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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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February 2, 1978

Arkansas Baptist

NEWSMAGAZINE

You don't have to leave home
to do Bold Missions
page 6





I must say it

Charles H. Ashcraft / Executive Secretary

Helping people open the door

Our leaders everywhere are concerned with reaching more and more people. Among the many constructive suggestions which could be offered, may I present "helping people with their problems opens the door to their hearts." Countless people are turned off from the church because in their hour of need, no one from the church was there. The supreme need of every person is Jesus Christ, but the door into their hearts is the door of Christian ministry. When a better job is done ministering to all the needs of the total person, our churches will again be filled with seekers and our baptisteries will come alive again.

Jesus entered into the hearts of his converts through the door of helpfulness (Christian ministry). He helped people with their problems and not so strangely, he was invited into their lives. When he did some good thing for someone, the word got around and others sought him out because of it. He never lacked for customers, neither will the church if it engages in Christian ministries. When the church exercises its stewardship of helpfulness to people with their more mundane needs, the door is wider open to meet the deepest spiritual needs.

Entire homes may be reached for Christ if a bit of human kindness and Christian compassion is expressed at the right time in an intensely Christian manner. The Christian who is Christian to an aged pensioner is in a better position to reach the pensioner's children and grandchildren. The church which does its churchly duties toward the people in the community who need the specialities which the church only can provide, will not lack for converts.

There are scores of idle people in most any church who could serve a couple of hours a week at the rescue mission, others who could spend a few hours each week at the nursing home, some who could provide transportation for elderly people who can't get around on their own. There are Christian men who could play a helpful role of loving, caring and maybe even giving a bit of supervision to the unruly kids of a widow or divorcee. There are some people of just the right mold who could drop in on the half-way house and meet the guys. Helping a parolee or probationer get a job may help more than a full-page ad or a visiting evangelist.

I really do not see why people who are never touched in any way by the Christian way of life should bother to come to a church, but I can understand why the churches will be flooded with people who have felt the touch of the calm, human hand of Jesus upon them. Helpfulness is the door.

I must say it!

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The right way to "hallow" God's name is the subject of another in a series of articles on the Lord's Prayer. Magnolia pastor Jon Stubblefield is writing on the Model Prayer, phrase by phrase.

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You don't have to leave home to do Bold Missions, say an associational director of missions and four young people from his area. They tried it last summer and now plans are being made for other young people to serve in their home area this summer.

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Another woman will add her viewpoint to the variety of perspectives that make up "Woman's viewpoint" column this year. Ruth Ann Wade of Booneville will write during February.

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A new law in Israel could threaten the freedom of missionaries to win converts. Christians are concerned because the law could be misused to stop missionary efforts.

Arkansas Baptist

NEWSMAGAZINE

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J. EVERETT SNEED, Ph.D. Editor
BETTY KENNEDY Managing Editor

ERWIN L. McDONALD, Litt. D. Editor Emeritus

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Church swindles

Occasionally, churches are victimized by some type of swindle. Professional con artists may find our congregations to be easy marks because, as Christians, we have a tendency to think everyone abides by our own standards. Furthermore, once a church has been cheated it may be reluctant to press charges. But good stewardship of the Lord's money requires that a church protect itself against such thieves.

Across the years there have been a variety of swindles perpetrated against churches. These have included phony fund raisings, illegal bonding programs, and dishonest building construction. Of course, legitimate businesses which serve our churches in these areas should not be penalized because of the scallywags.

One of the most recent reported swindles was a phony church directory company. Their plan was simple, they came to a church with a promise of a free church directory. They made pictures of the members of the congregation and returned to the church with the proofs. Many of the members paid in advance for personal copies of their pictures. The men left with the money and the pictures were never delivered.

The most important question is, "How can churches avoid becoming the prey of cheats or swindlers?" First, they should always use the best business procedures. The task is easy for a church which uses the services of an old established firm, much reputed for its honest dealings in the community.

Sometimes, however, a church may decide to deal with a business that is not well known locally. It then becomes the responsibility of the church leadership to carefully check on the firm before making any pres-

Guest editorial

Time abuse — a practice which should stop

In every meeting it seems almost inevitable that someone will ignore the time limit placed on a presentation. Perhaps ignoring time limits is so widespread now that they have no guidance at all. We certainly hope not, but abuses seem to occur whether Baptists gather for an associational meeting, state meeting or national meeting.

At one meeting recently a speaker was scheduled for 30 minutes. An hour before he spoke, a Christian saint observed, "I've heard him before. He will go at least 15 minutes over his time limit." The speaker went 20 minutes over! At a meeting of the SBC Executive Committee one seminary president took twice as long as the allotted time to boast about the institution he served. His enthusiasm might have been justified, but it was totally unfair to the five presidents who observed the guidelines.

Oftentimes the most flagrant violators of time limits are those who contend, "God gave me the message and I just had to preach it all." One is supposed to be disarmed, for if God gives a direction, who are we as mortals to question it? However, it seems quite strange that God did not tell the program planner about the need for an extra 15 minutes for Brother Nor did he tell the audience that Brother

The editor's page

J. Everett Sneed



entation to the congregation. Several readily available sources of reference include the Better Business Bureau and the Chamber of Commerce.

It is highly advisable to contact others who have used the services of the same firm. It is always in order to tell a business that your church would like to check their references before any agreement is concluded. Ask them for a list of other congregations they have served. Direct contact should be made with several of the references. Such inquiries can avoid much future difficulty.

Finally, good business practice requires written agreements. If the transaction involves large sums of money, the contract or letter of agreement should be checked by a credible attorney. Such a procedure will clarify the responsibility of both the congregation and the firm with which they are dealing.

A credible business will have no objection to written agreements or checking on references. Such procedures will provide protection for everyone. If a firm under consideration objects to proper business procedures, it is likely that a church should not deal with them.

If a church has become the prey of a swindle, the congregation should take appropriate legal action. This will provide the possibility of recovering losses. But more important, it will protect others from becoming victimized. Such response may also serve as a deterrent to potential criminals.

Good stewardship demands good business procedures. Everyone has a Christian obligation to use the money that the Lord has entrusted to him properly. Churches have an even greater responsibility for proper use of the money which has been dedicated to the work of the Master.

. . . . had such an important message that the fidgeting and watch-glancing, and all the other things people do after they have stopped listening, should be ignored. Nor did he tell the next speaker or singer who had to cut short his or her God-given message.

Persons who habitually ignore time allotments apparently possess such an ego that they are convinced their messages are more important than any one else's. Their needs to be seen or heard are more important than needs of other program personalities and more important than the design of the program as conceived by the program planner under the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

If there are no time guidelines, one is free to take as long as he or she desires. If one agrees to speak or sing or make other presentations within a time limit, one is ethically bound under God to stay within those guidelines. If time is insufficient, it should be worked out in advance. To agree to a time limit and then ignore it, makes one's word less than trustworthy, it seems to us.

When one can accurately predict that this speaker or that singing group will abuse the time limits, it is a bad commentary on the offender. — Editor Bob Terry in the "Word and Way", Missouri Baptists' state paper

'Hallowed be Thy name'

by Jon M. Stubblefield
(Fifth in a series)

The Lord's Prayer contains six petitions (seven if "deliver us from evil" is separated from "lead us not into temptation"). The first three focus clearly on God's glory while the second three pertain to man's needs. This is the proper order. If we truly acknowledge God's name, kingdom, and will, then we can pray meaningfully for daily provisions, forgiveness, and help with temptation and deliverance from evil.

The first petition affirms, "Hallowed be thy name" (Matt. 6:9). In biblical thought a name expressed more than identity. It signified a person's nature or character. God's name reveals who he is and what he does, his personality and his power.

To "hallow" means to make holy, consecrate, sanctify, or set apart. In form the verb is an aorist passive imperative. The full force of the petition is perhaps seen in the following translation: "Let (may) your name be hallowed." This is not a prayer for God's name to be made holy. It already is. Rather, it is a plea for God's name to be recognized or



Dr. Stubblefield

regarded as holy by men everywhere. The phrase, "on earth as it is in heaven," should probably be taken not just with the third petition but with the first and second petitions as well.

The eschatological tone of the petition is evident. It points to that future day when complete reverence will be given God's name: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come" (Rev. 4:8, RSV). This is also a missionary prayer. It reminds us that we have an obligation to share the Gospel with a lost world so that all men through faith in Jesus Christ may come to know and honor God's name (see Rom. 10:13-15). The evangelistic task is not optional (Matt. 28:18-20). In the words of Warren Hultgren, "If it is to be, it is up to me."

Our society has not taken this petition seriously. Examples of an irreverent attitude toward God abound. For many people the Lord's day is no different than any other day. The sacred institution of marriage is threatened by an escalating divorce rate. God's name is profaned in the streets and on television. Surely we ought to pray, "Our Father who art in heaven, may your name be hallowed — beginning with me."

Jon M. Stubblefield is pastor of Central Church, Magnolia.

'Soap' altered, ABC confirms

NASHVILLE (BP) — ABC-TV apparently has decided to scrub the sexually offensive themes in its "Soap" comedy series, a move that a denominational agency here sees as further evidence that Southern Baptists and others involved in the protest over "Soap" have won a victory.

According to an article in the Dec. 30-Jan. 2 issue of *TV Guide*, ABC has dropped its "parental discretion" advisory which appeared at the beginning of each episode of "Soap". Alfred Schneider, ABC's vice president for programming, told *TV Guide* that the show's content has been changed, and the series will now be a "whodunit program."

"The episodes," says Schneider in the article, "do not deal with the adult themes that concerned us originally."

The Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), which has been one of the primary leaders in the "Soap" protest, claimed victory two months earlier after learning that ABC had notified its affiliates that radical changes were being made in "Soap."

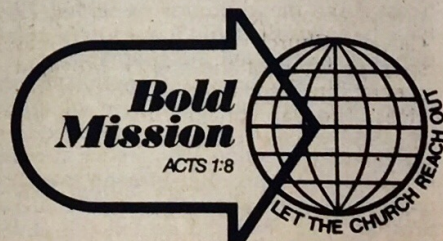
In a speech last November before the Baptist Convention of Maryland, Harry N. Hollis Jr., the commission's director of family and special moral concerns, said that as a result of grass roots protests ABC "has pulled away from its goal to make 'Soap' a forerunner of things to come on TV."

Schneider's public statements now confirm that report, said Foy Valentine, executive secretary of the SBC social concerns agency.

Valentine expressed thanks to "every concerned Southern Baptist who protested to advertisers, local television stations and national network officials about this morally offensive program."

He also praised editors of state Baptist papers for their "highly effective" role in keeping their readers informed on the entire "Soap" issue.

"We're glad the medium seems to be getting the message," Valentine continued. "At the same time, we plead for continued and now substantially increased local church, family, and personal efforts to communicate our Christian moral concerns about television."



One layman's opinion

Daniel R. Grant / President, OBU

Measuring prosperity by garbage

New York garbage collectors are well paid, I understand, so it is only right to expect unusual expertise from them. The Associated Press recently reported that some of them have ventured into economic forecasting. They reported that the total tonnage of garbage collected in New York in 1977 exceeded the previous year by 6.5 million tons.

Then came the economic analysis: garbage is a kind of economic barometer telling whether times are getting better or worse. A sanitation department spokesman explained, "In bad times people don't buy new things or throw away the old things, and they don't throw away as much food. More garbage means times are getting better."

I suppose this is true, but I am

reminded of a remark made to me on the tennis court by Winston Beard, chairman of the Division of Business and Economics at Ouachita Baptist University. I had the good fortune to be ahead of him in the tennis match so I called out the score and said, "Is that right?" He gave a professor's reply in saying, "It's accurate, but it's not right!"

Wasting more of the world's resources in time of prosperity is undoubtedly a fact of life, but it is hardly consistent with Christian stewardship. We may need to re-study and re-learn the Old Testament lessons about preparing during the years of plenty for the years of famine. Somehow or other I just don't feel right in rejoicing about a record increase in our garbage tonnage.

Wattensaw Church, Lonoke, held ordination services on Jan. 22 to ordain Rick Gates, the church's minister of music and youth, to the gospel ministry. Russell Clearman of Tulsa, Okla., delivered the ordination message.

Youth of **Mississippi County Association** held a rally on Saturday, Jan. 28, in Leachville. Phil Beall, assistant coach of Blytheville High School, was speaker. Special music was presented by the Youth Ensemble of Osceola First Church under the direction of John Dresbach.

Hardin Church observed Baptist Men's Day on Jan. 22 when John Moore, Sam Hargrave, Bill Werninger, and Randy Hosman, laymen of the church, were speakers.

Youth of **Ashley County Association** held a rally on Jan. 21 at First Church, Crossett. The program featured "The Hear and Now Singers" under the direction of Bob Burroughs, a religious composer.

Life Line Church, Little Rock, is planning an Arts and Crafts Festival to be held at the church April 8-9. Jim and Barbara Smith will coordinate the festival.

The puppeteers of **Clear Lake Church, Blytheville**, presented a program to the Retired Club at the Senior Citizens Building in Blytheville on Jan. 19.

Men of **Jacksonville First Church** held their first breakfast-meeting on Sunday, Jan. 15. Bill Burnett, a Christian athlete, was speaker. The Boys Ensemble presented special music.

The Brotherhood of **Calvary Church, Texarkana**, held a chili supper on Jan. 24. J. D. Larey, a lay speaker from Fouke, was speaker.

Gold Creek Church, Faulkner Association, held its first meeting on Sunday, Jan. 8, in a mobile home that has been placed on church property, located on Highway 65. There were 30 in attendance for the first services led by H. B. Shirley, pastor.

West Church, Batesville, held ordination services on Sunday night, Jan. 22, to ordain Bill Hurley, James Melton, and Gary Laney as deacons.

Hillside Church, Camden, observed Baptist Men's Day on Jan. 22. Activities for the day began with a prayer breakfast with Robert Blann, pastor of Calvary Church in East Camden, as speaker. Men of the church provided special music for morning worship services. The day concluded with an ordination service in which Don Bird was ordained as a deacon.

Senior Adults of **Geyer Springs First Church, Little Rock**, held a special meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 24. Harry

Trulove, president of Arkansas Baptist Foundation, was speaker. He spoke on the necessity and preparation of wills.

Men of **Central Church, Magnolia**, observed Baptist Men's Day on Jan. 22 with a breakfast. Laymen of the church presented testimonies in the morning worship hour and "The role of laymen in doing the Lord's work," was topic of the message. Theme for the day was "Baptist Men on Bold Mission."

Markham Street Church, Little Rock, began the "Deacon Family Ministry Plan" as part of the church curriculum in January. Bob L. Wright is pastor.

First Church, Paris, will be in revival March 5-12. Junior Hill of Hartselle, Ala.,

will be the preacher and Glen Blevins of North Little Rock will lead singing. William L. Kreis is pastor.

Ingram Boulevard Church, West Memphis, is holding a series of meetings Feb. 1-5 of special interest to teenagers and their parents. Don Lonie, described as the dean of North American High School speakers, is leading the services.

The annual Brooks Hays Lecture Series will be held at **Pulaski Heights Church, Little Rock**, Feb. 26-28, with Myron Madden as lecturer. Dr. Madden, Chaplain and Director of Pastoral Care at Southern Baptist Hospital in New Orleans, will speak on "The Christian Faith and Mental Health".

Arkansas all over

buildings

Lee Memorial Church, Pine Bluff, on Jan. 4 voted to build an additional 4,000 square foot educational building. Completion of the first 2,000 square feet should be in early summer with the additional footage to be completed as needed. Jack L. Ramsey is pastor.

Cord Church has announced plans to remodel their auditorium. Remodeling will include carpeting the auditorium, the purchase of pew cushions, and painting of walls and woodwork. Estimated cost is \$3,500. Emmett E. Powers is pastor.



A really "moving" church

This church building has done a lot of movin' in its time. It was moved for the fourth time in its 90-year history to serve as a meeting place for a new Baptist congregation in Concord Association. The building was moved 13 miles from Booneville to Blue Mountain where it will be used by New Briar Creek Baptist Chapel, a mission of First Church, Booneville. Guy Wade, pastor of the Booneville church, said the New Briar Creek congregation had saved to buy the building. First Church Booneville and Concord Association have gotten a loan from the Arkansas Baptist State Convention to pay for relocation and renovation of the structure. The new congregation had been meeting in a portable chapel provided by the association.

You don't have to

leave home to do
Bold Missions



Greg Smith's Bold Mission service was in his own association, working with youngsters in Vacation Bible School, among other projects.

There may be something glamorous about serving as a missionary in a distant place or setting. Every Christian youth has dreamed of tramping through the jungles of Africa or paddling a canoe up the Amazon to take the Gospel message to a remote people who have never heard of Christ, but few dream of doing something in their own area. Missions can be fun and you can stay at home while being involved, claims an Arkansas director of missions.

It all began as a dream of Director of Missions J. D. Passmore in early 1976 after he became the missionary for the Current-Gains Baptist Association. In his area are several small churches that do not have Vacation Bible Schools or youth-led revivals; do not conduct surveys; and do not have an organized outreach ministry because of lack of leaders or finances or both. The need to help these churches was evident. How to help was the problem.

Passmore shared the possibility of a youth team of four young people to work with him in the summer of 1977 in an outreach program with the Youth of the Association as they met in camps, retreats, and youth rallies.

Four young people responded for that first summer. Greg Smith and Debbie Vaughan of Pocahontas First Church, Judy Blevins of Witt's Chapel, and Michelle Wiley of Calvary Church at Corning were trained in Vacation Bible School clinics, state youth leadership workshop and in orientation sessions in

the missions office.

They served for a period of six weeks in June and July, conducting four Vacation Bible Schools, three youth-led revivals and serving as counselors at the associational camp. In the revivals and Vacation Bible Schools there were eight professions of faith. All of them had the privilege of leading at least one child or youth to the Lord during the week of camp.

The first week they conducted two Vacation Bible Schools, one in the morning and one in the evening. The small one room church, the site of the first school, was running about 35 in

Sunday School. They prepared for 25 children, but by the end of the week 92 enrolled. Thirty of these were in the Youth Department, and most of these were in high school. Their teacher was a young woman who is a senior in high school. Three boys made professions of faith and attendance averaged in the seventies for the week.

One of the youth team wrote in her evaluation of the program: "I learned so much about kids, how to motivate them, how to recognize and respond to their needs, also how to adjust to a variety of situations and work with limited materials. My great joy came in being



On the cover

J. D. Passmore (back) directed Youth on Mission who were Michelle Wiley, Debbie Vaughn, Greg Smith and Judy Blevins.

'My great joy came in being asked by two of my girls at camp how to be saved. All of the experiences of the summer were worth it just to be able to lead them to Christ.'



Woman's viewpoint

Ruth Ann Wade

Prescription for insomnia

Have you ever had a night when you had difficulty falling asleep or else you were awakened in the night and could not seem to doze off again? Well, what do you do? Count sheep? Rehash the day and all its problems? Or do you take tomorrow moment by moment and become overly concerned about the potential trouble there? How will you ever get to sleep now?

A dear 90-year-old saint in Florida (who wanted me to call her Lenora, because there weren't many friends left who called her by her first name) told me her secret for sleeplessness. When such an occasion arose she would lie there and think of all the Bible verses that begin with the letter A. When she could think of no more that began with A, she would move on to B and so forth down the alphabet as far as necessary to drift into drowsiness again.

I recommend it, because I've tried it.

A—Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. (Matthew 7:7)

B—Be anxious for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. (Philippians 4:6)

C—Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (Matthew 11:28)

D—Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. (Psalm 37:4)

E—Effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. (James 5:16)

F—For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

Those are just a few suggestions to get you started thinking. Ho, hum. Which verses would you have chosen? How far down the alphabet could you go? . . . Sweet Dreams!

asked by two of my girls at camp how to be saved. All of the experiences of the summer were worth it just to be able to lead them to Christ."

The four team members were able to stay at home and serve. They received \$20 a week plus car expense from the association. Each church where they served took a love offering for them. With what they received from the Association and the churches they averaged \$40 plus per week.

They each proclaimed that the money was not important. Some turned down summer jobs that would have paid more. Most are planning to serve again this year.

Current-Gains association is planning an expansion of the program. This year they want eight high school juniors and seniors, age 16 and above serving in the program. They will form into two teams and will be involved in Vacation Bible Schools, "Back Yard Bible Clubs", youth-led revivals, religious surveys, youth camp, and other mission outreach programs.

The association plans to raise the salary to \$30 per week plus mileage for the one driving the car. Churches will be expected to take a love offering for the team if they use them.

Interest is great and the problem may be too many wanting to serve. Early in January they had six applicants.

"Every Association has such needs as ours", Passmore says. "Youth on Mission can do the job in our Bold Mission Outreach and stay at home."

February writer

Ruth Ann Wade is a pastor's wife, homemaker, mother and substitute school teacher. During February she will write "Woman's viewpoint" from this perspective, sharing from her own experience. She is married to Guy R. Wade, pastor of First Church, Booneville, and is the mother of two sons, ages 11 and 13. Mrs. Wade, a

native of El Dorado, holds the bachelor of science degree from Ouachita University at Arkadelphia. She teaches young married adults in Sunday School and is approved by the state Sunday School Department as a worker with adults. Her interests include sewing, cooking, and crafts of all kinds.

New subscribers:

Church

New budget after free trial:

Excelsior, Greenwood
New Hope, Pollard
Pleasant Valley, Trumann
Dollarway, Pine Bluff
Pleasant Ridge, Greers Ferry
Boswell
Dolph
Hicks First, Ashdown
First, Junction City
Holly Island, Rector
First, Altus
First, Ash Flat
First, Delaware

Pastor

Charles Van Pelt
Leonard Williams
Frank Hendrix
Haskell Orrick
J. C. Verser
Don Phillips
Manuel Macks
Delbert Garrett
Loy Garner
Paul L. Seegraves
David Morris
O. I. Ford
Don Corbitt

Association

Concord
Current-Gains
Trinity
Harmony
Little Red River
Rocky Bayou
Rocky Bayou
Little River
Liberty
Current-Gains
Clear Creek
Rocky Bayou
Concord-Dard.-Russ.

Harrison First raises over \$600,000

Late in 1975, First Church, Harrison, had its house committee do a complete study on the church's repair needs. The committee determined that it would cost approximately \$100,000 to put the church plant in good condition. Some suggested that the church relocate.

Pastor Carroll D. Caldwell then appointed a long-range planning committee. Upon completion of their work, the congregation was offered two options — either to remain at the present site or to pursue plans to relocate. The congregation voted to relocate.

After additional study the church voted to purchase a 30-acre tract of land approximately one mile from the Court House. "Our church's new location," Caldwell said, "will still allow us to be a downtown church and yet it will provide adequate space for any future needs. In our present location we are completely land locked."

Another major decision made by the congregation was to raise as much money as possible toward the construction of the new church plant. The services of an outside fund-raising firm were secured.

Major committee members were enlisted for the fund-raising effort. Caldwell said, "The response of our people was excellent. Not a single person contacted for a major committee responsibility refused to serve."

Approximately 35 men were secured to go into the houses of every resident member and distribute a brochure on an upcoming revival and the church fund-raising effort. In each home a team member led in prayer.

The effort was to make the program more spiritual than financial. Robert Burdine, spiritual emphasis director for the campaign, said, "Serving in this program is probably the greatest blessing I have received during the four years I have been a member of this church. The greatest blessing was the privilege of leading in prayer in the homes of our church members."

The highlight of the effort was an all-church banquet, paid for out of the expenses of the fund-raising program. Reports were given and pledges were turned in at the banquet which ex-

ceeded the church's minimum goal of \$250,000.

The church continued to receive pledges during the month of June which, when they were all in, exceeded the maximum or "Hallelujah Goal" of \$500,000. The church has now received over \$606,000 in pledges and has \$220,000 cash in hand. The pledges are to be paid out in three years. The campaign, emphasizing "Equal Sacrifices, not Equal Gifts," brought pledges ranging from \$1 to more than \$100,000. "Many people who have made no pledge are giving for our building systematically," said Caldwell. "Others say they will more than double their pledges. I believe our church will exceed \$700,000 by the end of the three-year period."

Church leaders feel that the fund-raising program has been very beneficial to the church. Richard Hudson, chairman of the building Steering Committee, said, "This program has brought our church family closer together spiritually."

Dale Taylor, campaign director, said, "The key to success with Baptists is to present needs in the proper way and ask them to pray about the matter. Our congregation has done this and the response has been magnificent."

Bennie Ellis, promotion director, said, "This effort did a great deal for our church because it had many of our people working together for a common cause in a spirit of prayer."

The total project cost will be \$1.5 million. The new sanctuary seating 650 people and the education building caring for 550 people, will be located on a 30-acre tract of land.

The second phase, to be constructed at a later date, will expand the sanctuary to a seating capacity of 1,000 by use of a balcony and calls for the construction of an additional education building to care for another 500. Plans call for the construction of a Family Life building as a third phase.

Construction was begun in October, 1977, and it is estimated that the building will be completed by the latter part of this year.



Carroll Caldwell is pastor of the Harrison church.

The fund-raising program will enable the congregation to relocate and construct the new church plant. The congregation had \$100,000 in hand when the fund raising program was begun, and the present church plant has been sold for \$250,000. Caldwell said, "It is very possible that we will need to borrow less than \$400,000 to complete our new facility."

Caldwell believes that the future of First Church is bright. "The growth of Harrison is very stable," he said. "There are a number of fine Southern Baptist churches in our town, but all of us have been land locked. All are very close to their maximum potentials with their present facilities and space. A Baptist church in our community has the responsibility of providing necessary space and facilities to reach people.

"Our new facilities," Caldwell continued, "will enable us to major on quality as well as quantity. Our church will be able to provide a choice of programs, particularly on Sunday evening. In this way we should be able to meet the needs and interest of many different kinds of people."

starts new church plant

BELOW: Members of the Building Steering Committee were (from left) Bennie Ellis, Dale A. Taylor, Richard Hudson and Robert Burdine.

RIGHT: W. J. Moore, 105-year-old member of the church, attended his third groundbreaking for the church when they turned the sod for this new building. (ABN photos)



Boyce Bible School Center adds teacher for winter term

The winter term for the Little Rock Center of the Boyce Bible School will begin Feb. 10, which is one week later than planned, and they will have a new member of the faculty. Freddie Pike, associate for youth work with the state convention's Sunday School Department, will teach a course on Vacation Bible School.

Other teachers for the term, which still runs through April 1, will be W. T. Holland, director of the school, and Raymond Coppenger.

The classes meet at Central Baptist Hospital at 12th and Wolfe Streets, Little Rock. Parking is provided and a cafeteria is located in the building. Overnight lodging is available free for Friday nights to a limited number of students. Courses cost \$15 each up to three courses or a maximum of \$50 tuition per student. Textbooks are available through the Baptist Book Store.

Prospective students may contact Dr. W. T. Holland at 60 Warwick Rd., Little Rock 72205, or at 227-9324.

Paul Malcolm Holt (center) is the second student to receive a diploma from the Boyce Bible School through the Little Rock Center. Holt is pastor of Third Street Church, Arkadelphia, and is a junior at Ouachita University. Dr. Holland presented the certificate to Holt Jan. 20 and had one for his wife, Belinda, for her help.

Winter term schedule

Fri. 6:00-7:55 p.m.	—MS 6103 (1) The Bible & Missions	Holland
Fri. 6:00-7:55 p.m.	—NT 6241a Interpreting Matthew	Coppenger
Fri. 8:00-8:25 p.m.	—Assembly (All Friday students)	
Fri. 8:20-10:15 p.m.	—OT 6224a (1) Interpreting Isaiah	Coopenger
Fri. 8:20-10:15 p.m.	—NT 6041 (1) N.T. Survey (Gospels)	Holland
Fri. 10:20-11:15 p.m.	—FE 6001b Field Education	Holland
Sat. 7:45-9:40 a.m.	—OT 6224h (1) Interpreting Amos	Coopenger
Sat. 9:45-10:10 a.m.	—Chapel (All Saturday students)	
Sat. 10:15-12:10 (Noon)	—RE 6144 Vacation Bible School	Pike
Sat. 12:50-2:45 p.m.	—NT 6243b Interpreting I Corinthians	Holland



Your state convention at work

Stewardship

A bigger pie

Carl Bates, pastor of the First Church, Charlotte, N.C., and former president of the SBC, had a terse comment when he looked at economic realities. "The real problem is not how we cut the pie," he said, "the problem arises from the smallness of the pie itself."

The comments came as Bates looked

at the Cooperative Program pie. He felt Baptists should major on enlarging the pie by bold stewardship. Bold Mission Thrust, whether in the local church or the Convention, waits on the individual believer.

Warren Hultgren, speaking at the convention in Kansas City said, "If it is to

be, it is up to me." The individual Baptist asks, "How?"

The pie is larger. Per capita income keeps going up. Baptists gather their share from the farms, factories, services, and offices in Arkansas.

While the family pie gets larger, financial demands on the family budget also increase. Inflation cuts into the buying dollar. Food bills go up. Transportation costs keep increasing.

Taxes will take a larger share of the pie in 1978. A new Social Security bill touches paychecks before they leave the office. Increased pay scales move wage earners into higher tax brackets. After repeated efforts, some citizens vote themselves higher local taxes.

After watching repeating assaults on the budget, families question their ability to increase their offerings. The church's slice may remain the same, or in some instances, decrease.

It takes more than a New Year's resolution to increase gifts. It takes firm commitment. Somewhere a believer has to decide that he will excel in the grace of giving. Once a commitment is made to Biblical stewardship, the believer has established a principle for dividing his economic pie.

Two brothers fought over one piece of apple pie. The wise mother asked one to cut the pie and the other to take first choice. The pie was divided evenly.

Christian families do the dividing on their budgets. Those who follow the example of the Macedonian believers enlarge the percentage of their gifts to the church. This in turn, enables the church to expand its local and world mission gifts. — James A. Walker, Secretary of Stewardship

Looking ahead: Arkansas events

February 1978

- 2 Area Preschool/Children's Workshops, Monticello, First; Little Rock, First; and Hope, First (Church Training)
- 2- 3 Music Directors Seminar, Camp Paron
- 3- 4 Volunteer/Part-time Music Leadership Workshop, Camp Paron
- 4 Southern Baptist College homecoming
- 5 Share Hope — associational hymn sing
- 5 Baptist World Alliance Sunday
- 5-10 Religious Emphasis Week, Southern Baptist College
- 6-10 Christian Focus Week, Ouachita Baptist University
- 6-10 Associational training schools (Sunday School)
- 12-18 WMU Focus Week
- 12 Race Relations Sunday
- 14 State Vacation Bible School Clinic, Pulaski Heights, Little Rock (Sunday School)
- 17 GA Day Camp Workshop, West Memphis, First
- 18 GA Day Camp Workshop, Jonesboro, Central
- 18 Youth choir festivals, Immanuel, Little Rock, and Little Rock, First
- 19-22 Home Mission graded series study (WMU)
- 23 GA Day Camp Workshop, Little Rock, First
- 23-24 Ouachita Baptist University church music workshop
- 24-25 Regional Library Clinic (Church Training) Little Rock, First
- 28 GA Day Camp Workshop, Ft. Smith, Immanuel
- 27-March 1 Pastors Planning & Leadership Seminar, DeGray Lodge (Church Training)

March 1978

- 1- 3 Directors of Missions Retreat
- 3- 4 Handbell Festival, Arkansas Tech, Russellville
- 5-12 Week of Prayer for Home Missions & Annie Armstrong Easter Offering
- 6 Northwest District Bible Drills & Speakers' Tournament, Rogers, First
- 7 West Central District Bible Drills & Speakers' Tournament, Paris, First
- 9 North Central District Bible Drills & Speakers' Tournament, Melbourne, First
- 10 Central District Bible Drills & Speakers' Tournament, Benton, First
- 10-11 Baptist Men's Meeting, Little Rock
- 12 Home Missions Day in Sunday School
- 12-19 Youth Week
- 13 Southwest District Bible Drills & Speakers' Tournament, Hope, First
- 14 Southeast District Bible Drills & Speakers' Tournament, Warren, First
- 16 Northeast District Bible Drills & Speakers' Tournament, Central, Jonesboro

Correction

Because the ABN received incorrect information, an item on page 7 in the Jan. 19 issue did not properly identify Millard F. Marion, who died Jan. 3. Marion, who had been caretaker of the state assembly grounds, was a resident of Louisiana. The omission of the state left the impression that the Marion family lives in an Arkansas town of the same name. Their correct address is 804 Franklin St., Mansfield, La. 71052.

Two important events

Recently, pastors, staff members and Church Training directors received some information about two important matters. May I take a moment to remind you of these?

Baptist doctrine study

The week of April 17-21 is Baptist Doctrine Study week in our convention. This offers an excellent opportunity to provide some indepth doctrinal study

for all ages. The adult book is *The Doctrine of Man* by William Hendricks. Books are provided for other ages as well. Plan now to observe Baptist Doctrine Study in your church. For more information, write the Church Training Department.

Summer conference centers

Now is the time to make reservations for pastors, Church Training leaders,

staff members and youth groups at Ridgecrest and Glorieta. The Church Training Department will charter a bus to the Church Training Leadership and Youth Conferences at Glorieta July 29-Aug. 4 and at Ridgecrest July 8-14. Watch for more information soon. — Robert Holley

Youth choir festivals Feb. 18

Sponsored by Church Music Department
Arkansas Baptist State Convention



James Woodward

Oklahoma Baptist University
Shawnee, Okla.

Senior high and combined youth choirs Immanuel Church, Little Rock

Schedule:

- 9:00 Registration and room assignment
- 9:30 Adjudication
- 11:00 Dismiss for lunch
- 1:00 Mass rehearsal
- 2:25 Worship program
- 2:45 Dismiss

Junior high and beginning youth choirs

First Church, Little Rock

Schedule:

- 9:00 Registration and room assignment
- 9:30 Mass rehearsal
- 11:00 Dismiss for lunch
- 1:00 Adjudication
- 2:15 Worship program
- 2:45 Dismiss



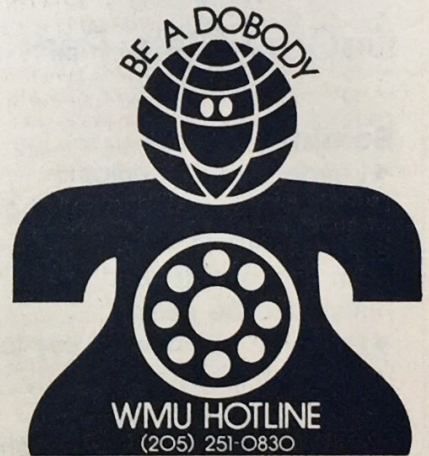
Don Wright

High School Choral Director
Fayetteville

Please send registration to Church Music Department

P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, Ark. 72203

Registration Deadline Feb. 8



Hello, Hotline:
What's Doing in WMU?

BIRMINGHAM, AL—For the cost of one three-minute direct-dialed telephone call to Birmingham, Alabama, a caller can hear a taped message of current happenings in Woman's Missionary Union. Carolyn Weatherford, executive director of Woman's Missionary Union, Auxiliary to Southern Baptist Convention, will share latest WMU facts and figures during the month of February. Messages will be changed every Monday.

The WMU Hotline, in its second year, is provided in connection with WMU Focus Week, February 12-18. Calling the Hotline is recommended for groups and individuals observing WMU Focus Week. The number to call is (205) 251-0830.

Arkansas couple works on first education manual

ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast — An Arkansas missionary couple was in charge of producing the first Theological Education by Extension (TEE) manual to be prepared and printed by Baptist Publications here. The manual, "Sermon Building" by Paul Gericke, is a French translation prepared for use in Francophone Africa (French-speaking West African nations) and other French-

language countries.

First in a series of 36, the manual represents several years of struggle and effort, according to Greta (Mrs. D. Edwin) Pinkston, a Southern Baptist missionary in Ivory Coast and native of Harrison. Her husband, a native of Crossett, was designated to do the work by the Francophone Conference of Baptist Missions in West Africa and began the

manual in the fall of 1974. Work was interrupted by the death of a translator in Paris, France, who was helping.

Work began again after Southern Baptist Missionary Buddy V. Norville, coordinator for Baptist Publications in Francophone Africa, arrived in Ivory Coast and secured a new translator to work on TEE manuals as well as on several Sunday School and correspondence course books.

While Norville was on furlough, missionaries J. Larry Cox, Barbara (Mrs. James H.) Lassiter, and journeyman Betty Kay Abell completed the manual.

For the final stage, several missionaries, two office employees, and several national Christians formed a long assembly line in the living room of the Coxes' home to assemble pages, staple, and bind more than 300 copies, says Mrs. Pinkston.

Pastor's Planning and Leadership Seminar

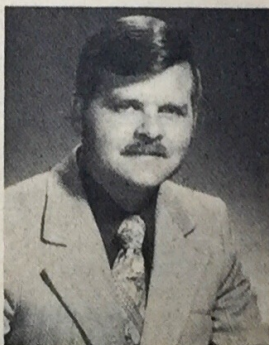
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DeGray State Park Lodge Arkadelphia

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- An appropriate leadership style for the pastor
- Personal planning: a key to effective ministry
- How to manage conflict
- Understanding my leadership strengths and how to build on them

Seminar leader



Walter Bennett
Consultant
Church Administration Dept.
Nashville, Tenn.

Sessions

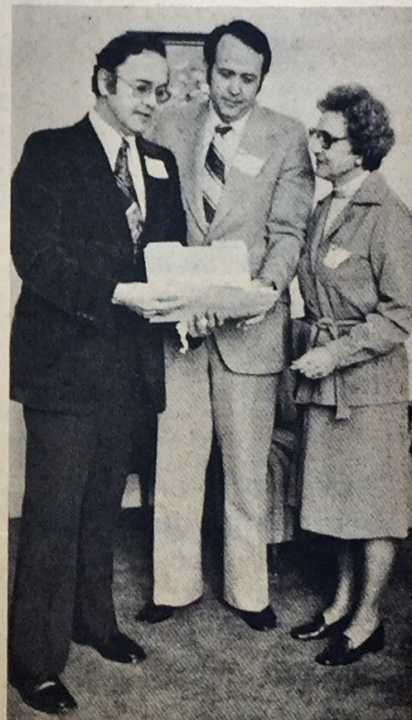
Monday
1:00-9:00 p.m.

Tuesday
8:45 a.m.-9:00 p.m.

Wednesday
8:45-11:45 a.m.

For additional information and registration
Write or Call

Church Training Department
Arkansas Baptist State Convention
P.O. Box 552
Little Rock, Ark. 72203
(501) 376-4791



Agency board officers

These three Baptists are the 1978 officers of the Board of Trustees of Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services. They are Emil Williams, president, pastor of First Church, Jonesboro; Jack Lovell, vice-president, from Ozark; and Mrs. Helen Snarr, secretary-treasurer, from Monticello.

Pray for these dedicated servants of the Lord who give of themselves so faithfully in this ministry. — Johnny G. Biggs, Executive Director, Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services.

God's action in history

Feb. 5, 1978

Psalms 105:1-11, 43-45

The title of our lesson arouses interest in that it speaks of God and what he is doing or did with Israel. When we think of history we think of official documents, but really for us as Christians, history is the unfolding of God's plan for the world. The Bible is a history book. The Psalms are history in poetical form. The inspired writers have given us history to anchor our faith and to learn facts that we may know what to believe. We also have biblical history to give praise and glory to God.



Dishongh

God's praise with an awareness of him in heart and mind we truly worship.

The suggestion is to "glory in his name." How can we as Christians glory in anything less than God? There are idols in this world and religions that are fashioned by men but what are they when compared to God and the fellowship he offers to all who are willing to respond to his invitation. We have cause to rejoice, but note in that same verse the rejoicing is done by those who seek the Lord. One does not drift into close fellowship with God. This fellowship becomes a reality when we desire to have it and pursue it. If we seek, he reveals himself. He rewards those who seek him (Heb. 11:6) and Jesus told us that he would not turn any away who come seeking him (John 6:37). We seek the Lord for the joy of being his child, but we also seek that we may have life and strength that comes from no other source. Dedication to God leads to an inward joy and even though Christians ought to have happy faces that reflect Jesus there may be times when this joy will be reflected in an inward assurance.

The psalmist appeals to us to remember God's works. This is right for we are not to look at Israel's accomplishments, or our own achievements, but rather to what God has done through Israel and through us. This Thanksgiving was also because Israel was the seed of Abraham and heirs of God's promise. How could they fail to remember this blessing? How can we fail to remember his blessings upon us? Israel was chosen of God, but not because of her goodness or greatness, but rather out of God's free mercy, thus the choice was not to privilege only, but rather to obedience and service. Our position as Christians is not because of our goodness, but because of God's grace. We are not only privileged to be his children but also we have responsibility in service.

A call to renewed faith (Psalms 105:7-10)

The God of the universe is Israel's God. The Canaanite nations worshiped

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Gods of stone, each nation choosing a pagan deity for their own. Israel did not choose a God out of many Gods, rather the God of heaven chose them. They, because of this, could praise God for his faithfulness to his covenant.

The relationship God had with Israel was based on the covenant that God had made and that they had accepted. God does not forget, he remembers forever. In the same fashion that God remembered his covenant with Israel he remembered the new covenant that was ushered in through Jesus Christ. The word says (Acts 2:39) "The promise is to you and your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Just as the first covenant was made with Israel, the second one embraces all nations.

Today we have God's promise of salvation in Christ. God will not turn away any who call on him, and as (Rom. 8:31-39) says nothing can separate us from his love. Too, we have the assurance of security in him for the word says "nothing can pluck us out of the father's hand." What wonderful assurance we have. This assurance really is a covenant relationship.

A call to obedience (Psalms 104:43-45)

Our lesson text leaves out verse 12 through 42 of the psalm, however here the psalmist describes the wonderful way God moved among the people of Israel from their settlement in Egypt to the giving to them of Canaan. God's faithfulness to his promise brought them to observe his statutes and keep his laws. This relates to our position in that just as Israel's entrance into the promised land was a positive call to obedience; our redemption obligates us to obey his law.

Conclusion

Our lesson is all about God in history, but the acts of God did not cease at the close of the Old Testament. God's acts there were preparatory steps for the sending of Christ, and Christ did in person, God's works. We need to remember his acts on our behalf for in so doing we will strengthen faith and deepen gratitude. Let's praise God for his acts in history for history would have little meaning if God were not a part of the history.

A call to thanksgiving (Psalms 105:1-6)

Here is a request for God's people to lift voice in praise to our Lord and thank him for his mighty deeds. Israel could honestly thank God for direction, sustaining power, for life, and for the nation all of which was God's work among them. The people of Israel had much to be thankful for even as we today. The psalmist urges us to call on the name of the Lord as we give thanks. This is calling on God as Jehovah God. When we, his people, honestly call on him we can be assured that he is ready to hear and to answer.

We are directed to "make known his deeds among the people." Here is Thanksgiving, but also here is evangelism. If we are his then there is laid upon us the necessity of proclamation. "Tell the people" is our command. Note the word "people" is plural and indicates the necessity of telling the nations of the world. We are to tell his deeds and what they are. Yes, his works are many, but for we Christians, the greatest thing God has done is give his son for us. Thanksgiving then is saying "Thank you God for giving me life eternal", or "Thank you God for sending your Son."

Thanksgiving takes on the form of praise. "Sing unto him" is saying that our singing is not just for men to hear, but is for praise to God. In other words the singing is not for show but is for praise or for worship and when we sing

The secret of fruitful living

Feb. 5, 1978

John 15:1-12, 16-17

As I write this lesson series, I have before me three amazing pictures taken from space. One is a marble-size view of earth as the Apollo 8 Spacecraft orbited the moon. Another is a full view of earth showing a great deal of Africa and the Asian mainland. This was taken from the Apollo 17 spacecraft on its way to the moon. The third picture is a closer view of earth from about 18,000 nautical miles away as viewed from the Apollo 16 spacecraft. The United States and Mexico are clearly visible. The point is this: an untrained eye viewing these photographs for the first time would not know whether life existed on earth or not. All that is visible is land mass, clouds, and water. But an expert could analyze these photos and determine the possibility of life. Yet he still would not know for sure that life did exist until closer examination was made.

As you get closer to earth then rivers and mountains and buildings and cars and finally people become visible. Upon landing you then would discover a swarm of people nearly three billion strong. What are all these people doing here? Where are they going and what are they trying to accomplish? Were you to ask each and every one, the same answer would be given though each would express it in a different way. Everyone is searching for meaning and purpose to life. We all want to "add a little to the woodpile" before we leave this planet in death. But how, is the three billion dollar question.

The apostle John recorded the answer to this question and it is available to everyone. This amazing secret came out of a conversation Jesus had with his disciples just before dying on the cross. It was entrusted to a handful of men some 2,000 years ago. They received it, not to keep it, but to share it. Now that we have received it, we too must pass it on as quickly as possible.

The secret of fruitful living is union with Christ. There, now you know. Millions have found it to be true from trial and success. It is a spiritual law as real as



Brockwell

the law of gravity in the physical world. It works because it is of Godly origin and has been validated by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God's Son.

What then is this union with Christ, which is the secret of fruitful living?

Know where you stand

Perspective is all important in the Christian life. We are so earthly oriented by necessity that we sometimes lose sight of the fact that we are actually spiritual in origin and purpose. At some point we must let Jesus Christ substitute his life for ours because he is the vine — the giver and sustainer of life. The Christian remembers that he is dependent upon Christ.

Are you willing to accept Christ's attitude toward people? Are you willing to submit to Christ's discipline? Are you available for service to Christ?

Consider what Jesus said about pruning, for example. The disciples were a gangly bunch of branches growing around Christ. When you look at them as a group they bear little resemblance to the purpose and mission of Christ. Yet that is typical of a tree or a vine in pruning. It looks awkward. Yet in due time it grows into a beautiful thing and bears its proper fruit.

Jesus pruned his branches (disciples) by his teaching. He brought the truth of God to bear upon their attitudes and actions. At first they were not aware of the power of his teaching until the Holy Spirit made those words come alive in their hearts. Then their lives took on the same direction and purpose of Christ.

Now the Spirit of Christ uses the same method today. The Word of God drastically prunes the barren areas of our lives and we grow into the likeness of our Saviour. Are you learning his Word, absorbing his Word? The Christian remembers to depend upon Christ.

Stay with the plan

Satan has lied to you. He has said that since you were "saved" several years ago, you can now do what you wish. If you were to follow those directions you would soon be useless in God's

kingdom. And "uselessness invited disaster" (Barclay).

Remember how it was in the beginning? You accepted Christ in faith and you experienced his power so greatly that you attempted great things in his Name. Well, the Christian life has not changed; you have changed. Christ's game plan for living remains intact. Stay in fellowship with him and you may ask anything in his Name and he will give it to you.

Now analyze what you have been asking for. Has it been related to Christ in any way? A vine only has one desire — to bear fruit. It wants to grow strong so it can produce more fruit. God wants to strengthen your physical, mental and social life but it is to be so you can bear fruit for him. God wants to prosper your health and finances so you can bring glory to his Name. Men will think of God when they see you and you will be greatly blessed also.

Keep Christ at hand

Communication is the master key to all of life. This is true in business, in family living, in world politics. It is especially true in spiritual things. You must stay in touch with God. Jesus knew and followed his Father's will because he stayed in constant touch. How much more do we need to stay in touch with Christ!

Jesus revealed something to his disciples that would help them keep their minds upon him. He said: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you . . ." (John 15:16a).

Remember this! Lay it down into your subconscious so that every thing you do will grow out of it. Living by this great truth will make you grateful and loving and that is the fruit you are to bear. "These things I command you, that ye love one another" (John 15:17).

"We are chosen for love! We are sent out into the world to love one another. Sometimes we live as if we were sent into the world to compete with one another, or to dispute with one another, or even to quarrel with one another. But the Christian is sent into the world to live in such a way that he shows what is meant by loving his fellowmen" (Barclay).

Thank you, Lord, for the secret of fruitful living!

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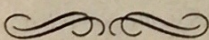
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choral, composition
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Attendance report

Jan. 22, 1978

Church	Sunday School	Church Training	Church adns.
Alexander, First	72	37	1
Alpena, First	32		
Ash Flat, First	62		
Batesville, First	195	124	2
Bentonville, Central Avenue	67	30	
Berryville			
First	124	51	
Freeman Heights	118	52	
Biscoe, First	57	35	
Booneville			
First	211		
Mission	19		
South Side	83	50	
Bryant, First Southern	117	69	3
Cabot			
First	351	83	
Zion Hill	115	62	
Caledonia	26	23	1
Camden, Cullendale First	455	161	
Charleston, First	134	55	
Conway, Second	380	174	
Crossett			
First	403	158	
Mt. Olive	257	111	
Danville, First	174	44	3
Des Arc, First	164	84	
El Dorado, West Side	401	385	7
Forrest City, First	359	54	
Ft. Smith			
First	1188		3
Grand Avenue	922	223	1
Mission	12		
Trinity	113	35	
Fouke, First	82	56	
Gentry, First	115	55	
Grandview	84	54	6
Greenwood, First	304	156	3
Hampton, First	120	62	
Hardy, First	58	19	
Harrison, Woodland Heights	82	33	
Hope, First	243	88	
Hot Springs, Park Place	109	51	
Hughes, First	161	52	
Jacksonville, Second	117	42	3
Jonesboro			
Friendly Hope	134	85	
Nettleton	256	117	
Lavaca, First	274	120	
Little Rock			
Crystal Hill	96	41	
Life Line	313	91	2
Martindale	62	29	
Wakefield	38	22	2
Magnolia, Central	551	199	5
Melbourne, Belview	94		3
Mulberry, First	199	129	4
Murfreesboro			
First	121	26	
Mt. Moriah	48		
North Little Rock			
Harmony	48	26	
Levy	234	101	
Paragould			
Calvary	219	149	
East Side	287	138	
First	362	131	
Pine Bluff			
Centennial	107	39	
East Side	113	60	
Lee Memorial	209	79	5
South Side	423		1
Watson Chapel	292	86	
Rogers			
First	513	150	5
Immanuel	420	106	7
Russellville			
First	485	104	3
Second	123	52	
Springdale			
Caudle Avenue	127	64	
Elmdale	299	105	
First	1329		6
Texarkana, Shiloh Memorial	115	78	1
Van Buren, First	417	161	
Vandervoort, First	32		
West Helena, Second	191	134	
Wooster, First	107	71	
Yellville, First	117	35	

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Foreign mission briefs

LOME, Togo — A Baptist student center was opened here recently by Southern Baptist missionaries Mr. and Mrs. W. Rex Holt Jr. During the first three weeks, the center registered 230 students, each of whom was told about the meaning of the gospel of Jesus Christ. All received a copy of the gospel of John and related study aids. The center has reading and study rooms equipped with Christian literature and cassette tapes. As a part of the center program, Christian films are shown and the students participate in Bible study groups and recreational activities.

New Israeli law may mean trouble for Christians

JERUSALEM (BP) — The Israeli Parliament has passed a new law that could be "misused in restricting religious liberty in Israel," according to the United Christian Council (UCC).

The law, making it a criminal offense to offer material inducements for conversion to another religious belief, is based on the "myth" that Christians bribe people to join their religious community, said Southern Baptist representative Robert L. Lindsey.

Southern Baptists serving in Israel have representatives on the United Christian Council which registered official protest of the law. In addition, Southern Baptist representatives met with the director of the Ministry of Religion. Lindsey reported that meeting was good, although "strong words" were exchanged.

"The offering of material inducements for conversion is totally unethical and has never been a part of our missionary effort," said J. D. Hughey, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's administrator for that area. "The only danger is that false accusations may be made."

The chairman of the United Christian Council, Naem Ateek of the Evangelical Episcopal Church, said he knows of no Christian group in the country that engages in such practices.

In Israel, changing one's religious beliefs means moving from the community and breaking many relationships. "The theory is that nobody would change unless there were advantages in doing so," Hughey said.

Southern Baptist representatives and other evangelical groups encourage

new Christians to stay within their own community.

Lindsey said wording of the law is quite vague. Punishment for one offering "unfair" inducements can be as much as five years in prison plus a fine of 50,000 pounds. The one taking the bribe faces up to three years imprisonment and a smaller fine.

Considering the ambiguity of the law one UCC member protested that an "innocent act of charity" given to a person interested in learning about another faith could be considered "unfair inducement." Baptist representatives were also concerned about the possible harassment of persons who had already become Christians.

One parliament member who pushed for passage of the bill assured Christians that it applied equally to Jews seeking to convert Christians to Judaism. According to Israeli figures, about 500 Christians convert to Judaism annually, primarily for purposes of marriage.

Lindsey said the secular Jewish community was also unhappy with the law. The head of the Israeli Secularist League denounced the law as a "charter for persecution of Christians."

However, the most objectional wording of the bill was in the introduction which was not made a part of the official Knesset (parliament) record. This section accused Christian missionaries in Israel of offering "huge sums of money" to "ensnare the souls" of the poor.

The bill was originally intended to stop all missionary activity, but was changed in the interest of religious liberty. It was introduced by Rabbi Yehudah Meir Abramowitz of the ultra orthodox Agudat Israel Party.

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LUANDA, Angola — The president of the Angola Baptist Convention, Adelino Manuel Chilundulo, returned recently from a visit with Southern Baptist missionaries Mr. and Mrs. Curtis L. Dixon in Portugal. He is working with the Dixons in plans to ship 3,000 Bibles here for use in Baptist work.

MANILA, Philippines — Baptist churches are beginning to see new people in their worship services, people who made decisions for Christ during the Billy Graham crusades held at the end of November. Churches throughout the area have followed-up on the decision cards that were filled out during the crusade and have invited the new converts to nearby churches. More than 22,000 public decisions for Christ were made, 13,500 of which were professions of faith.

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