazing how many came in and volunteered," said public relations director Jim Young. "Churches from all over came in to help in some form or fashion. Whether it was construction, tearing down stuff, putting up stuff or painting, they wanted to help."

Music director Judy McEarl said that during the construction, several area Baptists were part of the work teams, including "the youth from Hot Springs Baptist. They came out here with their youth pastor and planted a flower bed that was about 52 miles long," she joked.

With a 15-year history of performances in Hot Springs, The Witness annually attracts thousands for its entertaining and inspiring shows. More than 150,000 people have attended productions over the years.

Like the work crew members who helped build the new facilities, the cast and production crew "are here because they are hand-picked by God," McEarl noted. "You can see that. There are seven ladies who sing Virgin Mary's part. There are five different guys singing Judas. I see them back there praying for each other. They come with a heart for the ministry."

Marc Bremer, a member of Second Church, is one of three actors and soloists who play the starring role of Peter. He's been active in the role for nine years.

"I grew up here in Hot Springs," he said, "and when we first moved back here I went to see this. I was moved by the power of the drama, the realism of it and the impact of the whole story in one setting. I had been to the Passion Play before and it's wonderful, but it's a different feel. That captures the spectacular history of it, but this is much more personal, more emotionally touching."

Bremer noted that his part "is a big-time commitment. There are three of us guys that have shared this part over a nine-year period of time, so it's not too much for one person doing it every Friday and Saturday night through the end of October. That's a huge commitment, especially for one with a family of four."

He admitted that the lead role has changed his life "in several ways. One of the first ones is that it gave me the perfect outlet for the singing ministry that I know God gave me.

"I studied music at Ouachita and intended to be a minister of music," he related. "I did that for a couple of years, but began to realize that for me, solo singing is my call.

"I got into secular work, but now I'm back in my hometown singing twice a weekend to 1,200-1,500 people every weekend, and doing it all for the Lord Jesus Christ," Bremer said. "What could be better than that?"

While the role of Peter is high-profile, he said, he and other cast members aren't out for notoriety. "None of the cast get the glory. There's no printed program. Most people don't know who we are and won't know. This is under the Lord and that's going to be a reward in heaven because I'm not being lifted up here.

The "toughest part" of the role, according to Bremer, "is twofold. It is the combination of the physical challenge of an hour-an-a-half of aerobic stuff at 90 degrees, doing the music, the narration



all at once, but the spiritual aspect, too.

"We are giving the pure gospel—every bit of the narration is paraphrased Scripture. We are speaking the Word of God—there's a spiritual warfare that goes on," he said. "The struggles of many of the members have been great over the years...yet God has been victorious."

Devotion such as Bremer's leads to "longevity among cast members and crew," said Reed, who has been involved since the production's inception. "They do it for so long because not only is it fun, but it is a ministry."

Many of The Witness' Baptist crew and cast agree with Bremer and Reed. First Church member Travis Gates is one of five actors who play James. "I've done it for seven years because God said, 'Hey, do it,'" he noted.

While Gates has given much of his life to The Witness, he affirmed that the production in turn "has absolutely and positively changed my life."

"First, I met my wife, Sherille, here," he explained. "Second, it sounds kinda weird, but I found another part of the Baptist faith and heritage here that I had never experienced. I had gone to Sunday School and Training Union and had honed in on knowing the Word, but had never experienced the feelings and emotions that came along with Christianity."

Gates said that although the character of James "is more of a comic role, it does have its serious side to it. I sing a song

that talks about how Christ is a servant—'Please, Lord Make Me Just Like You.' That's a very simple but very powerful statement and it's one that once I sing it, it comes home not only to the audience but to me as well. It has touched me many times singing it or hearing it."

There is nothing comic, however, about the role played by Gates' father, Tom—a Roman centurion who delivers a realistic beating to the actor who portrays Jesus.

Is it mentally or spiritually tough playing the heavy in that setting? "Oh no. No, no, no," Tom Gates emphasized. "I'm plowing the garden and planting the seed—even if it takes playing the bad guy."

"That's how I look at it," he commented. "You have to have somebody that's got to be the bad guy to plant the seed."

Peter comes back and waters it and nourishes it along."

He admitted that whipping the actor portraying Jesus "was tough at first. I had to take that and put it behind me for the last six years. When you have the audience crying when you are coming by them, you know you are doing what God wants you to do."

Stage director Tanni Braughton said that like the Gates family, "we've had up to four generations involved in The Witness. One of the things that attracts people to volunteer is that there is something for

everybody to do. It's a good experience for the whole family. You don't always see ministry opportunities for the whole family."

While it is good to look at the impact on the lives of the performers, said McEarl, it is more important to look at the impact The Witness makes on the secular community. "On opening night, there was a group that came out that were Oriental. They had an interpreter and one of the older ladies tracked down one of our cast members after the performance and prayed with them and gave her life to the Lord right here on the stage."

"We're not wanting to do anything not done properly, but if the Holy Spirit moves, we go with that," she said. "We do not have an altar call because we don't believe that is what the Lord has called us to do. When the Word of the Lord is planted, the Holy Spirit is fully capable of using it after that."

"This is a ministry, but the Lord uses us in the tourist-attraction arena because that is another way He infiltrates society," she said. "There's a lot of people we're not going to get into the churches. If we can get them out here where they can hear the anointed Word of God, we know people are affected by that."

"They come away from here saying, 'I gave my life to the Lord tonight,' 'My relationship with the Lord has been strengthened,' or 'I feel like I can go back to my husband,'" she recalled. "We've had many testimonies like that and that is what we are here to do."

**The Witness is performed Fridays and Saturdays at sunset (approximately 8:30 p.m.) through October.**

**Tickets are \$10 for adult box seats; \$9 for adult general admission; \$8 for senior citizens, and \$4.50 for children 12 and younger.**

**For information or tickets call 501-623-9781 or write Witness Productions, P.O. Box 6434, Hot Springs, AR 71902.**

## Actor who portrays 'Peter' identifies with real apostle

**M**ANY CHRISTIANS would recognize the biblical Apostle Peter as a brash, impetuous character. But do those traits of Peter have anything in common with Marc Bremer, who portrays the apostle in *The Witness*?

Hopefully not, said Bremer, a member of Second Church in Hot Springs. "Thanks to the Lord, I'm 41 now, and I think the Lord has mellowed those things a lot and turned what was once a weakness into a strength in the areas of being an emotional, high-strung type-A kind of person."

"God has worked on that," he

acknowledged. "But I can certainly identify with all of the emotional struggles Peter went through in his life: He was totally committed to Jesus, but when the 'whys' didn't have good answers for him, it shook everything up."

"My favorite line in Peter's life is, 'Well, if we don't serve You, what are we going to do?'" Bremer said. "There was no alternative, even if the Lord never rose from the dead. Of course, He did and that faith was there and it was worth it."

"That's the contrast between Peter and Judas in this: Judas goes ahead and kill himself. Both betrayed the Lord, but Peter hung in there based on the blessed hope of Jesus Christ."





# people & places

COMPILED BY MILLIE GILL

## CHURCH LIFE

**Central Church of Bald Knob** will conclude the observance of its centennial year Oct. 4-5 with activities which begin on Saturday evening when the Ouachita Sounds of Ouachita Baptist University will be in concert at the church. Also performing will be the Bald Knob Beat, the Bald Knob High School show choir. A barbecue meal will precede the concert. Sunday events begin at 9:45 a.m. with special music, recognition of guests and remarks from former pastors. Former pastor Jim Box will preach during the worship hour which will be followed by a potluck noon meal and the dedication of a new building, located on 20 acres on Center Street. The opening of the cornerstone from the former building on Elm Street will conclude the celebration. The church began centennial activities in August with evangelistic assemblies which emphasized Sunday School and church growth. Pastor Claude Gibbs and centennial committee chairman Molly Kircher and committee members Susan Gordon and Evelyn Everett coordinated the special programs.

**Rehobath Church** of Moorefield will observe its 171st anniversary Oct. 5 with a worship service, dinner and "all-day singing." Pastor Billy Williamson said former pastors, members and guests will be special guests.

**Hermitage Church** will observe its 150th anniversary Oct. 5 with an 11 a.m. worship service, followed by a noon meal. Afternoon activities will include special music presented by the King's Messengers of Jena, La. Former pastors and former members will be special guests.

**Union Avenue Church** of Wynne recently ordained Hilman Davis and James Moore to the ministry.

## TRANSITIONS

**Brian Skinkle** has joined the staff of First Church of Cherokee Village as associate pastor for music and youth, coming there from First Church of Hampton. He also has served churches in Texas. Skinkle and his wife, Susan, have two children, Sarah and Steven.

**Travis Roberts** retired Aug. 31 as pastor of Martinville Church of Hamburg. Roberts, who was a pastor of churches in Ashley County Association for 17 years, previously served Second Church of Crossett, Eden Church of Hamburg

and Corinth Church of Wilmar. Roberts, who will be available to serve as a supply preacher or interim pastor, may be contacted at 870-364-2015 or 870-866-4548.

**Ray Ratcliff**, pastor of Greater Emmanuel Church in Hot Springs, was ordained to the ministry Sept. 21 in a service led by Central Association director of missions Tim Reddin and Eddie Jones Sr., black church planter strategist for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. Ratcliff has served as pastor of Greater Emmanuel since the new work was started in 1995.

## MILESTONES

**Ron and Betty Williamson** were recently honored by Spradling Church of Fort Smith in recognition of his 15 years of ministry as pastor. They were presented with a trip to the Holy Land by deacons of the church and a love offering by the congregation.

**Blanche Wood** was presented with a plaque Sept. 7 by First Church of Pine Bluff in recognition of 47 years of service as a children's Sunday School teacher.

**Maggie Sue Goodwin** was recently recognized by First Church of Marion for 50 consecutive years of service as church treasurer. The surprise recognition for Goodwin, a retired school administrator, included a framed church resolution of appreciation and an album of personal letters from individual church members, presented by pastor Mark Baber and church trustee Herbert Carter.

**Lona Moncrief** was named "Teacher Emeritus" Sept. 14 by Woodson Church in recognition of her service to the church, and as a charter member who was instrumental in launching the church as a mission in 1938.

**Wanna Coward** of Fort Smith was recently recognized when Fort Smith mayor Ray Baker proclaimed Sept. 12 as Wanna Coward Day in recognition of 25 years of ministry as secretary of Concord Association. Coward, a member of Grand Avenue Church in Fort Smith, has served four directors of missions.

## OBITUARIES

**Lily Joan "Grannie" Cranford** of New Edinburg died Sept. 5 in Ouachita Hospital in Camden at age 75. She was a member of Southside Church of Fordyce. Survivors include her husband, Fred Cranford; two sons; two daughters; two brothers; and one sister.



Arkansas Baptists' Church in a Day team, led by chairman Bob Fluharty of Little Rock and coordinator Ronnie O'Neal of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention's Brotherhood department, traveled to Perryville Sept. 5-6 to construct a new church facility for Second Church. The team, assisted by several Texas volunteers, built a 5,440-square-foot facility that will house an auditorium with a seating capacity of 200, classrooms, a fellowship hall, kitchen and nursery. Gifts for the building program have been provided by church members, friends, the ABCS missions department and a Texas foundation. Jim Haggard is interim pastor for the church which has been meeting for 15 months in a tailgrounds building.

## Williams to build new men's dorm

**A**N UPSURGE in enrollment and three major financial gifts have led to plans for a new men's residence hall at Williams Baptist College. Williams president Jerol Swain reported that the board of trustees has approved the \$850,000 project, with construction to begin within two months.

Swain noted three gifts that spurred the college to proceed with the construction. Mr. and Mrs. Moscoe Cash of Harrison gave \$212,000 toward the project and Mr. and Mrs. Bill Jessen of Hot Springs Village pledged \$50,000. An anonymous donor gave an additional \$50,000.

Tom Jones, vice president for institutional advancement, said the gifts were crucial to the project. "The donors have enabled Williams to make this kind of progress. The generosity of these three families makes it possible for many more students to get a high-quality, Christian education at WBC."

The proposed dormitory will house 64 students and is planned for completion before the start of the 1998-99 academic year. The building will adjoin Wilson Hall, also a men's dormitory, on its west side.

Swain emphasized that the gifts came at a needed time in the school's growth. "We have reached capacity in men's housing and we want our students to know that relief is on the way."

Enrollment jumped 20 percent this fall, with the resident student population reflecting a 24 percent increase.

"Williams has reached the stage where the vast majority of students are full-time students seeking a bachelor's degree," Swain said. "That means more and more will be living on campus and we have to accommodate them."

The Williams board of trustees voted to approve the plans Sept. 12, reported Swain. "They realize, as we all do, that Williams is entering some great days. The trustees showed a lot of foresight and we are grateful to them."

The college also has added several new faculty and staff to meet increasing growth demands. Summer-Lee Sales was named chairman of WBC's business administration department and Todd Ewing will be teaching history.

Eric and Barbara Turner have joined the college's administrative staff. Turner is serving as director of annual giving and Mrs. Turner is serving as an admissions counselor and scholarship coordinator.

Stephen Bell has been named coach of WBC's soccer team. He also serves as a basketball assistant coach.

**A national conference on fasting and prayer**, to be held at the Dallas-Fort Worth Airport Hyatt Regency on Nov. 12-14 will be broadcast by satellite to at least two Southern Baptist locations in Arkansas. Fasting & Prayer '97, a multi-denominational event chaired by Campus Crusade for Christ co-founders Bill and Vonette Bright, can be seen at broadcast centers at the Baptist Building in Little Rock and at Central Church in Jonesboro. Jimmie Sheffield, Arkansas Baptist State Convention associate executive director, said the event's "emphasis on fasting and prayer is also on revival and spiritual awakening. As Arkansas Baptists have a five-year emphasis on awakening," he added, "this fits into our work during these years. Anything that lends itself to praying and spiritual awakening is certainly needed." The event, which is free, will be held from 6 to 9 p.m. Wednesday, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Thursday and 9 a.m. to noon Friday. For more information, contact ext. 5103.

**The Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine's Holy Land Tour** has a limited number of seats still available for laypeople. The Jan. 7-16 trip to Jordan and Israel will include visits to Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nazareth, Jericho and the Sea of Galilee. The tour will be hosted by Newsmagazine editor Trennis Henderson and will feature on-site Bible studies led by Bill Staeger, chairman of the division of religion and philosophy at Ouachita Baptist University. Henderson noted that he is "confident it will be a wonderful time of inspiration and fellowship" for participants that will "bring them closer in their walk with Jesus by bringing them closer to the places where Jesus walked." The basic cost for the tour is \$2,299 which includes round-trip airfare from New York to Jordan, lodging, ground transportation and most meals. For more information or a tour brochure, call ext. 5153.

**The State Keyboard Ministry Conference** will urge "Keyboard Players of Arkansas...Unite" Nov. 1 in a setting that conference planner Peggy Pearson said will "unite all keyboard players for worship." Pearson, an associate

in the ABSC church music ministries department, said the program will be "a combination of worship and training for church pianists, organists and synthesizer players. It will show them how to combine these instruments for worship in churches." The program will be led by John Dresbach, assistant minister of music and organist for Central Church in Jonesboro; Kathy Cooper, organist and synthesist for Second Church in Little Rock; and Pearson. Noting that the program will include a "first," Pearson added, "This is the first time we will offer multiple classes to choose from." Classes will include the use of organ, piano or computer with synthesizers, "Sequencing Secrets," "Making Praise Flow" and "Keyboard Jam." The cost is \$15 per person for registrations made prior to Oct. 24 and \$20 per person after that date. For more information or to register, contact ext. 5121.

**The 1997 Youth Evangelism Conference**, popularly known as Joy Explo, will be held Dec. 29-30 at the Statehouse Convention Center in Little Rock. Randy Brantley, an associate in the ABSC evangelism department, said that the program will focus on the theme, "Code Blue!" He noted that "teens are in a life-and-death struggle, contending with the Prince of Darkness for their lives. Our response must be a Code Blue response." Brantley explained that "Code Blue is a hospital term for a life-or-death emergency...where everyone drops what he or she is doing to respond to a crisis." He said the program will focus on training, inspiration and entertainment. "The conference is a platform for presenting the state youth evangelism strategy as we continue to equip teenagers to live radically for Jesus. This dynamic gathering is drawing young people and their leaders for an incredible time of prayer, praise, worship and celebration." The program will include: Bill Jones, a youth communicator from Columbia (S.C.) International University; Bulgarian Baptist pastor Teddy Oprenc; recording artists 4-Him and Two or More; drama with Paul and Nicole Johnson; and praise and worship with David Bell and the Good Stuff Band. The cost is \$8 per person for regular seating and \$10 per person for special "Gold Circle" seating. Ext. 5222.

For more information, contact the Arkansas Baptist State Convention at 1-800-838-ABSC in state or locally in Little Rock at 376-4791.

**TRAINING  
UPDATE**

# Huckabee issues call for character

## Governor's book highlights impact of faith amid adversity

Trennis Henderson

Editor, Arkansas Baptist

**F**EW ARKANSAS will ever forget the tumultuous events surrounding Mike Huckabee's inauguration as governor on July 15, 1996. In a new book published by the Baptist Sunday School Board's Broadman & Holman division, Gov. Huckabee offers a firsthand account of that historic day and how it has impacted his personal and professional life.

The 190-page book, titled *Character Is the Issue*, is Huckabee's first published book. The idea for the project began a year ago over lunch with BSSB president Jimmy Draper who invited Huckabee to write a book about his recent experiences.

"Broadman contacted me and it got under way last October," Huckabee recalled. Calling the project "a great experience," he said he was able to "focus on the message of the book" while BSSB editor John Perry coordinated production details.

Noting that "a lot of it was written mostly late at night" to accommodate his hectic schedule as governor, the 42-year-old Huckabee joked, "How long did the book take? You might say 42 years."

The book, presented in three sections, includes "Character in the Furnace," which chronicles his rapid ascent from political novice to governor; "The Need for Character," which highlights issues of faith and integrity; and an appendix of selected speeches and commentary. The appendix includes his initial acceptance speech as governor which was scrapped in favor of an impromptu address that was televised shortly before his delayed inauguration became reality.



According to Gov. Mike Huckabee, "The real goal in life is to be more Christlike."

Huckabee said a primary goal of the book is to encourage readers to "commit to be individuals of personal character and integrity and to try to instill that in others."

"I would hope it would be an encouragement to people who think our society is beyond hope," he shared. "I'd like them to be buoyed in their own conviction that the things they do to build character qualities are really worth doing — that it really does matter."

Acknowledging that some people are uncomfortable with his faith perspective, Huckabee remarked, "I wanted the book to be an honest book. I can't write an honest book without talking about faith, without talking about my personal relationship to Jesus Christ. That is the centerpiece of who I am."

"In our culture, we talk about diversity and acceptance and tolerance," the former Arkansas Baptist pastor pointed

out. "I shouldn't be restricted in my freedom of speech as well as freedom of religion to talk very candidly and openly about what makes me tick. To try to present myself other than that would be dishonest."

In addition to Huckabee's focus on faith, the book also contains such chapters as "Is God a Democrat?" and "Yellow Dogs Bite" that reflect partisan political perspectives.

Talking specifically about the events surrounding former Gov. Jim Tucker's resignation following conviction on Whitewater-related charges, Huckabee explained, "There's no way I could tell the story of what happened on July 15 and prior to that and after that apart from telling what happened. By this book being as personal as it is and as simple, it will give some people ammunition."

Despite that risk, Huckabee said the overarching message of the book is that "the issues that affect character are important issues." Noting that the bulk of such social crises as drug abuse, teen pregnancy, juvenile delinquency and overcrowded prisons "comes from a lack of character," he said the breakdown of character has "a spiraling kind of effect that you can measure in true economic impact."

Explaining his emphasis on the issue of character, Huckabee wrote in the book's introduction, "Our character defines the world we live in. Our government, welfare programs, schools and everything else in our lives are shaped and directed according to our character.... Your character makes a difference every day — in the work you do, the candidates you vote for, the people who look to you for leadership."

Highlighting the impact of his Christian faith throughout the book, Huckabee wrote, "Character does count. Integrity does count. But if integrity and character are divorced from God, they don't make sense.... Being governor has led me to depend on faith with a new sense of urgency. I face situations every day that would be insurmountable without using the faith God has given me to make decisions."

As he continues to adjust from his role as local church pastor to governor of the state of Arkansas, Huckabee remarked, "The biblical definition of the highest calling is the calling we have in Jesus Christ, not the calling we have to a particular vocation.... The real goal in life is to be more Christlike."

### Excerpt from Gov. Mike Huckabee's new book, *Character Is the Issue*

"Today I am definitely a 'grace Christian' and not a 'law Christian.' One of the few things I detest more than liberalism is legalism. I think both are cancers on the Christian faith — liberalism because it doesn't believe anything, and legalism because it restricts us only to the things we can live up to. Liberalism makes God seem so commonplace that He becomes meaningless, while legalism makes God so small that He becomes insignificant...."

"Fortunately, God is gracious. And just as He exercises grace toward me, I have to exercise grace toward others. It's easy to want Him to exercise grace toward me; the real reach is becoming anxious for Him to exercise grace toward others."

"Today, grace affects everything I do. In every decision I make as a governor, as a father, a spouse, a friend, it has an impact on me."



# Missionary Parents Fellowship formed

## Little Rock

Executive Assistant, Arkansas Baptist

**T**HIRTY ARKANSAS parents whose children serve on Southern Baptist international mission fields enthusiastically endorsed the organization of the Arkansas Missionary Parents Fellowship during a Sept. 13 meeting at South Highland Church in Little Rock.

"We would like to sponsor your organization," responded Julia Kettner, executive director of Arkansas Woman's Missionary Union, as she welcomed the parents and other guests to the meeting. The gathering was coordinated by the state WMU office and Pat and Lee Roy Walker of Little Rock, whose son, Lee, and family serve in Santiago, Chile.

Mrs. Walker, Betty Moore of Hope, Martha Dewbre of North Little Rock, Wanda Swihart of Sherwood and Randy Owens of Jacksonville were named to work with WMU in finalizing the organizational structure for the group.

"I am so appreciative and grateful that we decided to organize," noted Eileen Kirby of Little Rock whose son and daughter-in-law, Ben and Charlotte Kirby, serve in Santa Cruz, Bolivia.

"Through this organization, Arkansas parents can share prayer requests for mission field needs around the world," she added. "As we pray, we specifically need to pray for the missionaries' protection as they face dangerous situations in travel and in other ways in the countries where they serve."

## Prayer 'most important' support

Kathleen Jones, retired from 35 years of medical mission work in Indonesia, also stressed the importance of prayer for those on international mission fields. "Prayer is the most important thing you can do for those on the field," she explained. "Your prayers will be used day-by-day by God to strengthen the missionaries and provide service opportunities as they need them."

Kaye Miller, who grew up on the mission field in Thailand where her parents served for 25 years as medical missionaries, shared insights about missionary children and grandchildren on the mission field and upon their return to the United States.

"I vividly remember my parents talking with us of their call to missions and our call to go there with them," she said. "I did not know as I went at age five with the family that I would personally



Parents and grandparents of Southern Baptist international missionaries gather Sept. 13 at South Highland Church in Little Rock to organize the Arkansas Missionary Parents Fellowship. Arkansas Woman's Missionary Union is sponsoring the fellowship group.

become involved to the extent of assisting in the training process of nurses, my father in surgical procedures and even in the delivery of children.

"It continued to impact my life as both a young person and as an adult in that I returned to the States, enrolled in Baylor University and in Baylor's School of Nursing to prepare for the nursing field where I have worked since."

Miller told parents and grandparents that as their children and grandchildren return to the States on furlough or to enter school, they need guidance in such basic items as U.S. money, driving, how to use phone cards and thank you notes, how to dress and help in making new friends.

"I encourage you to give them the opportunity to share with you those things which have happened to them on the mission field," she added. She reminded participants of a 1999 International Mission Board re-entry retreat to be held in Arkansas for all incoming college freshmen. "Missionary kids are ones who know world missions," she remarked. "As one of them, it created within me the urgency of sharing Jesus Christ with others." Miller currently serves as both Girls in Action and Youth on Mission director for Immanuel Church.

Bruce Swihart, whose son, Tim, serves with his family in Pusan, Korea, said, "Today has been most beneficial to me because I have learned the importance of my assisting my grandchildren in their transition from the mission field to becoming college students."

Barham and Marie Ridgell of Alexander, whose daughter and son-in-law,

Mary and Ted Stanton, serve in Venezuela, said, "Even though at our ages of 80 and 78 respectively we have experienced our grandchildren returning for their education and then entering the work force, we are thankful this organization is being formed. It will be very beneficial to those who still have not traveled these roads."

In a prayer and share time, Sarah Haggard of Conway whose son, John, serves in Romania, shared her thankfulness for having a child serving on the foreign mission field.

"I'd rather have a child overseas in God's will than have one next door out of God's will," she noted.

Harold Farmer of Crossett, whose son, Lloyd, and family serves in Malawi, Africa, noted that the group "is going to be great because we will be able to give each other support and have fellowship with people with similar situations."

"I have learned a great deal today," affirmed Clara Reed of Siloam Springs whose daughter, Cheryl Headrick, serves with her family in Arusha, Tanzania. "We have been able to share things that we cannot share with just everyone."

Monica Keathley, adult consultant for the state WMU department, will assist the new organization. "The Lord's timing is perfect, and it seemed obvious to me that it was His time for this group of missionary parents to come together," she said. "There was an automatic bonding between people who had never met each other, and a real sense of mutual appreciation and support. I look forward to working with this group."

# World missions

## Religious leaders discuss responses to Mexico violence

A second round of talks between Roman Catholic and evangelical leaders in the Mexican state of Chiapas has resulted in a commitment to expand the dialogue to include more churches in the strife-torn region.

"We affirm the roots of violence, including in the northern zone of the state of Chiapas, are not religious but are rather social injustices," said a joint statement released following the recent talks. Participants pledged "to make efforts together, without hatred or violence, to collaborate in the eradication of such causes."

The Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America coordinated funding for the second round of talks, after co-sponsoring an earlier dialogue in April.

Talks between the government and the Zapatista Army of National Liberation broke off more than a year ago, but there have been no further armed confrontations in Mexico's southernmost state.

A related conflict, however, has polarized peasant farming communities along political and religious lines.

According to the International Service for Peace, more than 300 people have died and 4,000 more have been displaced from their homes in the past two years. About half of those displaced by the conflict have since returned to their homes.

CHIAPAS, MEXICO (ABP)

## NAMB staff members gather to focus on prayer, fasting

Gathered for three days of prayer and fasting, 350 employees of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board spent Sept. 9-11 away from telephones, committee meetings and the day-to-day business of denominational service. The retreat focused on repentance, prayer and worship.

In a keynote message, NAMB president Bob Reccord compared the prophet Isaiah with Israel's King Uzziah and rhetorically asked staff: "Are you a person God uses or a person who uses God?"

"A person whom God uses is focused on God...and strives to know Him," Reccord remarked. "Is the work of the board around you killing the work of the Lord within you? Are you more concerned about the pull of work than God's presence in your life? We must be tuned in to God's voice. We must have something fresh to say to God's churches."

Agency employees prayed by name for every NAMB trustee, missionary, long-term volunteer and SBC-endorsed chaplain and wrote personal notes of encouragement to each, mailing more than 8,000 cards. Staff also walked throughout the buildings praying for every fellow employee by name and ministry.

During the three days, speakers addressed areas of special focus for the new agency including family, reaching ethnics, the cities, students and Canada.

ALPHARETTA, GA (BP)

## NAMB endorses 28 new Southern Baptist chaplains

Twenty-eight chaplains were endorsed by the North American Mission Board Sept. 14, bringing the total number of Southern Baptist chaplains to 2,518, serving in 27 countries and all states and territories of the United States. The service was held at First Baptist Church of Peachtree City in suburban Atlanta.

The North American Mission Board, which officially began work in June, was formed by combining the Home Mission Board, Brotherhood Commission and Radio & Television Commission. The chaplaincy program formerly was a ministry of the Home Mission Board.

"I have learned not to tell God things I will never do," said Maurice DeFoor, a new chaplain serving the South Carolina department of corrections at Allentown Correctional Institution in Ulmer. "I told God I would never be a prison chaplain, but here I am."

First Lt. Paige Heard, an army chaplain serving in Ft. Hood, Texas, echoed DeFoor's sentiment. "God will call you to a place where you aren't comfortable," Heard noted. "I get airsick, and I'm serving a helicopter battalion."

In addition to institutions and the military, Southern Baptist chaplains endorsed by NAMB serve in health-care and pastoral counseling roles as well as business and industrial settings.

Emphasizing that "chaplains minister through their presence," George Pickle, chaplaincy associate for health-care and pastoral counseling at NAMB, added, "They bring the presence of Christ to the trauma, drama and celebration of life."

ATLANTA (BP)

## Former Arkansan, Berri Matz, dies at age 36 in Philippines

A 36-year-old Southern Baptist worker in the Philippines died unexpectedly Sept. 18, apparently from an allergic reaction.

Berri Matz of Bixby, Okla., a former teacher in Marion and West Memphis before appointment as a Southern Baptist international missionary, collapsed at home and was pronounced dead on arrival at a hospital in General Santos City. U.S. Embassy reports listed the cause of death as cardiac arrest due to asthma-induced aspiration.

A memorial service was held Sept. 20 at LaGao Baptist Church in General Santos City. Her body was then brought back to Bixby for burial.

Matz and her husband, Larry, were appointed by the International Mission Board in June 1996. Matz was the mother of two children, ages 10 and 8, and had learned only weeks ago she was pregnant with a third. The former Berri Gayle Williams, she graduated from the University of Tulsa with a degree in special education in 1983.

The Matzes arrived last October in General Santos City on Mindanao, the southernmost of the Philippines' two largest islands, to study language. They were to move soon to Cebu City, where he would be a church starter and she was to be a church and home worker.

GENERAL SANTOS CITY, PHILIPPINES (BP)

# Future perspective

## Baptist lobbyist, church historian featured at Brooks Hays lectures

Russell N. Dilday

Associate Editor, Arkansas Baptist

**A** LECTURE SERIES honoring a legendary Arkansas Baptist statesman and Arkansas congressman featured a Baptist political lobbyist and a Baptist historian offering "Free and Faithful Believers: A New Perspective."

The Brooks Hays Lectures, held Sept. 19-20 at Pulaski Heights Church in Little Rock, featured James Dunn, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs giving the lecture, "Politics is My Parish" during the Friday night session. Dunn's lecture shared the title of Hays' autobiography. On Saturday evening, church historian Bill Leonard, dean of the Wake Forest Divinity School in Winston-Salem, N.C., presented the lecture, "If Jesus Tarries: American Religion in a New Century."

The lectures were begun in 1974 by Pulaski Heights to honor Hays, who served as a United States congressman from Arkansas for eight terms and as Southern Baptist Convention president from 1957-59.

During his Friday evening lecture, Dunn paid homage to Hays, taking the Christian Coalition to task and highlighting Hays' involvement in the 1957 integration crisis at Little Rock's Central High School.

"We know what Brooks Hays would have thought about an outfit called the Christian Coalition," Dunn remarked. "Fifty years ago he said, 'Recent events require us to assert again our devotion to the principle of separation of church and state.'"

"How much more so now," Dunn declared. "The tendency to use the faith for force flies in the face of everything Brooks held dear. The...arrogance, insufferable self-righteousness and dogmatic certainties of the so-called Christian Coalition stand in virtually every specific exactly opposite Mr. Hays' positions."

Noting Hays' devotion to his faith while in public service, Dunn told the audience, "Brooks Hays was proof of the power of a faith that took on flesh. His work demonstrated indisputably that one dedicated individual can redirect the flow of history. His life linked personal religion with political reality in a way rarely equaled, never exceeded."

Citing evidence of Hays' influence on history, Dunn noted that "Brooks Hays did exactly that when he brought Gov.



Bill Leonard, dean of the Wake Forest Divinity School in Winston-Salem, N.C., examined the future of Baptist organization during the Brooks Hays Lectures.

Faubus and President Eisenhower together to consider the segregated situation in Little Rock and again, days later, when he stood for legal integration because he believed black children should be permitted to exercise their constitutional rights to attend public school in Little Rock.

"Brooks Hays was dedicated as few have been to finding the high ground, not merely the lowest common denominator," Dunn concluded. "He was determined, despite diverse rhetoric, to be a reconciler or, if necessary, a traffic cop at the corner of church and state streets."

### Future of Baptists examined

Leonard gave participants a look at the future of religion during the Saturday evening session. Noting the recent cross-ordination agreements among three Protestant denominations and a report published by Texas Baptists' Effectiveness and Efficiency Committee recommending publication of its own Bible study literature among changes in the state convention's relationship to the Southern Baptist Convention, he said, "It's hard to keep track of the changes taking place in American religion today."

The Texas proposal is one of many changes in America's religious landscape "that leaves me with three theses" he presented to participants. They include:

■ "Religious denominations are in a

permanent state of transition today and, probably, none of them will stabilize," he said. "We'd better get used to it and we better be careful how deep we put our tent pegs.

"Why?" he asked. "The denomination essentially served us well as the way to (build identity), but denominations are only one way. Fewer and fewer Americans think of their identity as a denominational identity. What forms those take are yet to take shape."

■ Baptists must pass on an identity. "The SBC was the most enduring 19th century denomination," he said. "I missed the 20th century while retaining many of its 19th century characteristics.

"Its genius was to pass on its identity," he noted. "The identity was all connected - from independent churches, to associations, state conventions and the SBC.

"Before our eyes, big chunks (of Baptist identity and structure) are falling off. The Texas proposal is the greatest example of that.

"Not since 1845 have Baptist churches had to be intentional about their identity," he said. "For a long time, the SBC as a system passed on identity. The question is, 'How are you going to pass on an identity to your children or grandchildren?'"

■ Pass on a Baptist identity of "hospitable traditionalism," he said. "Everybody needs a place to stand that gives you a sense of belonging. We have to learn new ways of networking among churches and individuals and talk about what is important about being Christian and Baptist."

Leonard also shared insight into "the forces eroding denominationalism. For years, we followed the corporate organization structure.

"Now national structures are moving to more regional structures," he said, because "we are at a time that people don't want a brand-name religion."

In a related observance, Second Church in Little Rock presented Dale Cowling with the 1997 Brooks Hays Christian Citizenship Award, an annual honor presented to Baptists who have distinguished themselves and their faith in civic life.

Cowling was pastor of Second Church from 1952-77. He led anti-gambling efforts in the state, served as president of the Pulaski County School Board and was noted for his opposition to the closing of Little Rock schools during the 1957 integration crisis.

## MISSIONS

### Moore's share with European missionaries

**F**ORMER STATE CONVENTION executive director Don Moore and his wife, Nita, recently completed a month-long assignment of leadership for Southern Baptist International Mission Board mission meetings in Europe.

The Moores led Bible studies and shared messages in four areas sponsored by Southern Baptists. Following dialogue with IMB administrative office staff in Wiesbaden, Germany, they led meetings with the mission force from England, Wales, Scotland and Norway; missionaries from Italy and Austria; and with missionaries in France, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands.

Moore said the leadership ministry "came at a critical time. The entire European Mission is being restructured with many changes in leadership and assignments. Rather than one mission, there will be two missions with one made up of Western Europe and the other of Eastern, Central and Southern Europe.

"The France, Belgium, Luxembourg and Netherlands Mission, within Western Europe, is considering a total reorientation to their mission strategy," he added. "The stress and uneasiness created by these changes was a part of the challenge the IMB asked us to address."

He also noted that interaction with the missionaries allowed for many opportunities to encourage them in their work.

"These missionaries are serving in some of the least responsive areas of the world," Moore observed. "Consequently, the turnover...is great. It was pretty humbling to know that God and the missionaries were counting on us to have a special word of encouragement for them.

"We came away with two major impressions," he said. "One, the sacrifice and the struggles of missionary life are so very real. They deserve the admiration and support we give them.

"Two, the spiritual battles the missionaries have to fight to maintain a strong witness calls for far more prayer than we generally give them," he remarked. "These meetings were in striking contrast to those we led last year. We performed the same ministries to all of the missionaries in the former communist countries with meetings in Moscow, Poland, Croatia and Hungary last year. In these countries the response to the gospel is so overwhelming that the missionaries need our prayers for somewhat different reasons."

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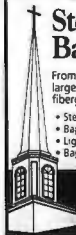
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## Hawkins elected Annuity Board president

**O**S. HAWKINS, pastor of First Baptist Church of Dallas, has been elected the seventh president of the Southern Baptist Annuity Board.

Hawkins, 50, will begin his work with the Annuity Board Oct. 1. Current president Paul W. Powell will become a consultant to the board until his 65th birthday in December 1998.

Hawkins was elected in a unanimous vote during a brief, called meeting of the board of trustees Sept. 12 at the Hyatt DFW Hotel at Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport. His election came one week after a Baptist Press article reported that he and Annuity Board officials "both deny Hawkins is the nominee for president of the Annuity Board."

Hawkins, pastor of First Church, Dallas, since 1993, said in a news conference following his election that "this was the most difficult decision in my life." He added, however, that "I sensed a call of God to this expanded ministry."

With assets exceeding \$6 billion, the

board manages active retirement accounts for more than 80,000 Southern Baptist ministers and other employees of churches, agencies and institutions.

Approximately 27,000 annuities receive benefits that total more than \$200 million a year.

Powell, Annuity Board president since 1990, said in a prepared statement, "I commend the presidential search committee, their chosen nominee, and the full board of trustees." He noted that Hawkins "brings to the office a solid track record of leadership and pastoral ministry. I am excited for him, and I am excited for the Annuity Board."

Trustee chairman Timothy E. Head said Hawkins' salary would be in the midpoint of an approved salary range, but declined to disclose the range. The Annuity Board presidency has traditionally been one of the highest-paid offices in the Southern Baptist Convention. In 1994, the last year for which figures are available, the president earned \$195,900.

Before accepting the pastorate of First Church, Dallas, Hawkins served congre-

gations in Florida and Oklahoma. He came to Dallas from First Baptist Church, Fort Lauderdale, where he was pastor from 1978-1993. A former president of the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference, he is a graduate of Texas Christian University, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and Luther Rice Seminary.

During the news conference, Hawkins cited several reasons he felt God's leadership to assume the Annuity Board post, including its platform in pursuing a passion for helping other ministers. Hawkins said he hopes to make his 3,000 sermon manuscripts available to fellow SBC pastors, including using the Annuity Board's Internet home page to make sermon preparation resources available. He also hopes to use the board presidency to mobilize as many as 1,000 retired pastors in missions each year.

"I want to surround myself with persons who have a vital relationship with Jesus Christ, persons who are faithful to their families in fulfilling the picture of Christ and His church," Hawkins noted. "I want to surround myself with persons who are good stewards personally and who support their local church and the SBC." DALLAS (BP/ABP)



Hawkins

## SBC leaders approve radio show, magazine

**T**HE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION Executive Committee voted last week to approve a weekly talk-radio program to be produced by the convention's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission and a flagship magazine for the newly organized North American Mission Board.

The radio program, titled "For Faith and Family," will debut Jan. 21, 1998, the eve of the 25th anniversary of the Roe vs. Wade Supreme Court decision that legalized most abortions in the United States.

Commission president Richard Land said one goal of the program will be to fuel a campaign to overturn Roe vs. Wade. "We are going to turn back the tide of death," Land pledged during the Sept. 22-23 Executive Committee meeting. Other program goals include promoting the sanctity of marriage, opposing homosexuality and racism, and challenging the strict separation of church and state.

*On Mission Magazine*, the working title of the new North American Mission Board periodical, is slated for release in January/February 1998. Plans call for it to be bimonthly and, during its first one to two years, to be sent free to about 100,000 subscribers.

It would replace magazines formerly published by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, Radio & Television Commission and Brotherhood Commission. Those publications were discontinued when the three agencies were replaced by NAMB.

In other business, Executive Committee president Morris Chapman called increased giving by churches through the Cooperative Program "a sign of good health" for the SBC but raised concern about declines in the percentage of gifts that

local churches and state conventions forward to national and international ministries.

"Perhaps the most devastating news about our health," Chapman said, is a decline in nationwide baptisms. "Our health is not everything we would want it to be," Chapman said. "Until we get a passion, we'll not see this change."

SBC president Tom Elliff attributed such statistical decline to "the law of the harvest."

"I cannot help but think we are reaping some of the sins we have sown in the past, especially when I see the decline of the number of baptisms," said Elliff, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church in Del City, Okla.

He called for Southern Baptist preachers to emphasize expository preaching, view the ministry as a calling rather than a profession, lead lives that are "spiritually consistent" and emphasize "doctrine, doctrine."

"We as Southern Baptists have so much for which we ought to be thankful," Elliff said. "God has taken a dinosaur by the tail and turned it around. God has caused a great ship to change course in the middle of the sea when it was adrift."

In other business, Executive Committee members voted to establish a committee to study the SBC's relationship with the Baptist World Alliance, an organization of Baptists worldwide.

Elliff said the SBC has had "a positive and encouraging" relationship with the BWA, but that recently "questions have arisen regarding perceived changes in the mission, focus and doctrinal positions of the BWA."

He said the study will ensure that Southern Baptists are "fully aware and in accord with their objectives, doctrinal positions and operational procedures." NASHVILLE, TN (ABP)



## WORLD

# Russian proposal restricts nation's religious freedom

**A**FTER WORKING to help Russian Christians score gains during recent years of religious freedom, evangelical missionaries are now facing looming fears of government restrictions or even deportation.

Southern Baptist international missionaries are expected to be among those least affected by nationalists' latest attack on non-Orthodox Christianity. A bill, which passed the lower house of Parliament by a vote of 358 to 6 on Sept. 19, won approval by the upper house, 137-0, on Sept. 24. President Boris Yeltsin agreed to support the restrictions on religious freedom as a concession to the Orthodox Church.

New energy for the restrictions came as Yeltsin agreed Sept. 18 to support the bill, which is similar to one he had vetoed in July. It allows foreign missionaries only if they are invited by organizations that have existed in Russia at least 15 years.

International Mission Board leaders see this latest development as a fear tactic by the real enemy. They are asking for prayer that missionaries have the strength and wisdom to maintain their ministry efforts, even in the midst of such public opposition.

"Satan would like nothing more than to get us all distracted by this and to pull back and stop sharing with people and building relationships," said Matt Spann, administrator for the organization of IMB missionaries in Russia. "We're carrying on our work and trying to be obedient day by day to what the Lord leads us to do."

The bill names Russian Orthodoxy as the dominant faith that established and developed Russia's spirituality and culture. It also names Islam, Judaism, Buddhism and Christianity in general as "traditional" religions. Baptists have been active in Russia since before Soviet communism, but the wording of the bill leaves the union's legal status up for interpretation.

U.S. congressmen, the Vatican, non-Orthodox religious groups and even breakaway sects of traditional religions in Russia oppose the bill. It would reverse religious freedom won in Russia in 1991 and promises to impede much of the evangelical activity that has developed since then. It also would highly restrict the activity of groups that operated underground to avoid registration during Soviet communism. **MOSCOW (BP)**

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# Family booster

Team to impact 'all family units' in churches, Turner explains

**I**F MESSENGERS to the 1997 annual meeting of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention approve a proposed restructuring of the convention staff into teams, it will create a team dedicated solely to aiding families.

The family ministry team will be unique for two reasons, said Emil Turner, ABSC executive director. First, he noted that "we're raising family ministries to the highest level - not putting it under another team but as its own team."

Second, it will be unique among other ABSC teams in that it will contain new personnel. Each of the six other proposed

teams will consist of members reallocated from existing departments.

"Because this is a new team, we don't have anyone in our current personnel who can take this responsibility," said Turner. He noted that "the search is under way" for a team leader.

"I would like to have someone for a December Executive Board meeting," he said. "If a candidate satisfies the Operating Committee requirement, then we will present him to the board."

Turner said the team "initially will consist of a team leader and a support staff member to do clerical duties. As that

ministry grows and expands, it will require an additional member.

"This team leader will be responsible to help churches and associations with ministries that strengthen family units," he explained. "He will be required to know all of the resources to strengthen families, conduct leadership and marriage conferences, lead singles and senior adult ministries and parenting workshops."

Tim Reddin, chairman of the Arkansas Baptist Structure Study Committee, noted that the need for a family ministry team was a mandate from Arkansas Baptists.

"The thing we heard through the surveys and listening groups is that family ministries had to be a top priority or we were in deep trouble," Reddin said, adding that "we have the resources, but families and churches are not discovering them."

Turner said the team will minister in the context of its definition of families. "We define families as all family units that exist in local Arkansas Baptist churches. They may be blended families, they may be grandparents raising grandchildren, senior adults or single adults."

**The family ministry team will seek to do its work by: leading churches to minister to more families and reach more families for church membership; to lead churches to reach more singles and senior adults for Christ...and minister to these groups; and to lead churches to involve more persons in men's and women's ministries.**

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## Congressional leaders debate religious persecution measure

**A** BILL AIMED at thwarting religious persecution in foreign countries has cleared its first barrier to passage but is facing increased opposition.

A subcommittee of the U.S. House of Representatives' International Relations Committee approved by voice vote a modified version of the Freedom From Religious Persecution Act Sept. 18. The legislation, as amended by Rep. Chris Smith, R-N.J., chairman of the International Operations and Human Rights Subcommittee, still would:

- Establish a new White House position, director of the Office of Religious Persecution Monitoring, to report on persecution overseas;

- Provide for sanctions against governments that support or fail to prevent persecution; and

- Improve asylum proceedings for victims of religious persecution.

The bill enables the president to waive sanctions, but he must provide Congress with a written explanation.

The amended version does not change the bill substantively but clarifies its purposes in response to some concerns expressed by House members, said an aide for Rep. Frank Wolf, R-Va., the bill's chief sponsor. The new House version of the bill is H.R. 2431.

The new version includes language clarifying the bill will protect all religious

believers, not just Christians; will not result in the displacement of other refugees in order to assist those who have been persecuted for religious reasons; and will not block loans and humanitarian aid that assist people instead of the government, said Anne Huiskes of Wolf's staff.

The bill, which at first appeared to have broad support, is now facing delays and opposition from lawmakers and some religious and human-rights groups.

More than 80 religious and public policy figures, including the presidents of the Southern Baptist Convention and the National Association of Evangelicals, sent a letter requesting that congressional leadership vote on the measure by November, when many churches are observing a "Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church." Pat Robertson's Christian Coalition has listed religious persecution as its "top legislative priority."

Recently, however, critics have come forward, claiming the bill creates another layer of bureaucracy, elevates religious persecution above other human rights and is too broad in its use of sanctions, which could result in greater persecution.

With the recent changes to the bill, "we went as far we could without giving up the heart and soul of the bill," noted Rep. Smith.

Rep. Tom Lantos, D-Calif., an original

co-sponsor of the bill, said he would withdraw his support unless additional changes are made. He criticized the bill's "one-size-fits-all policy" in which sanctions kick in automatically when religious persecution is documented, which he said may be "counterproductive to U.S. national interests."

According to Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, the worldwide persecution of Christians "has not occupied a significant place" in U.S. policy. "That must change," he added.

Land, who testified in support of the bill, insisted that the establishment of a White House office with monitoring authority "would give the U.S. government a mechanism to focus the American people's growing outrage on this issue."

"A foreign policy that denies our basic values and seeks only to meet the requirements of commerce and business is, and always will remain, totally unacceptable," he declared. "Some foreign governments do not think America cares what happens to non-Americans and that we are a money-bags democracy for sale to the highest bidder....They are wrong."

WASHINGTON (BP/ABP)

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## Offering, action part of Oct. 12 World Hunger Day observance

**A**RKANSAS BAPTISTS will observe World Hunger Day Oct. 12. As part of the observance, many churches will opt to take a special offering for hunger. The theme for this year's hunger relief promotion is "In His Name."

Tommy Goode, an associate in the Arkansas Baptist State Convention missions department, which administers Southern Baptist hunger funds in Arkansas, gave "two fundamental reasons why Southern Baptists should give to Southern Baptist World Hunger relief."

"On one hand, we should give from our hearts because of the devastation of poverty and starvation in the world," he noted. "There are so many people going without food. Second, it strengthens the hands of our missionaries and our witness. Those go hand in hand."

The offering will go to the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund administered by the SBC level by the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission. ERLC president Richard Land noted that "one

hundred percent of gifts" given to the fund are used for hunger ministry, with 80 percent distributed to the International Mission Board for overseas hunger projects and 20 percent sent to the North American Mission Board to fund state-wide hunger projects.

### All funds used for food

C. Ben Mitchell, a consultant with the ERLC, noted that because the funds are managed through existing organizations, "all gifts designated to World Hunger go directly to serve human needs around the world. Not a cent is used to maintain a large bureaucracy or for administration."

Goode emphasized that "all domestic (Arkansas and NAMB) hunger funds go for the purchase of food - period. Each year we try to budget about \$20,000 to fill hunger relief requests in Arkansas."

The World Hunger Fund supports a variety of ministries worldwide and in Arkansas. During 1996 alone, Southern Baptists supported 196 human needs

projects involving food distribution in 58 countries, including:

■ Internationally, funds went to water purification projects in Asia, hunger and famine relief efforts in North Korea and Uganda, humanitarian relief in Bulgaria and day care feeding in Venezuela.

■ In the United States, funds went to disaster relief in the Ohio River Valley, meals for the homeless in New York City and food for drug/alcohol rehabilitation center residents in Georgia.

■ In Arkansas, funds supported 12 food resource ministries, including the Arkansas Rice Depot and the North Pulaski Association Caring Centers.

ABSC feeding statistics provided by Goode indicate that Arkansas Baptists fed 3,641 families and 40,113 individuals.

Mitchell urged Baptists to serve as well as give. "Each of us comes in contact with individuals and families who have physical and spiritual needs," he noted. "Serving in a local soup kitchen, clothes closet or disaster relief team are effective ways to relieve human suffering."

"Others may serve the needs of the hungry by providing job counseling or by training those who need to learn work skills," Mitchell added. "It is not enough to feed the poor; we must also work to treat the causes of their poverty."

For more information about hunger-related ministries, contact Goode at 1-800-838-ABSC in state or locally in Little Rock at 376-4791, ext. 5150.

### MK prayer calendar

Missionary kids attending college in Arkansas with birthdays in October:

■ Oct. 2: Jeremy Palmer, OBU Box 4547, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001; senior from Nicaragua.

■ Oct. 10: Keturah Rucker, OBU Box 4237; sophomore from Egypt.

■ Oct. 10: Joy Conrad, OBU Box 3867; junior from South Korea.

■ Oct. 28: Ben Carothers, OBU Box 3259; senior from Guatemala.

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## BSSB to change name to LifeWay

**T**RUSTEES of the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention voted unanimously Sept. 15 to recommend LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention as the new name for the 106-year-old agency. The action was taken during the

trustees' semiannual meeting held at Glorieta (N.M.) Conference Center.

Two more steps remain in the approval process — consideration in February 1998 by the SBC Executive Committee and action by messengers attending the 1998 SBC annual meeting June 9-11 in Salt Lake City. If approved by convention messengers, the new name would take effect immediately.

BSSB president Jimmy Draper said the proposed name "best represents who we are and what we do." He said board

officials looked at 400 possibilities before deciding on LifeWay.

"This is not a trendy name; it will stand the test of time," Draper predicted. LifeWay is the name of one of the board's publishing imprints and two of its retail bookstores.

In other action, trustees approved a 1997-98 budget of \$326,184,000. The budget goal represents a 16.3 percent increase in revenue over 1996-97 projections of \$280,431,000.

GLORIETA, NM (BP)

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**Accepting resumes** — for full-time music/education minister. Send to First Baptist Church, 501 N. Main, Fordyce, AR 71742.

**Needed** — Part-time or bi-vocational director of music and/or youth needed immediately at First Baptist Church, Prescott, Ark. Send resume to PO Box 447, Prescott, AR 71857, Atr: Pastor.

**Accepting resumes** — for full-time pastor, send to First Southern Baptist Church, Pastor Search Committee, PO Box 449, Bearden, AR 71720.

**Accepting resumes** — for full-time minister of youth. Send resumes: First Baptist Church, PO Box 585, Thumanni, AR 72472.

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## missionary notes

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Forrest and Rebecca Bohlen, missionaries to Venezuela, are in the States (address: 605 Ash St., Conway, AR 72032). He is a native of Iowa. The former Rebecca Foard, she considers Arizona her home. They were appointed by the Southern Baptist International Mission Board in 1989.

Clifford and Cynthia Case, missionaries to Uruguay, are on the field (address: J. Gran 190, 27,000 Rocha, Uruguay). He considers North Little Rock his hometown. The former Cynthia Garner, she was born in Oklahoma. They were appointed in 1992.

Ben and Berdie Hopsa, missionaries to Brazil, are in the States (address: 4131 Terrace "R," Birmingham, AL 35208). He was born in Grant County and spent most of his youth in North Little Rock. She is the former Berdie Moose of Oklahoma. They were appointed in 1967.

Leon and Kathy Johnson, missionaries to Zimbabwe, are on the field (address: P.O. Box 272, Gweru, Zimbabwe). He was born in Piggott and she is the former Kathryn Kumabe of Hawaii. They were appointed in 1982.

Dennis and Cynthia Jones, missionaries to Southern Africa, are in the States (address: 1912 Brookhaven, Jonesboro, AR 72401). He considers Memphis, Tenn., his hometown. She is the former Cynthia York of Memphis. They were appointed in 1993.

Benjamin and Charlotte Kirby, missionaries to Bolivia, are in the States (address: #5 Wickford, Little Rock, AR 72212). He is from Little Rock. The former Charlotte Halbert, she was born in Little Rock and grew up in Star City. They were appointed in 1978.

Robert and Janice Mooney, missionaries to Uganda, are on the field (address: P.O. Box 1734, Kampala, Uganda). He was born in Marvell. The former Janice Anglin, she considers Talisheek, La., her hometown. They were appointed in 1987.

Larry and Janet Murphy, missionaries to Brazil, are in the States (address: 5391 Ezell St., Graceville, FL 32440). He considers Bentonville his hometown. The former Janet Harris, she considers Little Rock her hometown. They were appointed in 1986.

Bill and Laveta Sergeant, missionaries to Taiwan, are in the States (address: 2517 Azalea Terrace, Fayetteville, AR 72703). He was born in Iowa and grew up in Missouri. She is the former LaVeta Pierce of Kansas. They were appointed in 1970.

Stephen and Tommie Smith, missionaries to Portugal, are in the States (address: 211 East "B" St., North Little Rock, AR 72116). He is a native of Camden. The former Tommie Shaddox, she considers North Little Rock her hometown. They were appointed in 1983.

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### Family Bible Unwavering faith

By Randy Maxwell, pastor,  
Mount Olive Church, Crossett

**Basic passage:**  
Daniel 3

**Focal passage:**  
Daniel 3:14-25

**Central truth:**  
Those who live by faith in God—even in the midst of extreme testing—will find life through the power of the Son of God.

### Life and Work Be overcomers

By Brett Cooper,  
director of public relations,  
Williams Baptist College

**Basic passage:**  
II Corinthians 4:1-18

**Focal passage:**  
II Corinthians 4:1, 7-18

**Central truth:**  
Christians can experience the overcoming power of Christ as they make their lives available to Him.

### Explore the Bible Pride in self or trust in God?

By Ken Shaddox, pastor,  
First Church, Fordyce

**Basic passage:**  
Genesis 10:1-11:9

**Focal passage:**  
Genesis 11:1-9

**Central truth:**  
Spiritual pride easily leads prosperous people to forget the source of their blessings.

A huge gold-plated statue was constructed under the direction of Nebuchadnezzar. We are not sure what the exact shape of the statue was, but we do know that bowing to it was clearly a test of one's loyalty to Nebuchadnezzar, to his empire, and to the Babylonian gods. Because of the pagan connection, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego refused to bow down.

The king was furious, not only because they had been disobedient, but because the disobedient ones were his favorites. These Hebrews had proved themselves honest and capable. So the king decided to bend just a bit and give the offenders a second chance.

The three would be given another chance to bow down and worship the idol. Yet, they refused to bow to the pagan "god." As a result, they were thrown into the fiery furnace turned up seven times hotter than usual. In such a flame, the victims were expected to be reduced swiftly to nothing. Even though they should have been instantly incinerated, they were unharmed. In

fact when the king looked into the furnace, not only did he see his three favorite students alive and walking around but a fourth man as well.

Nebuchadnezzar said the fourth man looked like "a son of the gods." Possibly this fourth man glowed with a light brighter than the flames around him. The king was not certain just what or who he was seeing, but it was clear that God had not abandoned His devoted servants.

Mildred Clarke, 86, of Albany, New York, lay unconscious in her apartment. A police officer, the coroner and two morgue attendants all agreed that she was dead. About an hour and a half later, when the funeral home people came for her body, they discovered that Mildred was once again breathing.

At the other end of the thermal spectrum, those three Hebrew young men were also found to be alive after their stay in that crematorium. And the fourth man seen in that furnace now gives hope to all who accept His gift of eternal life.

The Bible is full of ironies. To lead, we must learn to serve. To be exalted, we must be humble. In this focal passage, Paul demonstrates another irony: to overcome, we must first submit.

Paul conveys several contrasts in this passage, and they all point to the overcoming power and grace of Christ. Paul describes every sort of crisis one can endure, only to contrast it with the salvation God provides for that situation.

When he refers to himself as a clay jar in II Corinthians 4:7, Paul is identifying with the lowliest of vessels. He is stating that anything good which comes through him is from God.

This humility gives Paul the overcoming strength of which he writes. By disavowing all credit and acknowledging the true power source, the apostle enables God to go to work. He has removed the selfish pretense that would prevent God from working through him.

That God is bigger than all our problems is not a surprise. It is in God's nature to deliver His children in times of distress, and He

continues to do so regularly. He does not do away with our trials. He simply outweighs them.

What is all too rare is the humility, the sense of submission, which Paul demonstrates. This is the man many consider to be the greatest evangelist in the history of Christendom. But Paul describes himself as a homely jar of clay.

Paul writes this in part as a response to critics who charged he wasn't up to the challenge of his ministry. He was not a particularly handsome or dynamic individual. His personality was not magnetic. He was ailing.

He responds that all the charges are true to the letter, which is exactly why he is the one to proclaim the gospel. To those who saw and heard Paul, he argues, it would be apparent that God deserves all the credit for the awesome things taking place. His weakness makes God's strength apparent. Of course, he is exactly right.

Paul was a very rich man for realizing the poverty of his abilities. We could also be richer by acknowledging the same to God.

It has been stated that just as "I" is in the middle of "sin," so "I" is found in the middle of "pride." The eleventh chapter of Genesis depicts a prideful people that chose to try to live life without God. The events surrounding the tower of Babel remind us of the dangerous tendency to replace trust in God with trust in self. Evidently, this event took place while people still spoke only one language. "Now the whole world had one language" (Gen. 11:1). The diversity of nations and the languages referred to in chapter 10 had not developed at this time.

The people of this early time began a migration to the east. The people identified simply as "they" (v. 2) came and found a plain, a broad flat valley in Shinar. This area is identified geographically as the Mesopotamian region. The land would be good for cultivation and building, but the plain had no stones for building. The people entered into brick-making in an attempt to accomplish a task that was on their minds.

Certainly the unity, industry and peace of the people should be noted as they prepared to build a city and a tower. The Genesis account, however, reveals a fatal flaw. The city builders wanted to make a name for themselves. In the process they left God out of their plans. The repetition of the words "let us" in verses 3-4 shows that the people of Babel sought to live their lives isolated from God. Today, many people follow a similar pathway that is characterized by pride and selfish ambition. Such a lifestyle always leads to destruction (Prov. 14:34, 15:25, 16:18, 18:12).

God judges pride (James 4:6). We can always expect God to respond to pride with judgment. This principle is not an exception but rather the constant rule. The final verses of this section of scripture tell how the Lord confused the language of the people and scattered its inhabitants (v. 7-9). Perhaps it should go without saying but this passage reinforces the thought that the only way to please God is through humble submission.



The Babylonian Empire, once thought to be virtually invincible, had become an empire about to collapse. God had used this pagan empire to accomplish His purpose in the life of His own people, and now Belshazzar was about to experience the power of Almighty God.

Yahweh chose to use an elaborate banquet where Belshazzar flaunted Babylon's dominion, a testimony to that man's ego. Suddenly, the fingers of a human hand appeared and began to write on the wall a mysterious message. Frightened, the king called for help, seeking a translation of the message. When none of the wise men of Babylon were able to decipher the message, the queen remembered Daniel. When Daniel saw the handwriting on the wall, he quickly revealed the message: "Numbered, numbered, weighed, divided."

The explanation of this strange message was that Daniel's God had been numbering the days of Belshazzar's reign. He had been weighed on God's scales and was found lacking. Now the

Babylonian Empire was about to be divided between the Medes and the Persians.

In October 1985, a group of Japanese students spent a solid month setting up 710,899 dominoes in such a way that by touching one, all of them would go down in order. It took only two minutes for that whole month's efforts to be obliterated.

Belshazzar became ruler of Babylon after decades of effort to build a great empire. In these verses we see it all come crashing down in just a few hours' time. Because it was built on human power and human pride, it could not last forever.

Vividly, the book of Daniel reminds us that Yahweh is God of the whole world, not of Israel alone. Yahweh not only raises up great pagan empires, but He also has the control to remove them from the stage of history because their purposes are evil.

This same God also has the right to rule over individual people. He empowers them as He empowers nations. He uses them as He uses nations, but He also removes them as He removes nations.

In the realm of world politics, an ambassador is a revered figure. This person has been given the responsibility of representing his or her country, usually in a foreign land. An ambassador on the field speaks for the home country and represents its interests abroad.

Paul writes in II Corinthians 5:20 that Christians are ambassadors for Christ. He is telling us that we hold the same responsibilities for our Savior that other ambassadors hold for their countries.

The task we face as ambassadors for Christ, according to our focal passage, is to be reconcilers. It is our job, our solemn responsibility, to help others be reunited with God through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Sin has separated humankind from God. However, many are not aware of this separation and have no idea of their need for reconciliation. They do not realize the grave eternal danger they face every minute they live apart from God. It makes the Christian's task rather like throwing

life preservers to those who are not even aware they are drowning.

Even those who realize they are separated from God may be difficult to reach with the salvation of Jesus. The reconciliation that comes only through Christ is hard for many to accept.

Indeed, the ambassador for Christ does not have an easy job. The task calls for someone who has become poised in the faith and has learned to articulate the message of the Master. In short, it requires sacrifice and dedication.

Unfortunately, many have not taken seriously their jobs as ambassadors. They have received salvation for themselves but have not learned to lead others toward this precious reconciliation. As II Corinthians 6:1 puts it, they have received God's grace in vain.

As Christians, we are all in the reconciliation business. We are called to do many things, but ultimately, we have the job of reconciling the lost to God. It was the passion of Paul; it should be ours as well.

The focus in Genesis 12 narrows to include a man named Abram or Abraham. His life is spotlighted over a number of chapters in Genesis. What was his label? What tag was used to identify Abram? He is labeled as the first Hebrew patriarch and as a prime example of one who trusted God (Heb. 11:8-12).

The Lord called to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you" (Gen. 12:1). This was a difficult command to follow. Abram was being asked to leave the security and identity of the community with which he had been associated. The idea of leaving the familiar often brings anxiety in our lives. Yet, willingness to venture with God is often a part of His master plan for our life.

God's call to Abram to leave the known and go into that which was unknown was challenging to say the least. It would involve sacrifice and a great deal of faith. In verses 2 and 3, God made a series of promises to Abram. God would make

Abraham great and would use his life to bless others.

The Christian is to be a channel of blessing to others. God may call us to leave our country and go to another part of the world to share the gospel. Many times, however, God desires that we serve as a blessing to others without leaving the communities where we live. This week God can use your life to bless and encourage someone else. Obedience has a reciprocal effect!

Genesis 12 is a significant high-water mark in the Old Testament record. Abram's response to this personal encounter with God was one of worship. In verses 7 and 8 we read of Abram building an altar unto the Lord so that he could worship. God is still worthy of worship and praise. We may not erect stones into an altar in the times in which we live but we can offer ourselves today as living sacrifices unto Him (Rom. 12:1-2). What is God's calling in your life? Respond by wholeheartedly trusting Him and saying, "Lord, here am I."

## Family Bible Weighed and found wanting

By Randy Maxwell, pastor,  
Mount Olive Church, Crossett

**Basic passage:**

Daniel 5

**Focal passage:**

Daniel 5:1-7, 25-28

**Central truth:**

Just as God humbled the arrogant Belshazzar, we find that pride is destructive to anyone's relationship to God.

## Life and Work Be reconcilers

By Brett Cooper,  
director of public relations,  
Williams Baptist College

**Basic passage:**

II Corinthians 5:1-6:2

**Focal passage:**

II Corinthians 5:11-6:2

**Central truth:**

Christians have a responsibility to help the lost be reconciled to God through Christ.

## Explore the Bible Trust and obey

By Ken Shaddox, pastor,  
First Church, Fordyce

**Basic passage:**

Genesis 11-12

**Focal passage:**

Genesis 12:1-9

**Central truth:**

When the call of God comes to our life, we must respond with readiness and willingness.



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## Church ordered to return tithes from bankrupt member

**BAYTOWN, TX (ABP)**—A state judge in Texas has ruled that a Baptist congregation must relinquish tithes contributed by a church member who filed for bankruptcy. Judge Tom Sullivan ruled that Cedar Bayou Baptist Church in Baytown must turn over four years of tithes donated by church member Leiland Collins to a creditor. The church has voted to appeal the ruling.

Creditor Bill Gregory's company, Gregory-Edwards Inc., sued Collins and two other former employees in 1990, claiming they had been overpaid by \$90,000. Gregory-Edwards won that case, and Collins declared bankruptcy to protect personal assets including his home, vehicle and retirement accounts. The bankruptcy case was settled in 1994.

In June of 1994, Gregory-Edwards sued Cedar Bayou Church for the tithes Collins contributed during the period he owed money to the firm. The judge's ruling hinged on the contention that Collins made his contributions to the church "without receiving a reasonably equivalent value in exchange."

The church turned down several offers to settle the case, because a settlement would have violated the congregation's convictions about church-state separation, pastor Richard Steel said.

## NOBTS initiates new counseling degree

**DECATUR, GA (BP)**—New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary trustees voted unanimously Sept. 9 to approve the creation of a master of arts in marriage and family counseling degree program. The new 79-hour degree program, to begin in the spring of 1998, will be landmark among seminaries since it will qualify NOBTS graduates for licensure in all 50 states.

"Our new master of arts in marriage and family counseling degree will be the premiere degree of its kind," said Steve Lemke, NOBTS provost. "It offers a 24-hour theological/biblical core of courses as a foundation for preparing distinctively Christian counselors. In addition, the 60 hours of counseling courses meet the highest national standards for licensure."

Trustees also voted to change the name of the seminary's 21-year-old School of Christian Training to New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary College of Undergraduate Studies.

## NAMB continues RAs, Baptist Men program materials

**ALPHARETTA, GA (BP)**—Although new missions education materials for Southern Baptist churches are being developed by the North American Mission Board, Tim Seanor wants to reassure missions leaders that traditional programs are still available.

"Virtually all the programs and materials previously produced by the Brotherhood Commission are still being produced, including Royal Ambassadors (RAs), MissionKids, Challengers, Express Missions and Baptist Men," said Seanor, director of NAMB's missions education team. "The only significant change at this point is how churches order the materials."

"Churches can order mission education materials, including *Lad* and *Crisader* magazines, from the Baptist Sunday School Board," Seanor explained. "Books and supplies can also be purchased at local Baptist Book Stores."

## Sentence credits pastor with 1,500 hours of service

**BUENA PARK, CA (BP)**—California Baptist pastor Wiley Drake was sentenced Sept. 19 to 1,500 hours of community service for his role in helping homeless people through First Southern Baptist Church, Buena Park, Calif.

Judge Gregg L. Pickett then credited Drake for 1,500 hours already served, based on evidence presented during a three-week criminal trial in July. A jury in that trial found Drake and the church guilty of four counts of misdemeanor criminal actions that violated the city's zoning laws.

The city's concerns related to the church's ministry programs that permit homeless people to live on the church property. First Southern was placed on three years' informal probation. A progress report is to be presented in November to the court describing steps the church is taking to come into compliance with city codes.

# NEWS DIGEST