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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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When Families Crumble

Arkansas Baptist

December 22, 1988

Students
Sharing
Family



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Cover Story



ABN photo / Millie Gill

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"Students Sharing Family" is the theme for this year's "Student Day at Christmas" emphasis.

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GOOD NEWS!

The Lord's Supper

I Corinthians 11:20-34

The old monk announced that he was going to preach on the love of God. On Sunday the cathedral was filled to capacity in anticipation of the monk's sermon. For a long time the monk stood silently before the congregation waiting for complete silence. When the congregation was motionless, the monk lifted a candle from the candelabra and walked to a statue of Christ hanging on the cross. He held the candle beside the pierced hands, the pierced feet, the wounded side, and the crown of thorns. In that holy moment the great assemblage had "heard" with their hearts the love of God.

When God's people come together to observe the Lord's Supper, it is a time to hear again of the love of God. Few words are spoken, but the majesty of the moment is not lost. For those who love Christ, the Lord's Supper is a blessed time.

It is a time of remembrance—On the night before Jesus died, he took bread and broke it, saying, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me" (I Co. 11:24, RSV). As we receive the Lord's

Supper, we remember God's atonement for our sins. The bread and the cup are symbols of Jesus' death on the cross for the remission of sin.

It is a time of reflection—Paul said, "But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup" (I Co. 11:28). The word translated "examine" (*dokimazeto*) means "to put to the test." The word was often used to describe the testing of metal to see if it were genuine.

It is a time of rejoicing—The Lord's Supper is a time of rejoicing because we know that our sins have been forgiven. The Lord's Supper is a time of rejoicing because we are proclaiming the gospel. Paul said, "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death" (I Co. 11:26).

Although we may be facing difficult days, the Lord's Supper reminds us that our Lord is coming back. He will win the final day.

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IT'S UPLIFTING

Former Buddhist Preaches Now

VENICE, La. (BP)—Thy Sith took a giant step from being a priest in his native Buddhist religion in Cambodia to become a Baptist minister of the gospel in Venice, La.

Speaking at his recent ordination service, Thy said the change to Christianity was difficult because Buddhism is based on ruling others. Christianity teaches serving others.

He serves a congregation of about 45 Cambodians in Venice, nearly 70 miles south of New Orleans, where the locals say Louisiana begins.

As former residents vacated the community that was based on the oil industry, Cambodians moved in to work as fishermen, said Hebert Nettleton, pastor of First Baptist Church of Venice, sponsor of the mission.

"They have found a home-away-from-home," Nettleton explained.

Churches in Plaquemines Baptist Association sponsored an outreach ministry providing food and clothing for people in need. Cambodians responded to Baptists' offer of help and began to attend worship and other meetings.

Bibles in the Cambodian language were located in California and brought to Venice. "When the people could read it in their language, they began to understand," said Nettleton.

Thy was converted in a Thai refugee camp. He later was a Bible teacher in the Koa-I-Dang Camp in Thailand.

Following his arrival in the United States seven years ago, he was assistant mission pastor for the Cambodian Baptist Fellowship of Lynn, Mass., before moving with his family to Venice.

Bob Ellzey, chairman of deacons and member of First Baptist Church, surveyed the community and found 80 Cambodian families. The congregation was encouraged to pursue mission work with them, co-sponsored by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board and the Louisiana Baptist missions division, with Thy as pastor.

Thy leads the Cambodian worship services in the fellowship hall of First Church while the congregation meets in the auditorium.

Thy holds Bible study in various homes and has Bible study in his trailer for fishermen.

Thy has no plans to return to Cambodia but hopes "Christianity can be taken there," he said.

Celebrating Christmas

J. EVERETT SNEED

Each year a cult leader forcefully declares that Christ was not born on Dec. 25. "Therefore," he says, "we should not celebrate Christmas." At the climax of his presentation he always urges his listeners to send the money that they would spend on Christmas gifts to him. The important issue is not when Christ was born but how we celebrate Christmas.

The cult leader states a half truth. He is correct in saying that Christ almost certainly was not born on Dec. 25. There, also, is considerable error in the year of Christ's birth. A.T. Robertson, the internationally known expositor and author of *A Harmony of the Gospels* observes, "If one hazards an opinion, it would be that the birth of Christ occurred in the summer or early fall . . . B.C. 5 or 6."

The statement of Dr. Robertson coincides with the biblical account. Obviously, the shepherds would not have been in the field as late as the end of December. The Dec. 25 date for Christmas was adopted in the 4th century.

However, the time of Christ's birth is not as important as the spirit in which the celebration takes place. Unfortunately, too many of us have forgotten the real purpose of Christmas. Certainly God is not honored when the season is a time for drunkenness or wild revelry. Others have made the season totally commercial, a time in which they seek to amass every penny possible.

The most important question is: What is the true spirit in which we should celebrate Christmas? First, we should remember that it is a time for giving rather than a time for receiving. The greatest gift that was ever made to man was God's gift of his only begotten son (Jn. 3:16). Each of us should pattern our activity at Christmas after that of God himself.

The birth of Christ should center on the incarnation. John tells us, "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God" (Jn. 1:1). The declaration of the evangelist is that Jesus was already present before the creation began.

John says, "The Word was God." Hence, when we see Jesus we discover perfectly and completely the heart, the mind and the character of God. Jesus and Jesus alone reveals to us what God was, is and will be.

The idea of the incarnation was proclaimed long before John. Isaiah, the prince of the Old Testament prophets, said,



"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulders; and his name shall be called wonderful, counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting father, the prince of peace" (Is. 9:6)

The incarnation expresses man's capacity for God. If man did not have the ability to receive God, God would not have sent his Son into the world. Our human nature, then, is spiritual.

Closely related to the incarnation is the virgin birth. Both Matthew and Luke present Jesus as being born without a human father. Some argued that the miraculous conception is untrue because it is stated only on two occasions. First, it is not necessary to assert a fact repeatedly to make it correct.

The Bible gives credence to the virgin

birth in that it describes Christ as pre-existent. The Messiah (Greek equivalent of "Christ") is foretold in the Old Testament and is repeatedly stated in the New. If Jesus was God, one would expect him to be born in an unusual way.

The virgin birth is closely related to the way one views the saving work of Christ. If one views Jesus as a divine savior and the Son of God, in an exclusive and particular sense, he is likely to believe the virgin birth. But if one regards him only as a son of God, as others are, he doubtless will deny the virgin birth.

The doctrine of the virgin birth is vital because it declares the total lordship of Christ. The entire New Testament declares that Christ is to be Lord of every area of the Christian life. He is Lord because of his pre-existence, his unique birth and sonship. Since this is true, he is head of the church and has every right to the life of every Christian.

The spirit of Christmas also requires an attitude of worship. As we gather on Dec. 25, each family should take time to praise God for what he has done for us in providing eternal life through the giving of his son Jesus.

Finally, those who have the true spirit of Christmas will enjoy fellowship. God felt that it was so important for man to communicate with him that he took the initiative and sent his Son to earth clothed in human flesh. One of our greatest needs is fellowship, a partnership between God and each other.

Giving, worship and fellowship are visual expressions of our love for God and each other. If Christmas involves these ingredients, it is likely that we will discover the true spirit of Christmas.

Arkansas Baptist

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BOB PARKER

Today's Issues



A Ghetto Lesson

Never have I known anyone as opposed to unnecessary risk gambling such as

horse and dog racing, casinos, and state lotteries as Austin McGuigan, a former attorney general in the state of Connecticut. He is a Roman Catholic lawyer who was born and spent his early years in the Irish ghetto of Boston, Mass.

During last March's annual meeting of the Arkansas Christian Civic Foundation, he related how, until he began to see that most gambling was related to organized crime, he was not opposed to gambling.

Also, in taking a closer, more serious look at the issue, noting especially the devastating effects of all types of gambling on the poor, he began the conversion process to strong opposition.

After telling how illegal bookies in the ghetto neighborhood where he grew up would sometimes discourage the poor from betting money that should be spent on food and clothes for children, Mr. McGuigan stated that legal gambling such as state-operated lotteries showed no mercy to the poor but instead encouraged spending money for lottery tickets.

After his speech last March, someone asked during the question and answer period if organized crime was related to state lottery gambling as he had stated it was to most other gambling. His answer was, "If you in Arkansas vote for state lottery gambling, you will be the 'mob.'"

As one who has spent almost all of his life in Arkansas, I never want to be a member of the "mob," characterized ordinarily as disreputable characters who take unfair advantage of others for financial gain. Genuine love for God and one's neighbor, plus practicing the Golden Rule, are in no way consistent with gambling. Cut out this article and keep it handy to share with others who need to know that there are those besides Baptists and other evangelical Christians who strongly oppose gambling.

Robert A. Parker is director of the Christian Life Council.

Skip Notice

There will be no *Arkansas Baptist* published Dec. 29 because of the Christmas holidays.

BAPTIST STUDENT UNION

Student Day at Christmas

This year's emphasis on Student Day at Christmas falls on Dec. 25. Many churches will reschedule this special event, recognizing college and university students who are home for the holidays, for Wednesday night after Christmas. Whenever it is calendared, it is an important time for students to share with their church.

The theme of this year's emphasis is "Students Sharing Family," based on Ephesians 2:19-22. Those who participate in the service may tell of ways they have discovered new family in a college church, as well as how they have grown to appreciate their home church. Some will have experiences from Baptist Student Union to relate in pointing up areas of growth in their Christian lives. As students help to lead the service it can be an important worship experience for the whole church.

Special activities might be planned by the church while the students are out of school for the holidays. Although schedules may be full, there could be an opportunity for a reception or a fellowship meal with the church staff, students and their families. Sunday School teachers and officers with responsibilities for collegiate aged groups could be involved in renewing contacts. Other fellowship efforts could be built around renewing the "church family" relationships.

More than 50 percent of today's college students commute to a campus near their home community. It is important to recognize that these students, too, need to experience the family atmosphere of the church. All students face challenges to their lifestyles, the challenge of vocational choice, and the need for continued personal growth as a Christian. Student Day at Christmas may be just as important for these students who remained at home.

God has given our churches a tremendous asset in the students within our own family. With planning and preparation the students can share a part of their church's family in a renewed way. A blessing awaits the students as well as the church at this important time of the year.

For additional resources and suggestions, see the "Student Ministry Planbook, 1988-89," or call the Student Ministries Department, Arkansas Baptist State Convention at 376-4791.—George Sims, associate

Living in the Word

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Criswell Bible College
Dallas, Texas

Dr. Gerald Harris
Colonial Heights Church
Jackson, Mississippi

Dr. Ronnie Floyd
First Church
Springdale, Arkansas

Rev. David Miller
Little Red River Assn.
Heber Springs, Arkansas

Dr. James Merritt
First Church
Snellville, Georgia

Dr. Ron Herrod
First Church
Fort Smith, Arkansas

Musicians: Mike and Faye Speck

**For more information, contact:
First Baptist Church at 501-633-2382**

Letters to the Editor

Every Home For Christ

The Baptists of Arkansas have an opportunity in 1989 to turn the hearts of all Arkansas to the Lord! Billy Graham had a crusade in Rochester, N.Y., in September 1988 that changed the whole spiritual climate. Next year Billy Graham will be in Little Rock, Sept. 11-18.

If we do our part the whole state could be changed, and not just central Arkansas.

Every Home For Christ (World Literature Crusade) has a program set up to reach children, adults, and illiterates for Christ in the home. They use it overseas and in the United States.

Put Billy Graham and the Every Home for Christ program together and it should change Arkansas.

Every Home For Christ, Box 7139, Canoga, CA 91304-9930.—**Russ Curry, Bentonville**

Church Daycare

Each year at this time we are reminded of the stable where our Lord was born. We're also reminded of why he was born there: "Because there was no room for them in the inn" (Lk. 2:7b). We understand somewhat, why there was no room for Jesus in the inn, but what about in a Baptist church? Our Lord identified a church by name in Revelation 3:20, and is pleading to come in.

Our state government, with its greedy godless eyes, is looking at our four-year-old children. Most of these children are presently cared for by private nannies. Tragically, most of these children are not wanted in Southern Baptist churches. The reason they are not wanted is because Jesus is on the outside. Matthew 18:1-6, 25:40, and Mark 10:13-16 make it very clear that whoever receives or rejects a little child is receiving or rejecting the Lord Jesus Christ.

There are approximately 33,000 four-year-old children in our state. Arkansas Southern Baptist churches have almost three times the required educational space; excluding sanctuaries, to provide daycare for these children. Not only do we have the space, but it is sitting idle approximately 85 percent of the time. The problem is not the means, but the will. I am always impressed by those churches, and there are several, which have a good Christ-centered daycare for children at least five days each week.

We have already witnessed far too many of our children sacrificed on the altar of secular humanism. It is time for God's peo-

ple to use what God has blessed us with for the purpose of fulfilling the commission Jesus gave us here at home as well as overseas. May God help Arkansas Baptists to say "No," to the idea of four year old daycare in our public schools. May he also convict some of these unconcerned lost people on our church rolls so that they may be saved, then they will know what we are talking about.—**Jim Glover, Heber Springs**

Simple Sacrifice

I have an idea concerning the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering that I would like to share with other Baptists.

The headlines scream at us, "Lottie Moon is starving again." What can we do? I believe we Baptists can vastly increase our Lottie Moon offering by a simple sacrifice. At Christmas time, most families give gifts to one another. My wife and I have asked each other and our grown children to write checks for the amount they would have spent on us. We ask that it be made out to our local church and given to us as a Christmas present. We, in turn, put them in our Lottie Moon Christmas envelope. I would like to call this a Christmas for Christ. Please consider doing this yourself and we will see the Lottie Moon Offering goal go over its mark this year.—**James L. Butts, Mt. Zion, Ill.**

Holy Grail

I am really wondering about us. When we hear about special political meetings to which only a certain persuasion are invited for the purpose of picking candidates and targeting state men to be removed under the false banner of "No one believes the Bible but us," it is time someone spoke up. I don't think most Arkansas Baptists feel that way, and they need to know.

I don't know anyone who doubts the virgin birth, miracles or inspiration. But I do know we have made the convention president's office a "holy grail" over which to crusade to gain control of the nominating committee of the state to control our boards. And I am afraid we have some men who feel that they are too big and too important for even the Lord to rebuke.

Over the next few years, most of our lay people should attend the convention, especially deacons. To be perfectly frank, I really feel all the preachers should stay home for three conventions and let the lay

people run things. Then if we can prove ourselves, be allowed to attend again.

I'm not surprised that pastors wanting absolute authority are being fired. I wouldn't stay in a church under one. Those folks who see the authority of the pastor mixed in with the priesthood of the believer have launched a new doctrine. It should be called the "priest hood-winking the believers."

I feel the office of president should be defused and neutralized by electing board members some other way. And why has it become necessary to be on the Pastors' Conference program to be elected first or second vice-president of the convention?

And I'm hearing that some wish to mobilize messengers (buses) to the convention to gain control. My soul, even gamblers find a stacked deck unacceptable.

For those who will take me to task for my letter, I say to you, I am comfortable before the Lord, and only wish to see demonstrated more fruit of the Spirit that we talk about from our pulpits (or I guess we do).—**Nelson Wilhelm, Waldron**

Scriptural Baptism

This is a response to the writer of the "Arrogant Doctrines" letter in the Nov. 17 issue of the ABN concerning closed communion and alien immersion. He referred to the strictness of some Baptist churches in these areas as "arrogant and unscriptural doctrines" and tries to pass it off as simply a carry-over from the J.R. Graves era.

I've never read more than a sentence or two from the late Bro. Graves, and I don't accept the historical conclusions of J.M. Carroll. I have, however, read the New Testament several times and the teaching on baptism in particular is far closer to Bro. Graves' view than the view of Bro. Cochran from Fort Smith.

He is upset because many churches do not consider, as he puts it, "the immersion of a believer" as valid baptism. Basically, those of us who are more conservative on this issue are simply saying that every time a believer gets dunked does not mean he has been baptized. If he has not been scripturally baptized, he has not been baptized. He may be sincere, wet, and on his way to heaven, but he has not been baptized just as a man who has not been scripturally saved is simply not saved.

In the New Testament, the only valid baptism is one in which there was the proper: (1) Candidate—a believer (Ac. 2:41); (2) Method—immersion (Mk. 1:9-10; Jn. 3:23; etymology of Greek word *baptidzo*); (continued on p. 16)

STORYTELLING

Planting Seeds

by Charles Willis
Baptist Sunday School Board

RIDGECREST, N.C.—Maxine Bersch believes storytelling is a good way "to plant seeds for Jesus."

Bersch, a professional storyteller from Richmond, Va., and media library director at Richmond's Derbyshire Church, said she believes storytelling can prepare children to accept Christ "from the earliest days when they are forming big impressions. I consider that the golden opportunity to plant seeds that later will be brought to fruition by the gospel.

"Through storytelling, the message can be brought so the child is drawn to it," she said during the Church Media Library Conference at Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center.

For more than 40 years, Bersch has been in demand by schools, hospitals, nursing homes, senior citizens' groups, libraries, nursery schools, kindergartens and community organizations. Her storytelling

repertoire, to which she adds regularly, has stories for all age groups. When she took an early retirement six years ago from Richmond Public Library, storytelling became a full-time activity. Today she is in almost constant demand in Virginia and throughout the Southern Baptist Convention.

Bersch's philosophy is that storytelling is "the greatest way to communicate with another human being. While the story is being told, the audience responds and the storyteller responds, so it is not a performance like drama."

Depending on the groups, she uses myths, legends, hero tales, folk and fairy tales and stories from religion.

"People have brought these stories down to us, preserving them just as they did the history of the human race. The love of the narrative, the oldest form of storytelling, is innate in people," she said.

"Once you have a story in your possession, it never leaves you," she declared.

"It's a great teaching tool. Jesus taught by using the parable."

Stories not only communicate, she said, but also they entertain. "They can bring a lot of joy into the lives of people."

Bersch, a member of the National League of Storytellers, said she believes everyone has the innate ability to tell stories.

"You tell stories every day when you tell someone about something that happened to you," she said. "A storyteller is like a person with an ear for music who goes on to study and brings it to its highest point."

Bersch receives letters of appreciation regularly from children who have heard her spin a story. Some say, "One day I'm going to be just like you."

"I'm not concerned about perfection in my sessions, but rather impressions I might be making this week," she said. "This is a model. You don't know what the end might be.

"I believe the Lord called me to this work. I believe all I have done up to now has prepared me for this very special task, that it will bear wonderful fruit for him in this world and the next."

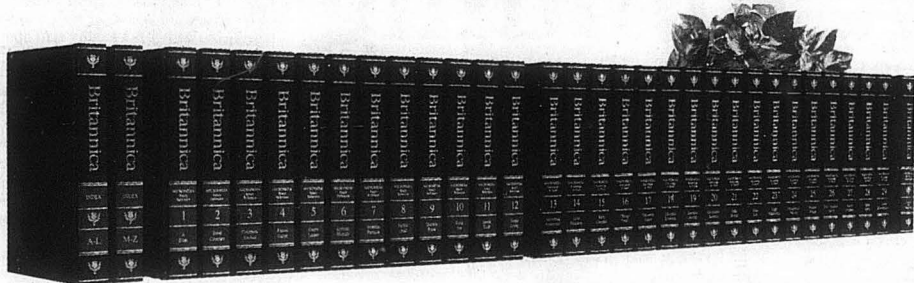
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Storyteller Maxine Bersch

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More Than A Building

by Terri Lackey
Baptist Sunday School Board

NASHVILLE—Many churches see a recreation program as sports, fun and games, while ignoring the concept of recreation as an outreach tool and support ministry, a church recreation leader said.

"Recreation is a support ministry of the church. It embellishes the ministry and helps to focus on the church's need to reach, teach and win people for Christ," said Wendell Newman, field services projects coordinator in the church recreation department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

"Concepts of church recreation sometimes cause problems in churches," Newman said. The idea of recreation as an outreach tool is an important one, especially for those churches which are in the process of building a recreation facility and for those which already have one.

Most churches haul off and build a building without the concept of a program," Harris said. "Churches just should not design a facility without programming—for the youngest child to the oldest person in your church—in mind.

"Church recreation can be the first contact a potential member has with your

church," Harris said.

For those congregations which are planning to build a recreation facility, Harris suggested they utilize available classroom space and begin offering members such activities as aerobics or crafts.

Touring other facilities in other cities or states is an ideal way to map out a program, Harris said. But church recreation ministers and committees must keep in mind that each congregation is unique, he reminded.

During the first year a facility is in operation, Harris said a rigid program is not as important.

"You will have a lot of traffic without programming because of curiosity and the newness of the facility," he said. That first year will give the recreation minister a chance to determine the recreational likes and dislikes of the majority of the church members.

However, if, after the newness has worn off, there is still no recreation program to accompany the facility, "you are in serious, serious trouble," Harris said.

"A building is useless unless you use the program and the people who run it to reach other people for Jesus Christ," Harris added.

BSSB Photo / Jim Veneman



Jan Garner of Harrison Northvale Church (left) works on counted cross stitch at a 1986 church recreation conference.

Where Do We Begin?

by Don Moore
ABSC Executive Director

With the beginning of a new year we are

faced with a very real question, "Where do we begin?" I suppose you could make a new beginning without knowing it, or without asking the question. But, who would want to begin a new year unconscious of the opportunity and responsibility? Perhaps the members of the "Ho-Hum Baptist Church" (yawn-sigh-sleep) would like to. It wouldn't take any planning, praying, giving or witnessing. I guess if you have just "held services" for years, you don't have to ask any questions to just keep on "holding services."

For those unwilling to simply "hold services," I have a suggestion about where to begin. When Jesus was raised from the dead, he could have gone over his Sermon on the Mount, explained all of the things that had happened earlier which his disciples did not understand, or dealt with the oppression of Roman rule. He didn't. He dealt almost exclusively with the commission to preach "the gospel to every creature," to "teach (disciple) all nations," to carry the good news "to the uttermost part of the world."

I think that would be a safe place for us to start, with missions and evangelism, as we start a new year. We would at least know we are on target with the Lord of the church if we establish that as our priority. "How can you do that?" I'm glad you asked. I would like to suggest a few things as starters.

(1) Plan to have a **Witness Commitment Day**, Jan. 8 would be a great time to do that. I don't think you should do it unless you are willing to do three other things. First, do not call people to make a commitment to personally share Christ unless you are willing to provide them some training. Second, do not ask for this commitment unless you are willing to work at keeping an up-to-date list of prospects for witnessing. Third, do not call for this commitment unless you are willing to establish a regular plan of visitation and witnessing that will carry on through the year.

(2) Plan to attend the **State Evangelism Conference**, Jan. 30-31, at First Church, Little Rock. Jesus' plan of discipling was that he called his disciples "that they might be with him." Pastors can hardly hope to improve on Jesus' plan. If you have not



tried his approach, this conference would be a good place and time to begin. At least 66 percent of our churches are declining in attendance. If pastors and people could be joined together in a concert of evangelistic zeal, most of this could be reversed. The dreams of many pastors cannot come true unless they can have lay people join them in their concern for reaching the lost. If you can't attend, pray for those who do.

(3) Have **Baptist Men's Day**, Jan. 22. Have some respected, faithful soul-winners from your church or a guest from another church come and speak on the role and responsibility of Baptist men in missions and evangelism. The advance called for in our efforts for Jesus and his kingdom demand a larger and stronger role of leadership to be taken by Christian men. I wouldn't think you would want to miss this opportunity to highlight and encourage faithful Christian witnessing by your men.

Pastoral Reinforcement—Whatever you believe the authority of a pastor to be or not to be, I know of no one who does not agree that the secret to the progress of any church in any area of its life is the pastor. It is because of this that your state convention tries to provide so much support for them.

The **Pastoral Ministries Conference**, Feb. 20-21, at Immanuel Church, will be a most unusual opportunity. Ten different very practical conferences will be conducted plus several inspirational speakers will be featured. National Baptist pastors will share in this conference. One of their finest Arkansas pastors, Rev. Jerry Black, Greater Paradise Baptist Church in Little Rock, will preach. I covet that our pastors could hear him. You'll find help and hope at this conference!

The **Pastors' Retreat**, March 13-14, will be another special opportunity for renewing and expanding your spiritual capacities as a shepherd of the flock. Strong shepherds can maintain healthy flocks. Dr. Jimmy Millikin will be the Bible teacher for this retreat. Personal renewal and enrichment is the objective of this fine time of fellowship. It happens!

The **New Pastor/Staff Orientation**, April 17-18, is not far away. "One of the most meaningful things we do," is the remark so often heard by those participating in this. Those who have come to the state from other states within the last year are invited to this orientation. Those within the state who are serving in their first position as a pastor or staff person also are included. New friends are made. New discoveries of resources are made. New ap-

preciations develop. A team relationship forms as a bond develops between church leaders and those the convention has called to assist them. Considerable financial assistance makes it possible for almost everyone to attend.

Attention churches: Many pastors cannot receive this help without assistance in their travel and registration costs.

Who helps youth? In churches where there is no youth minister, who carries the major responsibility for helping youth deal with human sexuality, alcohol, drugs, suicide, and pornography? Probably 95 percent of our churches do not have youth ministers. Sunday School, Church Training, RA, Acteen or music leaders who are volunteers usually bear this responsibility. Special help is on the way for you. Hold April 8, on your calendar for a Youth Issues Conference! More later!

"**The Doctrines Baptist Believe**"—A preview study will be provided in connection with the Evangelism Conference for those who plan to teach the book in 1989. Who can doubt that this is a critical area of need in our churches?

Church Media Library Help—Central Church, North Little Rock, is the location for this annual event. The date is Jan. 23-24. Practical conferences on cataloging, administering, promoting and maintaining the Church Media Library will be featured.

Baptist Student Union We Haven't Spent a Penny

We haven't spent a penny of the Third Century Endowment Fund, but eventually we will spend more than we have. This statement does not seem to make economic sense. It is a fact, though, that the endowment fund will soon produce more in spendable income than the principle dollars that make up the investment. And, it will go on earning and earning to support ministry to students.

At the meeting of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention in 1976, our nation's bicentennial year, Arkansas Baptists established a perpetual endowment fund for the expansion of the ministry to college and university students. Churches, associations and individuals joined together to raise over \$1 million. That principal amount, invested through the Arkansas Baptist Foundation, will provide earnings of nearly \$1.1 million by the end of 1988. These investments will continue to produce income for student ministry for years to come.

One matter of concern is that continu-

HELPLINE

ing inflation devalues the earning potential of the principle investment and the dollar value of the income produced. For this reason, there is a need to rebuild the principle annually to cover the inflation rate. There is also a need to be certain that only the most productive investments continue to be transacted, to maximize the annual earnings. The Arkansas Baptist Foundation has done an excellent job in managing this investment.

The only reason the pennies and dollars are important is that they represent people whose lives can be touched by our Lord. The dollars help to provide laborers, materials and programs that all reach toward people. We will not spend a penny of the earnings of this investment except to reach people.

The Student Ministries Department is appreciative of all those who worked to develop the Third Century Endowment Fund. We are also grateful for those who continue to give their support and their dollars to BSU. God is blessing the investment in the lives of our college and university students with dividends that cannot be counted.— **George Sims, associate**

Brotherhood Prayer Needed

During 1989 to 1992 Arkansas Baptists will carry out a mission partnership with Guatemala. This will be a cooperative effort involving Arkansas Baptist churches and associations with new missions and churches in Guatemala.

The Brotherhood Department will coordinate through the Foreign Mission Board/Southern Baptist Convention the activities with the Guatemala Baptist Mission.

Baptist men and women need to begin to pray now for the following:

(1) The missionary leadership in Guatemala. Don Doyle, the Guatemala mission coordinator for the partnership, and George Hardeman, the president of the Guatemala mission.

(2) The development of plans and projects for Arkansas Baptist to help with in Guatemala. Your prayers will be especially important Jan. 7-13, 1989. During those days a planning and strategy meeting will take place between ABCS representatives and Guatemala leadership both national and missionary.

Pray by name for these participants from Arkansas: Don Moore, ABCS executive director; Carey Heard, state convention president; Randall Everett, ABCS executive board president; Bobby Pennington, pastor; Ferrell Morgan, director of missions; Mark Kelly, *Arkansas Baptist*;

Russell and Ina Miller; and Marjorie and Glendon Grober.

(3) God's leadership in the selection of specific activities that will need to be done in Guatemala during 1989.

The Nailbenders for Jesus will initiate their work in 1989 by constructing the new church building in Center Ridge.

We are grateful for the way God used our Arkansas Baptist Men's Disaster Relief Unit during the November tornados. We helped to feed 2,500 meals in the Southside area, some 1700 in Lonoke as well as a full-time ministry of feeding and comforting in the Scott area.

We ought to honor men like Ed Lauderdale, our Disaster Relief Mobile Unit coordinator; Bill Wilson, local coordinator at Southside; pastor Hilton Lane; Wayne Ferguson; Don Gephardt; Gene Sutton; Virgil Case; Jim Sullivan; Perry Carlton; Bill Polensky; Earl Hanlin; Lynn Hopper; Johnny Pierce; Merle Cunningham; and Emmet Chapman.

A letter received from one of the couples at Scott gives local expression to the results of Arkansas Baptist Men's disaster relief efforts. "Words are inadequate to express the appreciation and admiration that we feel for you and your disaster crew that put in so many hours of work at Scott this past week. The delicious hot food was truly God-sent."— **Glendon Grober, director**

Annuity/Stewardship Money Worries

Money Magazine conducts an annual survey among its readers. Family decision makers are worried. Fifty-three percent said they worried about medical costs. Forty-six percent expressed concern about having enough money when they retire. The Annuity Board addresses these two major concerns. Baptist pastors, staff members, employees and financial leaders are worried over medical costs.

A 30 percent increase in medical premiums is a cause for concern. Churches should consider medical insurance as a benefit. Escalating costs call for careful comparison before changing carriers. Participants in the Church Insurance Program should also be aware of the cost containment features of their Annuity Board insurance.

Do ministers and church employees worry about having enough funds for retirement? Many do. Some have delayed participation in the Church Annuity Plan because of low resources. Others delay thinking they have plenty of time. The church can help ease this worry by adopting the Expanded Church Annuity Plan.

Committee members or deacons may take the initiative in providing these benefits for their ministers and church employees. Printed materials and individual consultations are available from your Annuity Representative or from the toll free 1-800-262-0511 number in Dallas.— **James A. Walker, annuity representative**

Administration New CP Film Generates Interest

The premier of "The Darkness Shall Turn," a new film about the Cooperative Program, during the Arkansas Baptist State Convention created a great deal of interest. The available copies of the film have been booked through April, 1989; however, copies of the video are still available from the state office on loan.

Remember that April 16, 1989, is Cooperative Program Sunday. You might want to book the film around that date. Also, October is Cooperative Program Month. You might do well to book the film even now for this month of promotion about Cooperative Program support.

James Powell, of the Southern Baptist Convention Stewardship Commission, said: "This film is very unusual in that it recognizes right off the difficulty of telling the whole Cooperative Program story in just 30 minutes. But it does an excellent job of sharing the excitement and the impact of the mission support channel that has helped us send the message of Jesus Christ to all corners of the world."

Every association has also received a copy of the video of this film. You could borrow this tape from your association. If you want to reserve the film or tape from the state office, please call Janet Ginn, 376-4791.

Church Music Music Festivals

Music festivals come in all forms and for all sizes. They bring together people of like interest for a great musical experience and for fellowship with other church musicians from across the state.

The first festival is for handbells, March 3-4; then comes the Young Musicians, April 15; followed by a new Youth Music Festival, April 22. Finally, there are the Adult Choir Festivals, May 8, 9, and 11.— **Glen Ennes, associate**

Next Month in Arkansas: January

January 7, Baptist Men's Teleconference, *Sherwood First Church, Hot Springs Village Barcelona Road Church, Fort Smith Eastside Church, Mena First Church (Bbd)*
January 8, Witness Commitment Day (Ev)

January 14, RA Counselor Fellowship and Workshop, *North Little Rock Baring Cross Church (Bbd)*
January 22, Baptist Men's Day (Bbd)
January 23-24, State Church Media Library Conference *North Little Rock Central Church (CT)*

January 28, Youth Leaders Christian Life Workshop, *Little Rock (CLC)*
January 30, Baptist Doctrine Study Preview, *Little Rock First Church (CT)*
January 30-31, State Evangelism Conference, *Little Rock First Church (Ev)*

February

February 1-4, Volunteer/Part-Time Music Director Conference, *Nashville, Tenn. (M)*
February 6, State Vacation Bible School Clinic, *Little Rock Immanuel Church (SS)*
February 6-7, ASSIST Training, *Little Rock Immanuel Church (SS)*
* February 10-11, Lay Renewal Fellowship, *North Little Rock Levy*

Church (Bbd)
February 11, Bible Teaching Gathering for Small Sunday Schools, *Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia (SS)*
February 12-18, Focus on WMU
February 16, Leadership Training for Guiding Volunteers in Church and Community Ministries, *Baptist Building, Little Rock (Mn)*

February 19-22, Home Mission Study (WMU)
February 20-21, Pastoral Ministries Conference, *Little Rock Immanuel Church (CT)*
February 24-25, State Single Adult Conference, *Little Rock Markham Street Church (CT)*
February 24-25, Volunteer/Part-Time Music Leader Retreat, *Camp Paron*

March

March 1-3, DOM Retreat, *DeGray Lodge (Mn)*
March 3-4, State Handbell Festival, *Little Rock First Church (M)*
March 3-4, State Church Recreation Conference, *Little Rock Immanuel Church (CT)*
March 5-12, Week of Prayer for Home Missions and Annie Armstrong Easter Offering (WMU)
March 7, Church Arkansas Rally, *Hope First Church (Mn)*
March 9, Church Arkansas Rally, *Benton First Church (Mn)*
March 10-11, HSBYM State Basketball Tournament, *North Little Rock Park Hill Church (Bbd)*
March 13, Northwest Bible Drill and Speaker's Tournament, *Huntsville First Church (CT)*
March 13, Southwest Bible Drill and Speaker's Tournament, *Hope First*

Church (CT)
March 13-14, Statewide Pastors' Retreat, *Camp Paron (Ad)*
March 13-16, Handbell Leadership Seminar, *Nashville, Tenn. (M)*
March 13-16, Senior Adult Choir Leadership Seminar, *Nashville, Tenn. (M)*
March 13-17, Church Building Tour (SS)
March 14, Westcentral Bible Drill and Speaker's Tournament, *Booneville First Church (CT)*
March 14, Southeast Bible Drill and Speaker's Tournament, *Warren First Church (CT)*
March 16, Northcentral Bible Drill and Speaker's Tournament, *Mountain View First Church (CT)*
March 16, Northeast Bible Drill and Speaker's Tournament, *Jonesboro Central Church (CT)*

March 17, Central Bible Drill and Speaker's Tournament, *Little Rock Olivet (CT)*
March 17, Eastcentral Bible Drill and Speaker's Tournament, *Wynne Church (CT)*
March 18, Volunteer/Part-Time Music Leader Retreat, *Murfreesboro First Church (M)*
March 21-22, WMU Annual Meeting, *Rogers First Church (WMU)*
March 24, State Youth Convention, *Statehouse Convention Center, Little Rock (CT)*
March 27-28, Here's Hope Association Steering Committee, *Camp Paron (Ev)*
March 30-31, Minister-Mate Marriage Enrichment Retreat (CT)
March 31-April 2, BSU Leadership Training Conference, *Camp Paron (BSU)*

April

April 8, Youth Issues Institute, *Little Rock (CLC)*
April 11, Commission '89 (Ad)
April 14-15, BSU Volleyball Tournament (Stu)
April 15, Young Musicians Festivals (M)
April 17-18, New Pastor/Staff Orientation, *Baptist Building, Little Rock*

April 20-21, Minister of Education Retreat (CT)
April 20-21, Minister of Youth Conference (CT)
April 22, Youth Music Festival (M)
April 25-28, Area Summer Youth Ministry Conferences (CT)

April 25-29, National Southern Baptist Secretaries Conference (CT)
April 28-29, Church Building Conference (SS)
April 28-29, Royal Ambassador, High School Baptist Young Men Congress (Bbd)
April 28-29, Acteens Encounter

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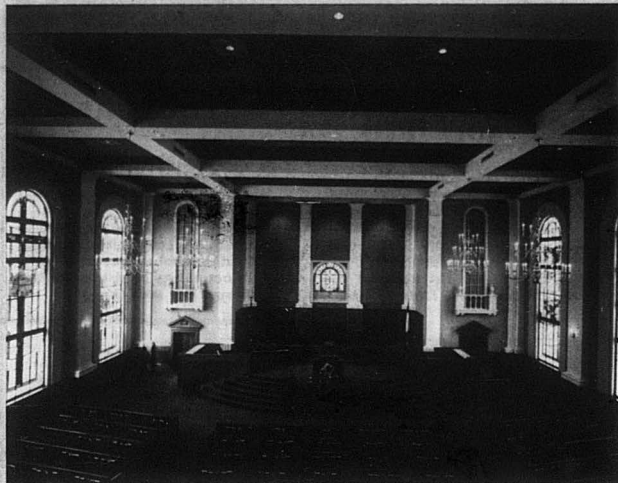
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Heartiest Co

Photo / Richard Leo Johnson



First Baptist Church of Malvern dedicated its completely renovated sanctuary on Sunday, October 16, 1988. The project included new carpeting and pews, new oak paneling and choir rail, a sound system, and eight stained glass windows. The total cost of the renovation was \$430,000. Zane Chesser has pastored the congregation for 16 years. Robert E. Naylor, president emeritus of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, and pastor of the church 1935-37, brought the dedicatory message during an afternoon service.

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LOCAL & STATE

Arkansas All Over

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People

Dennis A. Smith will join the staff of Sherwood First Church Jan. 1 as minister of education, coming there from First Church, Camden, where he has served for five years as minister of education and administration.

Bill Hilburn will begin serving Jan. 1, 1989, as pastor of Bingham Road Church in Little Rock. He and his wife, Mary, will move there from Ward where he has served as pastor of First Church for more than 10 years.

Charles Todd is serving as pastor of Gamaliel Mission in White River Association.

Doug Thorne has resigned as associate pastor of First Church, Batesville, following six years of service to continue his education at Arkansas State University in Jonesboro.



Smith



Hilburn

Leon and Lurene Van Landingham, N.A. and Lenell Holbrook, and Wylie and Bobbie Nell Brown, all members of Union Avenue Church in Wynne, observed their 40th wedding anniversaries Dec. 11 with a reception at the church where all three men serve as deacons. Van Landingham has served for 25 years, Holbrook, 30 years, and Brown, 31 years.

Doug Beasley of Goldsboro, N.C., formerly of Fort Smith, was ordained to the preaching ministry Dec. 18 by Adamsville

Church in Goldsboro where he is in his fourth year of service as minister of music. A graduate of the University of Central Arkansas, Beasley had served churches in Fort Smith and Lavaca prior to moving to Goldsboro in 1985. He is married to the former Jolene Rankin of Mulberry. Beasley is the son of E.C. Beasley of Fairfield Bay and the late Billie Beasley.

Delores Lynn has resigned as minister of childhood education at Park Hill Church in North Little Rock, effective Dec. 31 following more than seven years of service.

Jonathan Payne began serving Dec. 11 as pastor of First Church, Coal Hill. He and his wife, Linda, moved there from East Mount Zion Church, Clarksville.

Kenneth McGee of Fort Smith began serving Dec. 11 as pastor of Oark Church. He and his wife, Barbara, are parents of two adult children.

Ira Upton began serving Dec. 4 as pastor of Shibley Church, Van Buren. He has pastored other churches at West Memphis, Mulberry, and Ratcliff.

Tucker Honored At Retirement

The Tri-County Association held a gathering in honor of the retirement of Robert Tucker, who has served the association for 16 years. Tucker's retirement will be effective on Dec. 31 of this year. The retirement celebration was hosted by the Wynne Church.

Churches and individuals from the Tri-County Association gave \$3,338 as a love gift for the Tuckers. A new dormitory at the associational camp to be built in the near future is to be named in his honor.

Those participating in the program included host pastor Don Dunavant, who also presented the Tuckers the retirement gift. Special music was presented by Robert Shaw, minister of music for the Wynne Baptist Church. Associational moderator Wallace Williams introduced the Tuckers to the congregation and also gave a book of letters to the Tuckers. The associational secretary Mrs. Jeanette Burns offered a gift to Mrs. Tucker.

Conway Sawyers, director of state missions for Arkansas, brought greetings



Robert Tucker (left) is presented with a check by Don Dunavant.

from the state convention. The closing prayer was given by Eugene Ray, who has been elected to follow Tucker as the associational director of missions.

Tucker's accomplishments as director of missions include the building and

equipping of a new office building in 1973, the building of a swimming pool for the Tri-County associational camp in 1975, and overall improvements at the associational camp. The Tuckers plan to retire in Wynne.

ABN photo / J. Everett Sneed

Doug Bradberry joined the staff of Keo Church Dec. 21 as director of music and youth, coming there from Baugh Chapel Church of Austin. He is a student at the University of Central Arkansas in Conway.

Eugene Hughes has resigned as pastor of Center Point Church of Gurdon.

Larry Duke is serving as pastor of Anchor Church at Donaldson.

Jim Copeland has resigned as pastor of First Church, Pencil Bluff, effective Dec. 31 following 19 years of service.

Joe Hall is serving as pastor of Second Church, Amity. He is a student at Ouachita Baptist University.

Briefly

Dierks First Church hosted a World Mission Conference Dec. 4-7 which featured David Crutchley, missionary to South Africa; Lee Roy Woodard, former missionary to Wyoming; Doyno Robertson, missionary to Peru; Pastor H. Craig Chambers; David Miller, director of missions for Little Red River Association; and Floyd Tidsworth Jr., director of church extension for Arkansas Baptist State Convention; as speakers.

East Main Church in El Dorado ordained Charlie Skinner to the deacon ministry Dec. 4. Tommy Robertson, director of missions for Liberty Association, led the service.

Greenbrier First Church presented a surprise gift to John Birdsong Dec. 18 in recognition of his work with the church music program.

Little Rock First and Little Rock Immanuel Churches will co-host a single adult fellowship beginning at 9 p.m. Dec. 31 and concluding at 1 p.m. Jan. 1, 1989 at Robinson Center Exhibition Hall. Emcees for the event will be Gordon Swaim and Sybil Capps. SAY and SAM awards will be presented for the Single Of The Year and the Single Adult Ministry with selections being made from ballots. Ticket and ballot information may be obtained by contacting the sponsoring churches.

Mulberry First Church observed homecoming Dec. 4 with a noteburning service to celebrate early payment of its auditorium. Those participating on the program were David Moody, a deacon; former pastor Bill Spears; Clarence Hill, music evangelist from Hot Springs; and Pastor Rex Easterling.

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Dr. Darrell Robinson, pastor

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Dr. Bailey Smith, evangelist



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Dr. Freddie Gage, evangelist

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A pool of 600 adult Americans found that 80 percent believe heaven exists, while 67 percent think there is a hell.

Someday, we'll be 100 percent sure.—*Ed Scott*

Two ladies were admiring a fur coat in a swank shop.

"It's gorgeous," said one, "but who would be foolish enough to pay \$12,000 for it?"

"I don't know," replied the other. "But I hope I find him."

Letters To The Editor

(continued from p. 5)

(3) Purpose—to symbolize salvation, not in any way add to it (as with the Lord's Supper; Ro. 6:3-5; 1 Co. 11:26; "likeness," "show"); those who have a sacramental or works-oriented view of their immersion have not been scripturally baptized; (4) Authority—a local New Testament church (Ac. 2:41-47).

As for the autonomy of the local church, I believe that a church can take anyone with a pulse into their membership if they want and serve them communion. They do not have to comply with any state resolution. But if the other autonomous churches in the state refuse to seat their messengers, they also have that freedom.—Don Allred, Jonesboro

Letters to the editor express the opinions of their authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the ABN editor. It is the policy of the Arkansas Baptist to publish all letters which meet its guidelines. For a complete set of guidelines, write P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203.

Arkansans Appointed



The Thompsons

ATLANTA—Arkansas natives Roy and Lindy Thompson were among 16 people appointed to mission service by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board in November.

Thompson was appointed to serve as a church planter apprentice. Mrs. Thompson was appointed for family and church work. They are helping start a new mission congregation in the Kiehl Avenue/Brockington Road area of Sherwood, according to Marvin Peters, director of missions for North Pulaski Association. Park Hill Church in North Little Rock is the mission's primary sponsor.

A recent graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, Thompson was outreach director for McCart Meadows Baptist Church in Fort Worth. Mrs. Thompson was a teacher in the public schools in Euless, Texas. They have an infant son.

Hamptons Go to CSI

James E. Hampton who has served as a missionary in Africa for 32 years will become associate vice-president for administration of Cooperative Services International on Feb. 1.

CSI relates to countries where missionaries are not in residence. A prime example is China.

A health problem with Mrs. Hampton (Gena) has made it necessary for the Hamptons to remain in the United States. Both Dr. and Mrs. Hampton are graduates of Ouachita University. Hampton also holds degrees from Southwestern Seminary and the doctor of divinity degree from Ouachita University.

CSI, a nonprofit and humanitarian organization, has offices in Hong Kong and Richmond, Va. It seeks to identify service opportunities in selected countries so that Christians may have meaningful involvement.

Specifically Dr. Hampton will serve in an administrative capacity as well as liaison with Baptist colleges. His primary contact with Baptist colleges will be through the consortium of Southern Baptist colleges and universities.

The Hamptons will leave Little Rock

on Jan. 3 to return to Nairobi, Kenya to sell most of their furniture. Dr. Hampton will begin his new work Feb. 1.

From 1978 to 1987 Hampton served as the associate to the area director for eastern Africa. In July of 1987 he became administrative associate for 21 countries in eastern, central and southern Africa.

Hampton observed that Africa is the most responsive continent in the world today. In Kenya, for example, one church is being established each day.

Hampton said, "One of the secrets for the rapid growth in Kenya has been the Kentucky-Kenya partnership." In 1985 when the partnership started there were 602 churches. When the partnership ended there were 1,300 churches and the Baptist community had increased from 31,000 to 57,000. A 1988 report reveals that there are now 80,000 Baptist church members and 1,800 churches.

The Hamptons' address from Feb. 1 to April 30 will be 1203 West Laburnum, Richmond, VA 23227. The office address will be Cooperative Services International, P.O. Box 6767, Richmond, Virginia 23230.



James Hampton



Gena Hampton

ASC Sound Tip #1:

If you find that you are not getting very much volume from your church sound system before it starts to feedback, then you probably need to have your system equalized. This can be done through "room voicing" by using the ear to listen and adjust the equalization so that no part of the audio spectrum is given an extreme amount of cut or boost. However, the best method is to use a spectrum analyzer. Arkansas Sound Corporation, at no charge, can provide this valuable service. Remember, to have greater gain-before-feedback you should have your sound system equalized.

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When Families Crumble . . .

'No Church Stronger Than Its Families,' Prof Says

by Terri Lackey
Baptist Sunday School Board

NASHVILLE (BP)—Southern Baptist pastors have not incorporated family enrichment programs into their churches as they should, a fact that eventually could lead to the breakdown of families and churches, a seminary professor said.

"Most pastors in the Southern Baptist Convention are not exerting much leadership in this area," said Guy Greenfield, professor of Christian ethics at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. Greenfield is author of "Families Practicing God's Love," the 1989 Christian Home Emphasis book published by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's family ministry department.

"No church is stronger than its families," Greenfield said. "When families begin to crumble, churches are not far behind."

At the year-end meeting of state Baptist family ministry consultants and personnel in the board's family ministry department, Greenfield stressed the dire need for churches to minister to families creatively.

"As we shape the family, we shape the church," Greenfield said in explaining how changing morals should force churches to take a look at their family programing.

Divorce, couples living together, single-parent homes, child abuse, teenage pregnancy and adolescent suicide are growing occurrences that must be addressed, he said.

"What Southern Baptists do about family life will determine the direction of churches in years to come," Greenfield said. "The future of our churches, our denomination, the Home and Foreign mission boards and ultimately world evangelization hinge upon the quality of family life."

Douglas Anderson, director of the family ministry department, agreed one of the weakest areas in church programing is family enrichment.

"No one has really invested in getting anything going for families," Anderson said. "Single and senior adult work has emerged out of the grassroots."

"People of the church have gone out and done it. But family enrichment is an area of work which is underdeveloped. No one has really taken the ball and run with it."

Greenfield said family enrichment leaders could help shape family enrichment programs by enlisting a higher degree of pastoral leadership in the area, helping churches understand they must minister to families of the future and offering guidelines and modeling for growing, healthy families.

State leaders could "stimulate and encourage aggressive pastoral leadership in the area of family enrichment," Greenfield said. "As goes the pastor, so goes the church."

One way to stimulate pastoral leadership in family enrichment programs is to incorporate family ministry programing into state evangelism conferences, Greenfield said: "Most pastors' hearts are in evangelism and church growth more than in family life. If the pastor recognized family as both a means and a target for evangelism, he would be more likely to value family enrichment."

Finally, the Bible can offer guidelines and modeling for growing, healthy families, he said: "The nature, character and action of God in Jesus Christ should provide us with the criteria for a healthy and stable family life. Christ is not only the criteria for personal life, but also for family life."

Caring for the Family of the 90s

A "Caring for the Family of the 90s" workshop will be held Thursday through Saturday, Feb. 23-25, 1989, at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

The purpose of the conference is to equip participants for ongoing pastoral care ministries with families in the church and community.

Some of the topics to be addressed include "The Family Today and Tomorrow;" "Preaching to Strengthen Families;" "Developing a Planned Ministry Response to Family Needs;" and "Caring for Couples, Parents, and Their Children."

The conference cost will be \$25. For more information, contact the Office of Continuing Education, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 3939 Gentilly Blvd., New Orleans, LA 70126, or call 504-282-4455.

Toll-Free Number For Sellers Home

NEW ORLEANS (BP)—Sellers Baptist Home and Adoption Center in New Orleans has installed a toll-free telephone line to handle crisis pregnancy and maternity inquiries, (800) 552-9243.

Mary Dan Kuhnle, director of the Southern Baptist home for unwed mothers, said trained social workers will be available from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Central Standard Time. Callers may leave messages on an answering machine after hours.

Sellers Home is supported by the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program unified budget and Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions and is operated by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

Sellers Home offers residential care in a family environment for pregnant unmarried women. Mothers-to-be receive professional prenatal and postnatal care as well as delivery services. Residents have access to professional counselors, child-care classes and resources for completing their educations.

Calls about adoption should be directed to the home's regular telephone number so that the toll-free number may be left open for women in crisis, Kuhnle said.

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Churches Must

HMB Exec Says Indigenous Churches Reach Cities Best

by Mark Wingfield
Baptist Press

ATLANTA (BP)—Southern Baptists must start indigenous, self-supporting churches to minister in America's cities, Larry Lewis told state convention leaders in Atlanta.

Lewis, president of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, said ministries based in churches will be more effective in reaching the cities for Christ than ministries supported and staffed solely by the Home Mission Board.

There are no plans to close or phase out any existing Baptist centers supported by the Home Mission Board, he said, but added: "Our emphasis in the future will not be on opening more centers but on helping more churches become centers for ministry."

"The needs of the inner cities cannot be ignored by the Home Mission Board or the churches of our convention. I perceive the best way to meet those needs is by planting churches, not by creating Home Mission Board-sponsored ministries.

"We need indigenous churches, churches in harmony with the communities they serve," he said. "The Home Mission Board is the catalyst to provide materials and training for those churches to become loving, caring, ministering bodies.

"The result will be not just a few Home Mission Board-sponsored ministries but thousands of ministering Southern Baptist churches."

Lewis said this model of starting ministering churches will overcome two shortfalls of the past.

During the "golden years of church planting" Southern Baptists started new churches as Southerners moved into the Northern regions of the United States. While commendable, this effort produced affluent suburban churches for transplanted Southerners and failed to reach the native population, Lewis said.

"The end result was that we ringed the great cities with strong churches but left the inner cities unreached," he explained.

In response, the Home Mission Board stepped in to do inner city ministries churches would not do, Lewis said. "Some felt that if strong ministries could be established in the inner cities Southern Baptists from the suburbs would drive in and strong churches would result.

"I will give them an 'E' for effort," he said. "The idea was great, but the result was dismal. Home Mission Board-supported ministries produced few strong, indigenous, self-supporting churches."

Lewis said he wants to continue the strategy implemented by William Tanner and Gerald Palmer to find a balance between these two extremes. Tanner preceded Lewis as HMB president. Palmer soon will retire as vice president of the board's missions section.

"The church has to be the church," Lewis said. "The Home Mission Board cannot be the church. If all the resources of the Home Mission Board were expended in ministry, we still wouldn't have even scratched the surface.

"But the denomination as a whole with our 37,000 churches has significant resources to make a difference. The Home Mission Board can equip those churches to do ministry."

Starting churches in all segments of society poses at least three difficulties, Lewis said.

The first is limited resources, he said, noting that funds from the national Cooperative Program will remain the same in 1989 as in 1988 and that gifts to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions have shown only a slight increase.

The second difficulty is accepting the proliferation of ethnic and black Southern Baptist churches, Lewis said. "Traditional Anglo congregations must learn to associate with people from radically different backgrounds.

"It is not uncommon now in some areas to have more black and ethnic congregations than Anglo congregations. This is changing the face of who Southern Baptists are."

The third difficulty is educating new congregations to appreciate and support Southern Baptists' cooperative ministries, Lewis said.

HOME MISSION BOARD

Appointments Up; Annie Down

by Mark Wingfield
SBC Home Mission Board

ATLANTA (BP)—As of December, Southern Baptists had deployed their largest number of home missionaries ever but failed to meet the goal for their annual home missions offering.

Southern Baptist Home Mission Board President Larry Lewis told the agency's executive committee 3,841 missionaries now serve across the United States and its territories. That is the largest number of missionaries under appointment by the board at any time, he said.

However, Lewis also told the board that gifts to the 1988 Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions will fall nearly \$7 million short of the goal. Receipts as of Dec. 6 were \$30.6 million, only 82 percent of the \$37.5 million goal.

Annie Armstrong gifts are up 2 percent from the same time last year, Lewis said, noting that does not keep pace with the 4.5 percent rate of inflation. Although the books had not been closed on the offering, Home Mission Board leaders did not anticipate a substantial change from the current figures.

Lewis told the executive committee he is encouraged to see the board's emphases on church starting, church growth, evangelism and ministry catching on across the nation.

However, he expressed concern about

the proposed distribution of Southern Baptist Cooperative Program unified budget funds for 1988-89. The program and budget subcommittee of the Southern Baptist Executive Committee has proposed no increases in distribution of CP funds to Southern Baptist agencies for operating expenses.

Lewis said he intends to ask the program and budget subcommittee to reconsider when it meets in January.

He also expressed concern about what he called a "continued assault" on the Cooperative Program and an escalating trend toward negative designation of funds away from some agencies.

"Negative designation is becoming a popular concept for channeling money away from parts of our cooperative ministries some may not agree with," he noted. "This smacks of the immaturity of a child who says, 'If I can't have my way, I'll take my bat and ball and go home.'"

The executive committee also elected Don Carter and Dean Doster to new positions. Carter, who has been the board's purchasing agent since 1983, was named director of purchasing services. Doster, currently associate vice president for evangelism, was named a regional coordinator in the board's planning section.

At the December meeting, directors approved 26 missionaries and approved support for 17 mission pastors.

Missions or Evangelism?

by Mark Wingfield

SBC Home Mission Board

ATLANTA (BP)—Directors of missions from 41 state conventions and fellowships discussed reorganization of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, met with the agency's two new vice presidents and roasted a retiring vice president during their annual planning meeting in Atlanta.

This was the last meeting for Gerald Palmer as vice president of the missions section. Charles Chaney, vice president-elect for extension, and Paul Adkins, vice president-elect for ministry, met the group for the first time since their appointments.

In an open forum, directors asked HMB President Larry Lewis to clarify the reorganization of the board's Atlanta staff approved by the board of directors in October. Most debate centered on transfer of interfaith witness from the missions section to the evangelism section and the impact of the change on state convention staffs.

Charles Lee Williamson of Texas first raised the question about interfaith witness. "We mainly deal with cults on the basis of protecting our own members, not on the basis of converting people from cults," he said. "We have plenty of witnessing tools to evangelize them. We need help

educating our members about the dangers of cults."

Lewis responded that he encountered more resistance on this one change than any other in the reorganization. However, he defended the action on grounds that cult members need to be evangelized.

"I feel very strongly that interfaith witness needs to enable Southern Baptists to share their faith effectively with people of other faiths and cults," Lewis said. "I think we're going to have to be aggressive in teaching Southern Baptists to address these people."

Conway Sawyers of Arkansas countered that "aggressive evangelism with these groups is not always the best."

Lewis said the change was not set in concrete but asked the state leaders to give it a chance to work. "If we decide later that it was a bad move, I'm open to change," he promised.

Later, Interfaith Witness Department Director Gary Leazer addressed the group. "We don't know what the future holds for interfaith witness," he said, referring to the fact that a new vice president for evangelism has not been named to succeed Bob Hamblin, who retires Dec. 31.

However, Leazer said the current leadership in evangelism had promised any changes would occur slowly.

Leazer said he does not want interfaith witness to become solely a direct evangelism program. "We've always been a resource to all Home Mission Board program areas and will continue to be."

State mission leaders reminded Lewis that changes at the Home Mission Board affect the structure of state convention staffs. "You are making decisions that impact our organizations, whether we like it or not," Williamson said.

Both Lewis and Palmer told directors they did not expect state conventions to immediately alter their staffs to conform with Home Mission Board structure.

Chaney and Adkins assured the group of their personal commitments to working cooperatively with state conventions. "Any plans I have for church starting are totally dependent upon you," Chaney said. "If we cannot do this together, it cannot be done."

Adkins said he intends to create a workgroup to define a philosophy of ministry for the board. This philosophy should promote reconciliation between God and man, the freedom of individuals to accept or reject God, and the servanthood of Christians, he said.

At a banquet during the meeting, state mission leaders surprised Palmer by roasting him on the occasion of his retirement. The group also presented Palmer and his wife, Libby, with several mementos, including a cash gift.

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Student Leaders Note Advances

NASHVILLE (BP)—Every student deserves an opportunity to hear about Jesus Christ and to grow in grace through the ministry of a local church, Charles Johnson told Baptist state directors of student ministry.

A commitment to the priorities of student ministry is needed to provide the opportunities students deserve, added Johnson, director of the student ministry department at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, addressing the directors in annual planning meetings in Nashville.

He identified the priorities of student ministry as strengthening student ministries on campuses, expanding church ministries to students and developing world student ministries.

Johnson pointed to student ministry gains in the past year as indicators of success in the focus areas. State student ministry directors reported 157,190 students involved in campus programs during the 1987-88 academic year, up from 142,839 reported the previous year.

The total participation in Baptist Student Union is larger than the combined totals of three other major evangelical student organizations, he said. Information collected by the student ministry department staff from national headquarters of the organizations indicates Campus Crusade has 18,000 students; InterVarsity, 24,000; and Navigators, 10,000.

Southern Baptists also are represented on

more campuses with 1,018 compared with Campus Crusade, 385; InterVarsity, 750; and Navigators, 105. However, the number of campuses with Baptist Student Unions is down from 1,042 the previous year, Johnson said.

The report indicates 25,970 students were involved in mission projects in 1987-88. State directors reported \$1.83 million contributed by students for missions projects.

Focus On Evangelism

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)—The Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission has announced plans for the 1989 Baptist Men's Teleconference. The Saturday morning, Jan. 7, event will focus on "Missions Involvement Through Evangelism," said James H. Smith, president of the commission.

"If you want to know something of the excitement of missions involvement, ask the man who's doing it," said Smith. "We believe there's no better way than to hear it live from laymen who are involved in evangelism."

The telecast will be broadcast live simultaneously over the Baptist Telecommunication Network and the American Christian Television System. It will air at noon, Eastern Standard Time.

Richard T. McCartney, vice president of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission, will host the teleconference. Joining him will be Smith and several Baptist laymen from across the Southern Baptist Convention who are active in evangelism.

Viewers will be able to join panel discussions through toll-free telephone linkups.

Access will be over Spacenet 1, channel 21, and Galaxy 3, channel 7. BTN will broadcast an unscrambled signal.

Court Asked to Overturn Ruling

WASHINGTON (BP)—Following the lead of a major Jewish group, half a dozen religious and civil liberties organizations have asked the U.S. Supreme Court to overturn an Illinois panel's ruling last year denying unemployment benefits to a man who refused Sunday work on religious grounds.

William A. Frazee, who belongs to a conservative Presbyterian congregation in Peoria, was denied the benefits after turning down a clothing store sales position that required work on Sundays. Frazee testified his conviction against Sunday work was based on his "personal faith in the Lord."

But the Illinois Appellate Court subsequently held Frazee could not invoke the Constitution's protection of free exercise of religion in contesting the denial of benefits because his observance of Sunday as a religious Sabbath was not found in "the tenets or dogma of an established religious sect." He then appealed to the nation's high court, which in October announced it will review the case.

In a friend-of-the-court brief filed in late November, the American Jewish Congress—joined by the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs as well as other groups—asked the high court to overturn the lower panel's decision because it disregarded established Supreme Court precedents which protect the free exercise rights of practicing Sabbath observers.

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Convention Uniform

Let Us Worship

by Norene A. Reed, Bartholomew Association, Warren

Basic passage: Luke 2:25-38

Focal passage: Luke 2:25-38

Central truth: Remembering the birth of Christ should lead to an experience of worship.

Jerusalem, the religious center for Palestine, lay about five miles north of Bethlehem. Many came to worship and make sacrifices to God. There were still people who were true followers of the Lord and looked for his promised one, the Messiah. Aged Simeon was one of these. Luke tells us he was a righteous, devout person who was filled with the Holy Spirit. Waiting, worshipping, hoping Simeon received a revelation from the Holy Spirit that before he died, he would see the Lord's Christ.

Joseph and Mary followed the Old Testament teachings and brought Jesus to the temple when he was eight days old. At the same time Simeon was moved by the Holy Spirit to go to the temple courts. When Simeon saw the couple with Jesus, he took him in his arms and praised God. His words recognized God as the sovereign Lord who kept his promise. He saw Jesus as a light for the Gentiles as well as the Jewish people. There was peace in his heart.

Anna, a prophetess, spent her days and nights in the temple worshipping God. She had done this for many years since her husband had died after only seven years of marriage and she was now in her 80s. Anna saw the baby in the temple and immediately gave thanks to God and began to tell others who also were looking for God's deliverance that this was the Christ.

When God promised Zacharias and Elizabeth a son, he used a visible heavenly messenger to tell them. This also was true in his announcement to Mary of the promise for her to be the mother of Jesus. The birth of the Savior was told to the shepherds in a startling, glorious manner.

A week later, God chose to reveal the answer of his promise to Simeon very differently. Through the quiet working of the Holy Spirit within, Simeon knew this baby Jesus was the promised Savior. The Holy Spirit also worked within Anna, impressing her to know she was in the presence of the Christ. They expressed a celebration of praise to God and a sharing with others this great occasion.

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Life and Work

Celebrating Jesus' Birth

by Stephen Pate, Second Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: Matthew 1:18-25; Galatians 4:4-5; Colossians 2:9-10

Focal passage: Matthew 1:18-25; Galatians 4:4-5; Colossians 2:9-10

Central truth: We can celebrate the birth of Jesus by affirming that God was fully responsible for his birth, that he was fully God and fully man and that through him those who believe have fullness of life.

We love to celebrate. Have you looked at your calendar yet for 1989 to see how many times you have already planned to celebrate? We enjoy a good time. For a Christian there should be no better time in the entire year to get all excited about and ready to celebrate than Christmas. It means love.

Matthew records the birth of our Savior so that we might see the divine and eternal purpose of God. Matthew 1:18 indicates that the child is of the Holy Ghost, or Spirit, and that the miracle of the conception took place without any human intervention. The child's earthly father, Joseph, was a "just man," meaning he was compassionate, yet judicious. But in this case he showed compassion toward Mary.

Later in Matthew we learn that they were to call the son Jesus, which means "Savior" (1:24) for he came to serve. Joseph, after hearing God's voice, acted. He took Mary to be his wife and did not consummate the marriage until after Jesus was born. Joseph followed God's leadership, including naming the child Jesus. A special additional message included in this passage is when we feel God's leadership and determine something to be God's will—only a human action and obedience is appropriate.

Galatians 4:4 adds additional insight. Paul writes that he was born of a woman which means he shared our human nature and was born under the law as a Jew. But Jesus also was fully God! The "fullness of God dwells in Christ" (Co. 2:9). Jesus was not just "God like"; he was God.

Jesus came to redeem those under the law (Ga. 4:5). Jesus came that we need not be slaves to sin, for freedom is found in Christ. When Christ resides in us we have fullness of life. We have the capability to be someone all that he wants us to be. Christmas Day—a day to celebrate! Thank you God for Jesus! Merry Christmas!

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Bible Book

The Word Made Flesh

by Bradley A. Rogge, Forest Tower Church, Hensley

Basic passage: John 1:1-18

Focal passage: John 1:1-18

Central truth: Today the Word is still flesh, because Christ lives in us and we are his witnesses.

December 25 we celebrate the birth of Jesus. We sometimes have a hard time understanding that although Jesus was born a child, he has always existed. We do not need to understand something to be able to believe in it and to be a witness to it. I do not understand what powers the light on my desk, but I have faith that when I turn on the light, that power will give me light.

I cannot understand all about Jesus, but this I know, he is the power that changes things in men's lives and it is he who takes dark souls and makes them lighthouses.

John was a witness for Jesus in the very first stages of God's revelation of his Son. John prepared the way for Jesus to begin his work.

Today, you and I are the "Johns." Our task is to share Jesus with people. We are to help prepare for Jesus to enter their lives and begin his wonderful work.

In a sense, the Word is still flesh and dwells among us. When we accepted Jesus into our lives we felt his spirit enter to live with us. He is here today.

We are the only Jesus many people will ever see. How we allow Jesus to live through us will show the world what kind of a Jesus there is for them. It makes you realize how important it is to live the life we profess to have, doesn't it?

Sunday, we celebrate the birth of God's greatest gift to man. What can we give him? How about a gift of a committer's life? A life full of his spirit? A life full of his love? A life full of his light? Let his light so shine that in 1989 the darkness shall disappear.

This year Christmas falls on Sunday. The last time this took place there was such an ice storm in central Arkansas that nothing much moved. I was in the parsonage looking across the icy parking lot and reflecting how empty and lonely the building looked. It seemed more empty than usual. Let's pray that this year our churches can be filled with people celebrating God's Son's wonderful birth. What a great example it will be for a lost world to see churches filled with worshippers.

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Convention Uniform

The Good News

by Norene A. Reed, Bartholomew Association, Warren

Basic passage: Luke 4:16-21,40-43

Focal passage: Luke 4:16-21,40-43

Central truth: Jesus recognized he was sent to tell the good news of the kingdom of God to all people.

Early in his ministry, Jesus returned to Nazareth where he had lived while growing into manhood. Returning home to familiar people and places often stirs a warmth within a person. Luke tells us that it was the custom of Jesus to go to the synagogue on the Sabbath and this he continued to do.

The worship services were a formal, liturgical type and probably in many instances lacked spirituality. Corruption in doctrine and practice was prevalent in that time. Jesus did not avoid public worship because of this situation, but chose to attend and take part. He read from Isaiah 61:1-2 and put new meaning and depth to it when he applied the passage to himself.

A person may feel that some things in the church need to be changed. This does not give one license to stop attending. Jesus' example is to go and with a spirit of love help make a difference.

As Jesus traveled on to Capernaum, he continued to each and preach in the synagogues. At the close of one busy Sabbath, about sundown, the people found him at Simon Peter's home and began bringing the sick and demon-possessed to Jesus. He had personal contact with each person in the laying on of hands and met each need. The demons shouted, "You are the Son of God!" but Jesus silenced them. It would be much better for this to be revealed in the developing of prepared hearts than to be broadcast by unclean spirits.

At daybreak, Jesus went to a secret place. This is another example of a truth for today. A person needs spiritual relationship with God alone in order to minister.

It was not long before the multitude found him. With his mighty work on their minds, they wanted to keep him with them. Jesus knew he must move on. His mission was clearly in sight and time was limited. He was sent to preach the kingdom of God to all people.

Through a close walk with God and the leadership of the Holy Spirit we can know his will for our lives.

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Life and Work

Harmony In Christ

by Don Moseley, Sylvan Hills First Church, Sherwood

Basic passage: I Corinthians 1:1-13

Focal passage: I Corinthians 1:10

Central truth: Our behavior needs to match our position in Christ.

In verse 10 the Apostle Paul makes a plea for harmony in the body of Christ at Corinth. But before Paul deals with their problem of wrong doctrine and wrong behavior he reminds them in the previous verses about all they have and are in Christ Jesus as saints of God. Paul said, "Now I beseech you, brethren . . ." or in other words, "Now, act like who you are . . ."

Paul first addresses them in verse 2 as "the church of God" at Corinth. They are reminded of the fact that the church is God's, not theirs. Paul knew that they had lost focus of this truth just as we often do. Paul then reminds them of the fact that they were "saints." The word "saint" means "holy one." Paul was reminding them that they were positionally holy, but they were not living up to who they were in Christ. In verses 4-9 the Corinthians are reminded that God's grace touches all of their life: past, present, and future. Their past was forgiven. Their present needs are cared for by special provision of "all utterance" and "all knowledge" for witness to those on the outside (v. 5) and by provision of spiritual gifts for ministry to those in the body of Christ (v. 7). And their future was guaranteed (v. 8). Wow! All of this because they were saints.

Because of these truths Paul then declares their need to put aside their selfishness that was causing disharmony. In our focal passage they are admonished to "speak the same thing" and have the "same mind" and "same judgment." They needed to be in agreement about doctrine and leadership. That would require setting aside personal desires so that there could be harmony in the body of Christ.

According to verses 11 and 12, the Corinthians had allowed personal preferences to divide them. Paul explains this difficulty in chapter 3:3-4 when he diagnosed the problem simply as immaturity and carnality. This leads Paul to ask, "Is Christ divided?" The obvious answer was, "no." We are forced to conclude that in the interest of harmony we must be careful that our loyalty is not to a certain man but to Christ and his body.

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Bible Book

Priorities

by Timothy L. Deahl, Olivet Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: Acts 1

Focal passage: Acts 1:11,21-26

Central truth: Effective ministry depends on following God's priorities.

The book of Acts is a book about the early church, the church in action. Therefore, it should not be surprising to learn that the first chapters lay the groundwork for church growth. In these first chapters, we read about the hope, vision, unity, and power at the church. These are essentials.

The opening verses of Acts contain an apologetic declaration (or defense) of the Christian faith. By focusing on the resurrection and final words of Jesus, author Luke establishes a solid foundation for early church action. The church today must sound a clear note. People are inundated with opinions; they need to hear the truth. The truth established in Jesus' life and words provides the correct basis for all that we believe and teach.

A second need in the church of 20th century America is a clear understanding of purpose. The disciples were preoccupied with the promised kingdom (v.6). Although the promised kingdom is a fact of Scripture and often is used in the New Testament for both warning and encouragement, the pressing need of the early church was to hear testimony to its risen Lord. It is interesting that the two heavenly messengers reassured the disciples of Christ's return only after they received a clear statement of their immediate purpose (v. 8). This should not be taken to mean that the second coming is not important. The second coming of Christ is a continual hope which receives much attention in New Testament writings, but also it is a reminder of the church's need to be a faithful witness now.

A third ingredient of the early church is dedicated leadership (vv. 21-26). When the need for additional leadership presented itself, the disciples looked for faithful service, experience, evidence of divine appointment, and public confidence. These same qualities need to characterize the lives of those who would lead a growing church. The church that desires to follow the New Testament needs such leaders, and those who aspire to leadership need these qualities. A firm foundation, a clear purpose, and dedicated leadership provide the essentials for church growth.

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Hospital Settles Labor Dispute

PUSAN, South Korea (BP)—Union and management negotiators have settled a labor dispute that threatened the future of a well-known Baptist hospital in South Korea, but financial problems loom as a major hurdle to overcome, missionaries said.

Dan Jones, a Southern Baptist missionary physician from Laurel, Miss., stepped in as interim administrator at Wallace Memorial Baptist Hospital in Pusan last summer after labor union elements forced out the hospital's two top administrators.

The hospital named a new administrator in September. He is Kim Sung Chin, a specialist in lung disease who left his job as medical director during the height of the labor dispute, at the same time hospital administrator Lee Koung Soo resigned.

Kim's attempts to listen to the concerns of employees and work with union members have led to a closer relationship between management and the union, Jones said. Other factors that helped calm the situation included the union's alarm at watching a nearby Catholic hospital close in a similar dispute and public pressure on union officials to quell disturbances leading up to the Olympic Games in Seoul. "The hospital is back to normal, day-to-day operations," Jones said. "For all the people who prayed, I want to express deep appreciation."

Jones added, however, that Wallace

Hospital still must overcome newly identified financial problems.

Management is trying to deal with the rising salaries characteristic of South Korea's burgeoning economy. Higher labor costs, plus the labor strife that caused the hospital's patient count to drop drastically, have hurt.

"The strike brought financial problems to a head," Jones said. "What we need is a long period of stability."

Founded by Southern Baptist missionaries, the hospital is one of the best-known medical facilities in the southern part of the country. It treats more than 200,000 patients each year and employs a staff of nearly 600.

Journeyman Applications Due

RICHMOND, Va.—College graduates who want to work as journeymen with the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board must have their applications postmarked by Jan. 15.

The journeyman program is for college graduates with four-year degrees. They must be 26 years or younger and interested in using their skills to assist missionaries on overseas fields for two years.

Applicants must be active Southern Baptists, U.S. citizens, in good physical and emotional health, and qualified for specific mission tasks. They may be single or married, but not divorced. Couples must be childless and married for at least one year by Jan. 15. Both must meet qualifications.

The Foreign Mission Board commissioned 63 journeymen last January to work in 36 countries. In December, 21 journeymen were approved to work in 21 countries.

Persons interested in applying should immediately contact Pamela Smith in the Personnel Selection Department at 804-353-0151 or write P.O. Box 6767, Richmond, VA 23230.

Despair Sensed In Palestine

JERUSALEM (BP)—A new Palestinian state has been declared, but nothing has yet eased the despair among Palestinians on the West Bank, said two Southern Baptists who minister in Arab communities within Israel and the occupied territories.

"People are hopeless, depressed, hurting. They're looking for some sign of hope, for friends, for love, and they just don't know where to look," said Ray Hicks, a Southern Baptist representative in Israel. Hicks lives in a former Jordanian village that was annexed to Jerusalem after the Six-Day War of 1967.

Jarrell Peach, another Southern Baptist representative in Israel, said he senses a wait-and-see attitude among Palestinians in East Jerusalem, where he lives and works.

Peach noted the Israeli Army intensified security measures in and around Arab neighborhoods after the new Palestinian state was declared Nov. 15 during a meeting of the Palestine Liberation Organization's 450-member Palestine National Council in Algiers, Algeria. Some 1.5 million Palestinians live in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Both Baptist workers recounted hardships their Palestinian friends and acquaintances have weathered during the *intifada*, the Palestinian uprising against Israeli rule. More than 310 Palestinians and 11 Israelis have been killed in the conflict, which has lasted more than a year.

Hicks, who often visits a Palestinian refugee camp near Bethlehem, added that nearly "every family in the camp has had a family member either wounded, killed or arrested, and that's in a camp of 6,000 to 7,000 people."

People are frightened, Peach said. Palestinians continually face the possibility of detention, imprisonment, beatings or damage to property as the Israeli Army strives to control the *intifada*.

Hicks urged Christians in the United States to exercise care in their opinions about the Arab-Jewish strife.

"It's so easy for us as Westerners to get only one side of a situation and then draw conclusions, whether it's the Arab perspective or the Jewish perspective," he said. Christians, he emphasized, are called to be peacemakers and reconcilers, "and we cannot do that with a one-sided perspective."

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WORLD

Hurricane Opens Door

by Art Toalston
SBC Foreign Mission Board

MANAGUA, Nicaragua (BP)—More than six years after Southern Baptist missionaries left Nicaragua, new ties with Baptists there are on the horizon.

Doors may open for post-hurricane relief efforts by Southern Baptist volunteers, reported Joe Bruce, director of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's work in Middle America and Canada.

Bruce, who spent three days in Nicaragua in late November, also said officials at a university and a hospital related to the Baptist Convention of Nicaragua have requested sister relationships with Baptist institutions in the United States.

Hurricane Joan cut a 200-mile path of ruin across Nicaragua in late October, killing more than 100 people and destroying more than 29,000 dwellings. It stands as the country's second-worst natural disaster, topped only by the 1972 earthquake that pummeled the Managua area.

Bruce was scheduled to return to Nicaragua the week of Dec. 5 to develop an action plan for relief help. Expected to accompany him were Garry Eudy, associate mission administrator, and Russell Fox, a Southern Baptist missionary and construction engineer in Honduras who will oversee volunteer efforts in Nicaragua if plans proceed.

Southern Baptist efforts likely will focus on the coastal city of Bluefields, where most buildings and houses were destroyed or severely damaged, Bruce said.

A back annex of Zion Baptist Church in Bluefields was destroyed; an adjacent elementary school operated by the church lost a wall and its roof; and the parsonage sustained extensive damage, Bruce said. Southern Baptist volunteers also may help with home repairs, he said.

During his first visit, Bruce gave the Baptist convention a \$5,000 check from Southern Baptist disaster relief funds for the purchase of hammers, saws, nails and other items to help people repair their homes.

"One of the big problems is going to be securing materials," Bruce said. "There are little or none in the country." Materials may be purchased in Costa Rica and sent to Nicaragua by boat.

If sending volunteer teams does not prove feasible, Bruce will explore other avenues of Southern Baptist assistance.

He also met with officials at the 1,500-student Polytechnic University of Nicaragua, who expressed interest in a sister relationship with a Southern Baptist university. The institution in Managua is

the only Baptist university in Central America and one of the few evangelical universities in Latin America, he said. It also operates a nursing school.

Officials of Baptist Hospital in Managua also indicated interest in a sister relationship with a Southern Baptist hospital and in short-term volunteer anesthesiologists, Bruce said. When an eye clinic opens, ophthalmologists also may be needed.

Bruce said he sensed openness among Nicaraguan Baptist leaders—to ways Southern Baptists might cooperate in developing their work. He is "not sure yet what all the long-term implications will be. But the door certainly is not closed to the possibility of having some career personnel in there at some time in the future."

The Baptist Convention of Nicaragua encompasses some 70 to 80 churches.

Two Southern Baptist couples worked in Nicaragua until 1982, when Nicaraguan Baptist leaders voted to recommend that the missionaries leave because of the "sociopolitical and ideological situation." The first couple began a literature ministry in 1976 at the invitation of Nicaraguan Baptists and later opened a bookstore. A second couple came in 1980 to do music ministry. A Southern Baptist volunteer taught at the Baptist seminary in Managua from 1984 to 1986.

American Baptist Convention work in Nicaragua dates back to 1917 and still continues.

In another development, a volunteer team of nine Southern Baptists preached in a simultaneous revival campaign in Nicaragua two weeks after the hurricane. The campaign was sponsored by another Baptist group, the International Baptist Convention of Nicaragua.

The International Convention also wants ties with Southern Baptists, reported volunteer team leader Ernesto Chaparro, pastor of Canaan Baptist Church in Corona, N.Y.

"We had freedom to preach the gospel," even in a post-hurricane state of emergency declared by the Sandinista government, Chaparro said. "In nine days, nobody stopped us to give us regulations or anything like that."

Chaparro preached to crowds of up to 600 people in churches, he said. The volunteer team divided up to preach in 21 churches and several missions. The churches recorded 125 public professions of faith in Christ.

Bruce is "waiting to see what direction the International Convention decides to take" in requesting ties to Southern Baptists.

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