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### October 3, 1996

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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# ARKANSAS BAPTIST



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Volume 95, Number 20

October 3, 1996

## hungry & thirsty, their soul fainted

Psalm 107:5



World  
Hunger  
Day

October 13, 1996

## Veteran missionary couples respond to needs in Bosnia

**SARAJEVO, BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA (BP)**—Eight seasoned veterans of Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board work have arrived in Bosnia and are seeking out hearts open to the gospel.

"The missionary couples — with a combined 90 years' experience in cross-cultural evangelism and church planting — each volunteered to serve six months in Bosnia, where 44 months of intense ethnic warfare left people wondering what hope they have of finding peace.

"We were surprised when the war started," said Misko Horvatek, a pastor in Krapina, Croatia, and secretary of the Croatian Baptist Union. "We never thought that would happen. It shocked people and made them think.

"Now people are ripe to be harvested. We need workers to shake the tree."

### Baptist relief funds

More than 2 million of Bosnia's 3.6 million people were driven from their homes by the fighting, according to the United Nations. Through their "My Neighbor" humanitarian aid organization, Croatian Baptists distributed more than \$2 million of Southern Baptist relief funds throughout Bosnia, Croatia and Serbia.

Along the way, Croatian Baptists shared the good news of God's love, and many people — Muslim, Serb and Croat — responded to Christ.

Croatians who delivered humanitarian aid during the war reported more than 100 professions of faith during an evangelism effort earlier this year. Mission leaders are seeking experienced evangelists and church planters to step in and build on the

foundation laid by the wartime ministries.

"These contacts and others made by our Baptist brothers and sisters involved in relief work have provided us with a network of people all over Bosnia ready and waiting for someone to come and teach them about the Lord Jesus," said Larry Cox, who directs Foreign Mission Board work in central Europe. "Our objective is to start home Bible studies with some of them resulting in church starts."

Two couples — Wayne and Florence Frederick and Jim and Jean Leeper — are serving in Tuzla, a key multiethnic city in eastern Bosnia. The other two couples — Robert and Jerry Worley and Charles and Bobbie Miller — are serving in Sarajevo.

"It has been a joy to see veteran missionaries respond with enthusiasm to a need in an unsettled part of the world," Cox said. "We are praying for (still) another missionary unit to join them for special field orientation the first of November."

Two other couples are being recruited for six-month terms, perhaps to serve in Banja Luka, a key northern city, Cox noted. The greatest need, however, is for career missionaries who can give long-term direction to the new ministries.

"We know God uses disasters like this war to open people's hearts to the gospel," said Robert Worley. "We prayed when we were asked about going to Bosnia. We felt like God said go."

"We have many opportunities now that the war is over," said Croatian Baptist president Branko Lovrec. "This is a most crucial point in our history. We must not miss this opportunity."

## Cover Story



### Hunger relief 3

Arkansas Baptists will join other churches throughout the nation in observing World Hunger Day Oct. 13. The annual emphasis highlights the need for funds to support hunger relief work at home and around the world.

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Next issue: Oct. 17



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# ARKANSAS BAPTIST

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# Hunger needs demand urgency

*Arkansas Baptists have opportunity to make impact locally, globally*

By Colleen Backus

Assistant Editor, Arkansas Baptist

A dark-eyed Romanian girl stared at Diana's soft drink. Already a teenage mother, the girl held a young baby who also stared at the drink — and began to cry. The baby, the girl explained, was hungry and wanted the drink. Diana saw to it that they got food, and money to buy more. Although that was all she could do at the time, Diana longed to do more.

Diana Lewis is an Arkansas home missionary who works with hungry people here in the state. On a recent mission trip to Romania, she discovered needs very similar to those that exist in rural Arkansas communities. Here in Arkansas, Lewis would have access to Southern Baptist world hunger funds, enabling her to provide more permanent aid.

"We were putting a Band-Aid on the problem," Lewis explained. "If there was a missionary in that area of Romania with access to world hunger funds, there could be plans made for the future."

Many Southern Baptist churches will observe World Hunger Day on Sunday, Oct. 13. "The reason to give to the SBC world hunger fund is simple," pointed out Tommy Goode, an associate in the Arkansas Baptist missions department. "One hundred percent of all we give goes to hunger relief."

"We already have personnel in place, knowledgeable about hunger needs in the area they serve," he continued. "These hunger gifts strengthen and support our home and foreign mission efforts."

"We get a lot of bang for the buck," Goode emphasized. This year's national theme, "A Dollar In — A Dollar Out," highlights the fact that no hunger funds are used for administrative purposes. Every cent goes directly to hunger relief.

Arkansas Baptist contributions to the world hunger fund have declined in recent years, a fact which concerns Goode. "In 1994, receipts from Arkansas churches were \$158,334," he noted. "In 1995, they were \$132,085."

Even though the figures represent money turned into the world hunger fund, some of those funds are distributed back to Arkansas.

"Arkansas requests for hunger funds are more frequent, and at more locations," explained Goode, who administers the state funds. "Currently, we have not had to decline any requests, but we have to limit the amount we give to any one ministry."

"We're not maintaining the food

resources for our churches and are only marginally assisting them with what they are doing by giving them a small amount of funds," he added.

Some of the ongoing hunger relief ministries around the state include:

- Hope Migrant Center.
- Jonesboro First Church's areawide food distribution ministry.
- North Pulaski Association's Caring Center.
- Searcy County Church's food ministry.
- Central Association's summer feeding project.

Hunger is a reality in Arkansas. According to statistics from the Arkansas Rice Depot, one out of eight children nationwide face hunger; in Arkansas, one out of three children are at risk of hunger. Among Arkansas' school-age children, 39 percent are at risk nutritionally.

***"If we want to stop hunger in the world, we have to change attitudes."***

— Tommy Goode

ABSC Missions Department

Lewis has seen these statistics at work throughout the state. During a community needs assessment in the southwest part of the state, she spoke with an elementary school principal who visited a child's home in the winter to find family members sleeping on the floor around a bucket filled with burning wood for warmth. His meager food was cooked in the kitchen using the same method.

In Dixonville, where Lewis is involved in a summer feeding project through Central Association, a child came up to one of the workers and said, "I'm hungry." The worker replied, "Yeah, I'm hungry, too." The girl said, "No, I mean I'm really hungry. I haven't had anything to eat since you were here yesterday and brought me a lunch."

At Christmas in the same community, Lewis makes sure each adult and child receives an outfit for Christmas. She invites them to write their clothing sizes on a slip of paper. One elderly lady turned in her paper with simply the word "food" written on it.

Yet Lewis has noticed a great strength in these people. A few years ago, when the famine in Somalia was raging, she explained the SBC world hunger fund to

the Wednesday night women's group in Dixonville. The women, moved by the plight of those who had even less, collected their spare change from September to December, in order to send the money in at Christmas time. Lewis had set a goal of \$10. When the time came to send in the funds, the women had collected more than \$30, which would feed a family of four in Somalia for a month. Again, this year the women will save change during the fall to contribute. "They understand the urgency," Lewis explained.

There are numerous things Arkansas Baptists can do to raise awareness of World Hunger Day and contribute to the fund. Goode recently participated in a World Hunger Carnival at Benton First Church. "The event was all centered around young children," he explained. "It was just like a school carnival — there were fishing games, throwing balls in a hoop, baked goods — and all the proceeds went to world hunger."

"The youth missions groups — GAS, RAs and Acteens sponsored and planned the event, which also helped educate them about world hunger," Goode pointed out. He met with all the organizations' kids and talked to them about how serious the problem is and told them, "If we want to stop hunger in the world, we have to change attitudes. People who are hungry deserve our help — if we do small things together, a lot can get done."

Other projects Arkansas Baptists can do to help raise hunger funds and awareness include:

- Churches can evaluate how to impact their communities locally through hunger ministries, such as coordinating a quarterly food drive.

- Pastors can preach sermons or present dramas emphasizing world hunger needs.

- Churches or mission organizations can sponsor a hunger meal or hunger walk.

- Families can fast one major meal a week, and give that amount to the hunger fund or tithing 10 percent of the family's monthly grocery bill.

The state missions department also provides a hunger calendar with an emphasis for every day. For a copy of the calendar or for more information about the Southern Baptist world hunger fund, contact the ABSC missions department at 1-800-838-ABSC or locally at 376-4791, ext. 5150.

"We don't understand the urgency of responding to hunger relief needs," Goode emphasized. "It's almost mind-boggling. Every day there are 12 to 20 million people in the world at risk of starvation."

# A PASTOR'S HEART



By EMIL TURNER  
ABCS Executive Director

"Numbers, numbers, numbers — that's all Baptists think about!" The lady was upset because our church set a goal for a High Attendance Sunday. She never saw that each number represented a soul. She stayed home on High Attendance Day to show her pastor (me) that numbers were not important.

I agree with her to a point. "What kind?" is always more important than "How many?" But let me tell you what happened on the Sunday she missed.

A wealthy lady attended Sunday School and worship for the first time in months. During worship, she sat near a poor family — their first time in months, too. The wealthy woman noticed that the teenager in the poor family was wearing glasses that had been broken. She felt moved by God to help. On Monday, she called me and told me of her desire to provide the teenager new glasses, opening a door for me to talk with her about her soul. It wasn't long before she was saved. Her dad, who came to see her baptized, was soon saved, too.

The poor family? They also began to attend faithfully — because the church had ministered to them with new eyeglasses. Soon they too were a part of the Family. And the lady who stayed home because "numbers aren't spiritual"? The Spirit did nothing in her life that I know of.

Your church is probably planning a high attendance emphasis for this fall. I hope so. Souls are at stake.

■ Have you read *The Only Hope for America* by Luis Palau? (Crossway Books, 1996). This great book reminds us of how God will change the direction of America: by believers leading people to Christ. You'll enjoy the testimonies of those "suddenly converted" believers that Palau relates.

## Executive director's schedule:

Oct. 6 (a.m.) — Rehobeth, Batesville  
Oct. 8 (p.m.) — Arkansas River Valley Association  
Oct. 13 (a.m.) — Immanuel, Little Rock  
Oct. 14 (p.m.) — Delta Association  
Oct. 15 (p.m.) — Garland Association  
Oct. 17 (p.m.) — Tri-County Men's Meeting

BARBARA WIKMAN

## Woman's Viewpoint

### Don't mess with my kids

I've heard that you have to be careful what you do with the baby cubs when the mama bear is around. The mama bear doesn't tolerate your messing with her kids. At the risk of sounding negative, we mamas pay a lot of attention to how people act toward our children. If you said or did something that hurt my kids, I would find it hard to have a kind thought or word about you. I guess that's the bear in me.

On the other hand, if you want to make a lifelong committed friend of me, just say or do something good for my daughters. I will always be grateful to the couple who took my daughter with them and their daughter to dinner and the mail each Friday night. We had returned to the States after living on the mission field for a number of years. Their help and kindness was a tremendous influence on my daughter's adjusting to living in the States.

My other daughter likewise had several people to help her adjust to

stateside living. One was her GA leader and another was her Sunday School teacher. I still have a high regard for them and will never forget the blessing they were.

I believe God is like that with His children. If we want to hurt God, we could do it easily by hurting His children. We could cause God to grieve by ignoring His children and their needs.

If we want to bring a smile to the heart of God, we do it by showing interest and concern for His people. This may be a child in years or a person of any age. Regardless, each person is one "for whom Christ died." God will not forget the good things we do for His children.

Barbara Wikman, a former missionary to India, is president of Arkansas Woman's Missionary Union. She and her husband, John, a surgeon, are members of Fianna Hills Church in Fort Smith. They have two daughters and three grandsons.

## Personal perspectives

"People are ripe to be harvested. We need workers to shake the tree."

—Misko Horvatek, secretary of the Croatia Baptist Union

"I'm really hungry. I haven't had anything to eat since you were here yesterday and brought me a lunch."

—Youngster attending Baptist feeding project in Dixonville

"We've got to fan the flame....Isn't it time to get out of our ruts and win the 1.3 million unchurched people in Arkansas?"

—Cliff Jenkins, pastor, New Hope Fellowship, Fayetteville

"The main thrust of this school will be to study the Word of God and evangelistic preaching. What motivates us to study is love for the Lord and love for the lost."

—Pete Nuñez, director of the new Angel Martínez Baptist Theological Training Center in DeQueen

# It's not too late to let your voice be heard

Messengers to both the Arkansas Baptist State Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention have repeatedly adopted resolutions in recent years affirming the sanctity of human life and declaring that "we abhor the taking of innocent, defenseless preborn human lives."

SBC messengers were even more specific this summer, describing partial-birth abortions as "a blight upon our culture" that "surely deserves God's judgment." Those words came in response to a presidential veto of the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act which had gained passage in both houses of Congress.

With ongoing concern over legalized abortion that results in an estimated 1.5 million abortions per year in our nation, why all the uproar over a specific abortion procedure that accounts for only about 1 in every 1,000 abortions performed? Quite simply, because of the gruesome process involved in partial-birth abortions. According to a report from the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, "This procedure kills a living infant when she is almost fully delivered from her mother's womb."

In the pro-life/pro-choice debate that has raged since the Supreme Court's 1973 Roe v. Wade decision, the constant question has been whether any abortions should be allowed except in rare cases such as saving the life of the mother. Few people have budged over the years, with both sides insisting that their opponents are clearly wrong.

But the partial-birth abortion debate is different—or at least it should be different. This is not a matter of challenging the law of the land, regardless of how strongly many of us oppose abortion-on-demand. This is a matter of targeting one specific late-term abortion procedure that should never be a medical option unless the



## STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR

By TRENNIS HENDERSON

mother's physical life is in jeopardy.

Recent opinion polls indicate that more than 70 percent of Americans agree that partial-birth abortion is an unacceptable procedure. The U.S. Senate responded by approving the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act by a vote of 55-44 last December. The House of Representatives affirmed the proposed ban on a 286-129 vote in March. The votes marked the first time that Congress has voted to outlaw any abortion procedure since Roe v. Wade.

### Veto sidetracks measure

Those efforts were sidetracked in April, however, when President Clinton vetoed the measure. Although the proposal included the exception to save the life of the mother, Clinton sought to expand the exception to "avert serious adverse health consequences" to the mother. Supporters of the ban countered that such a broad exception was nothing more than a political loophole which would allow unlimited exceptions and render the legislation useless.

During a recent rally held in the state capitol rotunda, pro-life advocates from throughout the state gathered to voice concern over partial-birth abortions. The

event attracted such groups as Arkansas Right to Life, Christian Civic Foundation and Concerned Women of America. Baptists, Catholics, Methodists, Presbyterians, Lutherans and Assemblies of God were among the denominations represented.

"Today, to our shame, children are being sacrificed in the most heinous way," declared Robert Lewis, senior pastor of Fellowship Bible Church in Little Rock. "It is a barbaric act of savagery that must be stopped if we are to regain the moral high ground of our civilization."

Urging "all people of faith to raise our voices on this vital issue," Arkansas Baptist State Convention president Rex Home emphasized the need "to pray and be involved as God leads you."

John Miles, pastor of Heber Springs United Methodist Church, added that "here is an issue where surely everyone can agree....It shows the level of moral decline in our country. At least we can say this is too far."

Rally speakers affirmed the recent effort by the U.S. House to overturn Clinton's veto on a 285-137 vote. They also called on the Senate to do likewise, but that goal proved unsuccessful. The Senate voted last week 57-41 to override the president's veto, 10 votes short of the two-thirds majority required to enact the ban.

Despite the latest setbacks, it is not too late for concerned citizens to express their views. Efforts are under way in the Senate to have the latest veto reconsidered. If that option fails, plans also are being made to reintroduce the proposed ban next year.

Both Sen. Dale Bumpers (phone 202-224-4843) and Sen. David Pryor (phone 202-224-2353) voted against Clinton's veto. Personal responses from Arkansas voters may make a difference the next time the issue faces a vote.

### Gratitude for generosity

We, the congregation of the New Hope Missionary Baptist Church, would like to express our gratitude to the Arkansas Baptist State Convention for your generous donation. We are in the process of rebuilding our church and ask that you continue to pray for us.

May God bless each of you!  
**Spencer Brown**  
 Pastor, New Hope Church  
 Moro, AR

### Prayer focus affirmed

I am writing to emphasize how much we appreciate the encouragement for



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

concentrated prayer for the Foreign Mission Board appointment service in the *Arkansas Baptistist*. I don't think I have ever known of such a strong emphasis for prayer on behalf of an appointment service and certainly never this far in advance.

It is always a joy to work with Arkansas Baptists, and we are especially looking forward to the appointment service in

April. It is good to know that committees are already functioning and there will be widespread publicity and promotion. However, it is encouraging, but not surprising, that Arkansas Baptist leaders would see this not so much as an event as a spiritual opportunity and occasion for God to work. I appreciate Bill Elliff's leadership in this call to prayer and Trennis Henderson giving high profile to the appointment service. We are joining you in prayer that God will use it in a tremendous way to call out the called and renew all of us to be on mission with God.

**Jerry Rankin**  
 President, Foreign Mission Board  
 Richmond, VA

# Sunday School convention draws 1,400 to Little Rock

Sunday School directors, teachers and officers were urged to "Carry the Light" during the Arkansas Baptist State Sunday School Convention Sept. 20-21 at Geyer Springs First Church in Little Rock.

The event, which attracted more than 1,350 participants, featured a general worship session followed by special interest conferences led by personnel from eight states. The conferences spanned subjects as diverse as prayer to "Sunday School for Different Cultures."

The general session featured music and worship from the combined choirs of Baring Cross and Levy churches in North Little Rock and First Church in Sherwood as they led participants through the worship emphases of "praise, purity, peace and proclamation."

Participants also heard messages from ABCS executive director Emil Turner and keynote speaker Cliff Jenkins, pastor of New Hope Fellowship in Fayetteville.

Turner told leaders to "maintain a Sunday School focus in your church. Sunday School...makes a church strong.

"When believers learn the Word, the church becomes marked by holy people," he emphasized. "And, most importantly, it makes believers. Three lost people enrolled in Sunday School leads to one being saved. Sunday School is the most evangelistic tool in the church."

Jenkins, echoing the event's "Carry the Light" theme, preached from II Timothy 1. The apostle Paul's letter to Timothy "is saying one thing: 'Timothy, carry the light. That's the charge I'm leaving you on my last days on earth,'" he pointed out.

Jenkins emphasized that carrying the light is an honor, a privilege and a responsibility. "Carrying the light is an honor, but most of our recruiting is begging people to work for God. We ask people to teach Sunday School and they say, 'I don't know anything about Sunday School.' We say, 'Just get in there and teach,' and we replace them over and over again."

Jenkins said carrying the light is a privilege and "a responsibility. It doesn't happen automatically. I think about team players - if we are not careful, we will worry about filling positions instead of building a team. We've got a lot to learn about being a team."

In addition to carrying the light, "we've got to fan the flame," Jenkins noted. "We've let it burn low in our churches. Isn't it time to get out of our ruts and win the 1.3 million unchurched people in Arkansas?"

"The study of God's Word and the ministry of God's people is not out of date



Cliff Jenkins urged teachers and workers to "carry the light" at the Arkansas State Sunday School Convention Sept. 20.

and it's not going out of style," he said, noting contemporary criticism of Sunday School. "But when you start turning inward you lose focus. We get satisfied with what we've become and God's quit blessing."

He added that teachers must pray, communicate, care for needs and "fan the flame of sympathy. How long has it been since you've shed a tear for your class? It's time we got into the lives of our people."

Jenkins said Arkansas Baptists also have "the responsibility to fan the flame because

of your heritage. The people of Arkansas have a legacy of strong Sunday School work. We must leave a strong legacy for those who follow and we must begin in our Sunday Schools.

"The greatest need of Arkansas Baptists isn't reorganization or whether you're a moderate, liberal or conservative," he concluded. "That's not the pressing challenge of Arkansas Baptists. The pressing challenge is fanning the flame."

Following the general session, participants attended any of the more than 160 special interest conferences offered. One conference session was held following the general session with three workshop session times offered the following day (see related article on page 7).

Event coordinator Milton Redeker, Arkansas Baptist State Convention Sunday School department director, noted that the conferences featured "some real crack-jerk conference leaders."

In a more serious tone, he added that he planned the convention to include 168 conferences because "I believe in giving people the very best we can offer. That's the reason I enlisted this quantity and quality of conference leaders."

Danny Bryson, minister of education and outreach for First Church, Hot Springs, found the convention "reinvigorating. It's a recharge for me and our members.

"I think my workers appreciate the variety and quality of the conferences offered," said Bryson, who brought 21 workers to the event. "We offered our own church-based conference earlier this year, but I urged our people to get some additional training here - and there was a lot to choose from."

## Involvement grows churches, says Colle

"Statistics clearly define a need for more people. Involvement if we are ever going to win the world for Christ," declared conference leader Beau Colle during a session of the 1996 Arkansas Baptist Sunday School Convention.

Colle, director of the Sunday School division of the Louisiana Baptist Convention, said today's Southern Baptist churches must realize the necessity for more workers to reach today's secular world.

He listed training and equipping as two factors to strengthen lay involvement. "As the laity is trained, they soon realize the need to reach, teach and minister to the unchurched," he said.

Worker ratio is another critical issue, Colle added. "One volunteer per every five or six students increases attendance 54 percent but when that ratio goes above 10...attendance is going to drop."

Recruiting outreach and care group

leaders to assist teachers also increases attendance. "If you are unable to obtain these leaders don't let it be a deterrent to your Sunday School," Colle said. "It is true, however, that something good is going to happen when you broaden the base on every age-level group."

He encouraged pastors to brag on and encourage Sunday School teachers and workers. "People who feel good about themselves produce good results and are willing to share Christ with the unchurched and involve them in Sunday School.

"Christ has no other plan for reaching the lost except to use those of us who are already saved," Colle concluded. "He has chosen to use you and me and He wants to use us in His Kingdom to motivate volunteers, helping them realize they have a definite part in the big picture of what we are trying to do."

# Quantity, quality, variety

*Sunday School workshop issues range from bed babies to senior adults*

Planners of this year's Arkansas State Sunday School Convention targeted a specific goal: plan as many high-quality, special interest conferences as possible within a short time span.

"This request came from pastors, directors of missions, ministers of education and Sunday School directors across state," explained Milton Redeker, director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Sunday School department. "They wanted something that met their immediate needs, that they could put into practice immediately."

The department's answer: 168 conference choices during the two-day convention, held Sept. 20-21 at Geyer Springs First Church in Little Rock.

Redeker said that the emphasis on variety and quantity was appreciated. "I've had numbers of people thank us for having something on prayer, evangelism and literature interpretation," he noted. "These have never been offered before and (prayer and spiritual awakening conference leaders) Don and Nita Moore were just overwhelmed and excited. We had more in those two conferences than in any others."

Phil Whitten Jr., assistant to the ministry staff at Oak Cliff Church in Fort Smith, attended the "Prayer and Spiritual Awakening for Men" conference, led by former ABSB executive director Don Moore.

## Eye-opening experience

"Going to his spiritual awakening conference opened my eyes," Whitten remarked. "We have a prayer ministry in our church and several ideas for doing new things to encourage one another and to be more aware came to my mind."

Other conference attendance stand-outs, said Redeker, included the small Sunday School conference, the generations conference, the learning styles conference and "Reaching and Motivating Volunteers."

During his "Learning Styles in the Classroom" conference, Raye Zacharias, a consultant in the Baptist Sunday School Board's Church Growth Group, told participants most people fit into one of four learning styles, which are influenced by heredity, experiences and environment.

He tied the four styles — innovative, analytic, common sense and dynamic — to selecting Sunday School leadership, recruiting and teaching styles.

The issue in knowing the styles, said Zacharias, is: "How can we reflect His glory? By recognizing spiritual gifts. Different styles must link up arm-in-arm to do the ministry of the church."

Teachers of smaller children showed up in greater numbers for the convention.



*Sunday School workers from throughout Arkansas chose from more than 160 workshops during recent training at the 1996 Sunday School Convention in Little Rock.*

"We probably had more in the preschool children's conference than I can remember in any other convention we've given, and general officers had more in it than any time before," said Redeker.

Among the offerings for preschool teachers were conferences on discipline and safety. Sheri Babb, a BSSB consultant, reviewed ways to avoid negative behavioral problems among preschool-age children.

Babb noted that the word *discipline* "has a negative meaning, but discipline comes from the word *disciple* which means 'to teach,' so it's a good word. We need to teach children in a good way."

She defended discipline for preschoolers and offered "general guidance tips" in disciplining preschool children, including:

■ "Be firm, kind and accepting."

■ "Ignore inappropriate behavior such as tantrums or tattling when the child is not hurting another person or himself, is not using hurtful words or is not destroying property," she said.

■ "Stop actions before they happen. Be ready to move on a situation and redirect a child before an inappropriate act occurs."

Above all, she emphasized, "use positive redirection. Give them positive choices."

Attending the preschool conferences changed the attitude of Becky Ewing, a children's director at Baring Cross Church in North Little Rock. "They gave me a lot of things I never thought about," Ewing said.

"How many directors know where their emergency electricity is?" she asked. "I went down and found out."

Love or its absence was listed among the causes of "Why Kids Do What They Do" in a conference led by Jewell Nelson, preschool and children's associate for the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Nelson said teachers should be prepared to deal with children who are experiencing physical abuse, drug abuse, divorce and excessive parental expectations.

She encouraged participants to study their children's needs and think of the children to whom they seek to minister.

Ministry opportunities with children and their families were shared in a conference led by Nelda Williams, preschool and children's associate for the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

She emphasized the need for bi-weekly parental contact, seeking their cooperation in providing continuity in church attendance for the children. She said other ministry opportunities include building a relationship of trust between a teacher and the children, personal contact with latchkey children and ministering to children in times of grief.

In "Spiritual Awakening for Women," Nita Moore explained that spiritual awakening comes when large numbers of people supernaturally experience new birth in Christ in a short period of time and their lives are changed radically as a result.

"Women have the vital role of serving as prayer warriors for a spiritual awakening," Moore declared, adding that she believes the next great revival in America will be a revival of prayer.



# Minister terminations prevalent, painful

By Russell N. Dilday

Associate Editor, Arkansas Baptist

Just weeks ago Karl was a pastor of a growing Arkansas Baptist church. Now he climbs behind the wheel of his car each morning before dawn to drive to his new job an hour away — as a factory laborer.

Karl (not his real name) is the victim of a growing problem among churches of all denominations — forced termination. Following pressure from a handful of members in his former congregation — and despite a strong vote of confidence — he resigned his pulpit after a heated business meeting.

Instead of quickly reentering the pastorate, he opted for secular employment. "I did it just in case I didn't find another pastorate quickly," he said. "I want to pay my bills."

His typical day now begins when he leaves home at 5:30 a.m. "I usually work 10-12 hour days at the factory and come home at 7 p.m.," he noted. "This is the mission field in these factories. They call me 'preacher.' They cuss, but that's just the way they talk. It's rough stuff."

His termination was rough stuff, too. He attributed his problems in the congregation to "a power control, some personalities in the church that I wouldn't let control me."

"They began a slander campaign," he said. "I wouldn't do things the way they wanted it done, so I started feeling subtle accusations against me in committees."

The accusations grew from subtle to serious. When the situation became unbearable, "I brought it in front of the church," he recalled. A vote of confidence in his ministry produced an overwhelmingly favorable response, "higher than when I was called as pastor," he added.

Despite the vote and his pleas for harmony, his antagonists continued to make accusations. After months of trying to work through the problems, he resigned.

## 'Epidemic' problem

The number of Southern Baptist ministers who have endured termination is staggering. Baptist Sunday School Board leaders estimate that more than 200 congregations terminate a minister each month.

Describing the growing problem as "epidemic," Emil Turner, executive direc-

tor of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, remarked, "As a pastor, I had no idea how bad the situation was. Since I have become executive director...there is not a week that goes by that I am not praying for someone who is in a termination situation."

Forced termination also is receiving more attention among Southern Baptist leadership. During his presidential address at the 1996 Southern Baptist Convention, Jim Henry noted that pastor burnout and forced terminations are at an all-time high.

Calling for support of terminated pastors, Henry said, "We are in this together. What weakens one, weakens all."

Later that day, during the Baptist Sunday School Board presentation, BSSB president James Draper announced that the board had launched a new strategy to aid ministers in crisis, saying that approximately 225 ministers are fired every month.

Part of the board's new strategy is the ministry of LeaderCare, which Draper said was developed "to address the simmering issues that lie close to the surface of denominational life."

LeaderCare, he explained, is a ministry of prevention, intervention and restoration for ministers. Heading the LeaderCare ministry is Brooks Faulkner, senior manager of the BSSB's personal development section in the pastor-staff leadership department.

Analyzing current statistical estimates, Faulkner pointed out, "We can find 125 pastors and staff being fired every month, but there are another 100 — and that is a guess — each month that we can't find."

Comparing the current problem to a 1984 survey that cited 114 terminations a month, Faulkner added that the latest estimates "may not sound like a significant increase, but those are people."

J.D. Stake, director of the ABSB ministry of crisis support, said the number of forced terminations in Arkansas are "about the same percentage" as those occurring throughout the SBC.

Stake, who provides a counseling service for Arkansas Baptist ministers and their families, said he is "aware of one or two" terminations each month as a result of his ministry. He added, however, that he has no way to accurately identify the number of forced terminations in the state.

Part of that inability to identify the numbers may stem from the process itself. Often termination takes two forms: involuntary termination, which results in a church or deacon vote to terminate the services of the minister, and voluntary termination, such as Karl's, in which a minister is forced to resign through internal church pressures or threat of termination.

Many ministers elect to resign their duties rather than be fired to avoid the stigma — and the resulting difficulty in being called to another congregation — of an involuntary termination.

"Many forced terminations that are subtle and behind the scenes never get to the floor and reach a church vote," said Bruce Swihart, director of the ABSB church leadership support department. "We hear about those that do. It is very noticeable when a church votes on it or a deacon body decides."

"Those are heart-breaking," he noted, "but it's just as heart-breaking if a man is forced out behind the scenes."

## The 'roots' of termination

Behind the numbers are the reasons for forced terminations. Although each situation is unique, Stake said he has identified three "roots" that lead to a minister's termination.

First, he said, "is a congregation's dissatisfaction with the way a minister performs his duties: 'He's not a good preacher or visitor' or 'He doesn't relate well.'"

"Lack of people skills" and "weak administrative skills" are two reasons I often see" related to church dissatisfaction, Faulkner said. "A lot of laypeople want to see the bottom line. We think in athletic terms. We want a winning coach."

Swihart agreed with Faulkner's "winning coach" analogy. "Churches begin to get antsy when offerings, attendance or baptisms go down. They think, 'If the program isn't as good or better than it was....' We tend to see numerical growth as more important than spiritual growth."

There are some times, though, where a minister's failure to meet the members' expectations is justified. Swihart said some ministers cause conflict in churches because they "do not use their time wisely, are not responsible, haven't learned how to keep hours or are not disciplined."

"Sometimes a pastor doesn't try to figure out what a congregation's expectations are. The answer is that you do it by being proactive," counseled Swihart. "Spend time in your office, develop sermons that touch people, visit, balance ministry with

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## Annuity Board's LifePoints program offers participants expanded options

Participants in the Southern Baptist Convention's retirement program have until Nov. 1 to switch their retirement allocations from one of the four existing funds to any of 13 new funds being offered. The expanded options are part of a new fund structure that will be implemented Jan. 1, 1997.

Lea Zachry, vice president for fiduciary services at the Annuity Board, said the new structure "will be going from four basic funds — the fixed, balanced, variable and international funds — to 13 funds."

"What we're trying to do is give employees options from A to Z," Zachry explained. "We're giving the most aggressive or the most conservative participant in any of our plans the choices they have not had. We have unbundled those funds and let them invest in the underlying pools, giving people many more options based upon their personality and their financial goals."

The new fund options are presented in the Annuity Board's LifePoints plan, an investment education program designed to help retirement plan participants select an investment strategy for retirement.

### Investment profiles

The LifePoints process is organized around three "LifePoints Profiles" — Beginnings, The Midway and Transitions — to broadly determine a participant's retirement needs and aid in making investment decisions. After determining one of these profiles, a participant may then take a "Risk Quiz" to establish the amount of investment risk the participant may feel comfortable taking.

Using these aids, participants must make their choices and submit the decisions to the Annuity Board before Nov. 1. Postage-paid participant investment election forms are included in each LifePoints information packet.

Zachry urged all Annuity Board participants to contact James Walker, director of stewardship for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, if they have lost or not received their LifePoints information packet.

"If they do not make the changes by Nov. 1," Zachry explained, "we will be in the process of blending new funds and we will take moneys that are in the existing funds — fixed balanced, variable, international — and transfer those dollars for the employees who, basically, default and put them into the newly blended funds that most closely characterize the funds they are coming from."

Zachry noted that additional investment opportunities are not the only new features offered to participants in the LifePoints transition.

"The Annuity Board is not only offering more opportunities for diversification in investing, it also is offering some other features," he said, including telephone access to daily-valued accounts, the availability of loans and additional print information.

"We will be moving from a monthly valued environment to a daily valued environment," Zachry said. "An employee from any agency or church can pick up the telephone and, with the use of their personal identification number (PIN), find out what the balance is in their account, rather than waiting for the first working day of the following month to find out what that account balance closed out as."

To receive a PIN, he explained, "When you first call the Annuity Board at 1-800-262-0511, you will need your Social Security number to access the system and you will assign yourself a personal identification number."

He added that the Annuity Board also will have the ability to lend money to participants. "With the new software system going into the Annuity Board, we are going to offer loan features."

"The federal government makes it quite simple by saying that you have to pay this loan back over a five-year period and you can borrow up to 50 percent of your vested account balance, not to exceed \$50,000," he said. "The interest rate will be prime plus 1 percent."

"The reason we did that is because there are legitimate times that people absolutely have to access money that they couldn't any other way," he said.

Along with the "good implications" of the Annuity Board's lending ability, there are "some bad implications," Zachry said. "Defaulting on the loan creates a distributable event causing tax and penalty."

Participants also will be receiving more information from the Annuity Board, he said. "We have implemented the *Changes* newsletter that will be going out quarterly to all employees. We are also sending out quarterly accounting statements to all employees and retirees if they have an account balance with the Annuity Board."

For more information about the Annuity Board LifePoints program, contact James Walker at 1-800-838-ABSC toll-free in state or locally at 376-4791, ext. 5114.

hard work, recreation with your family and quiet time."

The second most common cause for terminations, said Stake, "are relationship issues — a conflict with prominent members or leaders in the church."

Turnersaid the problems of relationship issues often rest exclusively with either the pastor or the congregation. "My personal observation is that this becomes a pattern in churches and a pattern in ministers' lives. I advise a pastor to find out if a church has terminated anybody in the past and for what reasons."

Swihart said relationship issues are among "a lot of external factors that are out of a staff member's control. Many times, there is a control issue with the laity. As long as a staff member is under their control, if he wants to change a procedure, it may cost him."

Illustrating another "external," Swihart said he recently talked with a minister whose staff "felt that there were some problems and brought it to the deacons. The staff were concerned about the unwritten expectations of this minister's wife. They felt there were things she needed to be doing that weren't meeting their expectations."

Third, Stake said, are conflicts and terminations resulting from "credibility issues. A preacher loses his credibility because of domestic conflict, he doesn't manage his family well or he engages in inappropriate personal behavior or misconduct."

"Out of all the stories of people who get terminated," Stake added, "we hear most about number three."

Indeed, tales of pastors who engage in behavioral misconduct are the most sensational, but Faulkner said they also are the most rare. "We used to say one of the primary reasons for forced termination was immorality," he explained, "but that's not true."

Although immorality is not an issue in Karl's situation, he still finds himself searching for another place of service. "I'm talking to three churches right now," he noted.

The process has been made more difficult because his opponents in his former congregation have been the ones answering queries from churches considering him for pastor — with predictable results.

He said his ordeal has led him to consider his next pastorate in a different light. "I decided that I won't take just anything that opens up. I'm not going to take my family back into that."

Karl also said his experience has made him wary during his search. "I'm asking, 'Who's controlling it?' and 'How is it run?' I'm asking what problems they have.

If any good has come out of his situation, Karl said, it is that "God has strengthened my character. Crises do that for us."

# Hispanic training center a first in Arkansas

An inauguration ceremony and the registration of new students marked the opening of the state's first Spanish-speaking theological training center in DeQueen Sept. 13. Eleven students enrolled in El Centro Bautista de Capacitación Teológica Angel Martínez — The Angel Martínez Baptist Theological Training Center — located at San Juan Iglesia Bautista in DeQueen.

Pete Nuñez, pastor of San Juan Iglesia, also will serve as the director of the new center. He told participants at the ceremony that the opening of the school signals "an historic occasion" both among Arkansas Baptists and Hispanics in the state. He noted that there are 60,000 Spanish-speaking people in Arkansas, but only 16 Spanish-language Baptist churches.

Prior to the inauguration, Nuñez led an orientation for the new students, many of whom work in farm- or poultry-related industries. "Thank you for placing your trust in a school that has never been here," he told the new class. "We need to have mutual, spiritual support. I will pray for you; you pray for me."

He added that the school's "top need is prayer. Only God knows if we are doing the right things and only He can make it a success. Without Him we can do nothing."

Nuñez noted that although the school is starting small — with two faculty members and little outside help — it is focused on growth. Nuñez and David Dupree, a former missionary to the Dominican Republic, will split teaching assignments, with Dupree teaching piano and New Testament and Nuñez teaching homiletics and theology classes in its first semester.

Allen Mallette, a member of First Church in DeQueen and one of six BTTC board members, said board members "want it to expand so that Hispanics all over the state and from this area can get a theological education and will be able to reach out and minister to people around them."

Mallette, a consulting forester, said the center "is a dream" he shared with Nuñez when he was on First Church's search committee looking for a pastor for San Juan. "The thing that intrigued Pete when we talked to him was the chance to start this school," Mallette added.

The center is named for the late Angel Martínez, a well-known Hispanic evangelist popular among English- as well as Spanish-speaking congregations.

"Because Angel Martínez was an evangelist," said Nuñez, "the main thrust of this school will be to study the Word of God and evangelistic preaching."

"What motivates us to study," he told the students, "is love for the Lord and love for the lost."

Nuñez, a former university professor



*Pete Nuñez (right), director of the Angel Martínez Baptist Theological Training Center in DeQueen, aids the school's first registrant, Catarino Mendoza of Arkadelphia, in filling out his application. The school is the first of its kind in Arkansas.*

who also worked with Martínez in his evangelistic ministry for 32 years, told the new class the center had been named for Martínez because he was "a Christian gentleman who preached the Word. When I asked Robbie, Angel's wife, if we could use Angel's name, she said she could not think of anything more appropriate than to start a school, a theological school, a school in Arkansas, with it."

One of the orientation participants was the center's first applicant, Catarino Mendoza, a member of Primera Iglesia Bautista in Arkadelphia. He said he quickly enrolled because "I wanted to learn how to teach better at my church."

## Focus on doctrine

The center's inaugural sermon was presented bilingually by Dallas evangelist Homer Martínez, Angel Martínez's younger brother. "Why this school?" he asked. "Because you want to teach doctrine."

"What God thinks, He wrote in this book," noted Martínez, holding the Bible aloft. "We get it out of the Bible and put it into the hearts of those we teach."

Martínez urged the school's supporters to "do three things for the school:

"Pray for this institution," he urged. "It can be a phenomenal glory to what God can do.

"Promote the school," he added. "If word gets out, I hope that you will have students from all over — from Spain, from Guatemala, from Mexico, from the Dominican Republic."

Third, he said, "Give a sacrificial gift and lead others to give. It's in honor of

Angel, but more than that, it is God's place for teaching."

Affirming the need for the new center, Jim Hausler, language associate in the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, said, "We needed something like this because we need to train people in the state to start new works."

Noting that the only Hispanic seminary in the United States is in San Antonio, Hausler pointed out, "If this will succeed, it could supply a need not only in Arkansas but for states around here. I wouldn't be surprised if students came from Oklahoma, Kansas, Missouri, Louisiana or east Texas."

He said that the state convention has only contributed "seed money for a library," but would like to do more.

Nuñez said he may ask for funding help from the ABSB, but wants to wait until he can "present a work already in progress." Currently, the BTTC's funding comes only from special gifts, many from San Juan's sponsor, First Church in DeQueen, and from \$90-per-semester tuition fees.

First Church pastor Faron Rogers said his congregation will support the center "through freewill offerings and will encourage members to give scholarships to the school and anything the school asks for us, we will do.

"We feel a strong sense to reach all people for Christ," said Rogers. "That's how this mission church began. We feel we have an obligation to the growing Hispanic community in Arkansas to provide a place where Sunday School teachers and pastors can receive theological training to reach Hispanic people."

## Seminar to focus on 'more than prison ministry'

An Oct. 25 seminar will serve as the statewide launch for a criminal justice ministry, said Harry Black, director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Brotherhood department. The Criminal Justice Ministry Awareness Seminar, to be held at South Side Church in Pine Bluff, will seek to train Arkansans to minister to those involved in the criminal justice system.

Explaining that the focus of the seminar "is more than prison ministry," Black said, "Many people think of a criminal justice ministry as being only to those who are incarcerated, but this is really a ministry to anyone affected by crime."

He explained that the target of a criminal justice ministry "involves the families of incarcerated people, the victims of crime and law enforcement professionals, as well as inmates before and during their incarceration."

Ross Woodbury, chaplain for the Cummins Unit of the Arkansas Department of Correction, urged "pastors, staff members, chaplains, laypeople already ministering in correction facilities, and laypeople — men and women from any denomination — who want to become involved" to attend.

"It will be an excellent overview of prison ministry," Woodbury said. "It will strengthen existing ministry and give exciting new potential avenues for ministry."

The seminar, which will be held in conjunction with an Experiencing God Weekend at the Arkansas Department of Correction Cummins Unit, will begin at 9 a.m. Friday and conclude at 2 p.m. Black urged as many qualified participants as possible to also participate as leaders in the Experiencing God Weekend that continues through Oct. 26.

The program, which will feature Don Gibson, director of lay ministries for Texas Baptist Men, and four other criminal justice ministry experts, will present the biblical basis for a criminal justice ministry, how to start a ministry, developing mentoring relationships, criminal justice ministry as a mission field, conducting discipleship and involving women in a criminal justice ministry.

For more information, contact Black at the ABCS Brotherhood department toll-free in state at 1-800-838-ABSC or locally in Little Rock at 376-4791, ext. 5158.

## Sunday School department offers architecture service to churches

Benny Grant wears a lot of hats in his job as an associate in the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Sunday School department. And when he consults with churches wanting to build new facilities or renovate their existing structures, he may wear all of them at the same time.

Grant, who recently finished his first year with the state Sunday School department, combines skills he learned as a former pastor and contractor to aid churches in the areas of church growth and vision, building financing, Sunday School and church architecture. In his first year, he has made 83 on-site visits and consultations for churches with Sunday School attendances of 25 to 950 "and anywhere in between."

In his role as architectural consultant, he said his job is "to consult with churches who are thinking about building or wanting to re-evaluate their space to get the best space for Sunday School or worship, do on-site consultations and provide resources for churches for products or services for their building needs."

His architectural duties often take him "out in the field, where I do an on-site walk-through if they are thinking about building," he explained. "I try to determine the best use of space and how the building they want to construct fits with the ministry of church."

Further along in the process, he said, he also "can come back to the office and draw basic, rough-draft floor plans on my computer."

"In the state of Arkansas, if you build anything costing more than \$75,000, you have to have a registered architect" draw the plans, he noted. "I'm the first step. If I can give the architect the floor plan, it costs the church less."

Grant cautioned, however, that buildings "do not solve all church problems. If a church is declining or stagnated and members think, 'If we build a building, they'll come,' sometimes the last thing a church needs to do is build a building."

At that point, he explained, he can meet with church leaders in a "vision conference" to "look at the church's ministry, vision and goals, and work."

Grant emphasized that there are alternatives to constructing new facilities. "Sometimes churches feel like, 'We don't have space and we can't grow, so we don't sit here, stagnate or die.' There are several alternatives that can help them, including off-campus Bible study, dual Sunday School, dual worship, or bringing in temporary, portable housing."

He added that he can help churches address financing questions. "We have a rule of thumb that lets us determine how much debt a church should handle and we can give guidance on financing for loans."

"We also can get them together with the convention stewardship department to discuss using Together We Build (a financing campaign program) or Challenge to Build, which is an excellent building campaign for smaller church memberships," he noted.

He encouraged church leaders to contact him "as early as possible in the process" because many churches, "when they get into building, often make mistakes they have to live with for 30 years or more."

To begin the process, Grant recommended that a church building committee contact him immediately after they consider building. "I can work with the committee to help cast the vision and the direction the church is wanting to go. Some call me after that, but that's too late."

"After they call me, I send them two forms to gather information on the church, so I'm prepared when I go on site."

He said he will meet with building leaders to "work through the process of what we want to do, the best approach to take and directions to go. Sometimes that may mean reorganizing space they have or several phases that need to take place."

Grant said that his office also can offer the services of three trained regional consultants in the northwest, southeast and southwest parts of the state and is currently seeking one for the northeast.

Churches interested in beginning the consultation process may contact Grant at the ABCS Sunday School department toll-free in state at 1-800-838-ABSC or locally in Little Rock at 376-4791, ext. 5129.



Benny Grant's work varies from conducting "vision retreats" to designing floor plans as ABCS architectural consultant.

## Staff changes

**Larry Thomas** is pastor of First Church in Atkins. He previously served as pastor of churches in Arkansas River Valley Association, including First Church of Knoxville and Plainview Church. In addition, he has been pastor of First Church of Scranton, Pines Church of Pearson, First Church of Mountain Pine, First Church of Gravette and Kihler Church of Alma. Thomas currently is a trustee for Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries. He attended Ouachita Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and is a graduate of Andersonville Baptist Theological Seminary. Thomas is married to the former Patricia Ann McCarty. They have three children, James, Jeremy and Rebekah.

**Ricky Burke** is pastor of Bellaire Church, Dermott, going there from Flydrick Church of Cherry Valley. He also has served in Kentucky. Burke is a graduate of Mid-America Seminary. He and his wife, Carol, have a son, Douglas.

**Tim Brown** is pastor of Kern Heights Church, DeQueen, coming there from Bisbee Church in Mansfield, Texas, where he was staff evangelist. Brown, who is founder and president of Chameleon Ministries, previously served as youth pastor and minister of evangelism for



## ARKANSAS ALL OVER

By MILLIE GILL

**Happy Hill Church in Alvarado, Texas.** He is a graduate of the University of Redlands in California and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Brown and his wife, Julie, have two children, Joanthan Troy and Christopher James.

**Keith Owens** joined the staff of First Church of England Sept. 3 as minister of music and youth, coming there from Mambrino Church of Granbury, Texas. Owens, a graduate of Baylor University, will graduate in December from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Owens is married to the former Amy Brunt of Batesville.

**Jack McCarty** has accepted the call to join the staff of First Church of Huntsville as full-time minister of education and youth with responsibilities in the church's education program, as well as expansion of the adult and youth ministries. He has served the congregation for 13 years as lay youth worker, coordinating five summer mission trips to four different states. McCarty and his wife, Janice, have two children, Josh and Jessica.

**Jonny Edward Watkins** joined the staff of Nettleton Church in Jonesboro Sept. 25 as minister to students, coming there from Sunset Park Church in Wilmington, N.C., where he was minister of youth. He previously served other churches in North Carolina, Florida and Nebraska. Watkins is a graduate of Pensacola Christian College, Pensacola, Fla. He and his wife, Tammy, are expecting their first child this month.

**Don Moore** of Little Rock is serving as interim pastor of Barcelona Road Church, Hot Springs Village. He previously was interim pastor of Parkway Place Church in Little Rock.

## People

**Bobby Pennington**, pastor of Hamburg First Church, was honored Sept. 15 for 10 years of service as pastor. The congregation held a potluck dinner in honor of Pennington and his wife, Sadie, and presented the couple with a money tree.

**Kent Farris**, church administrator/staff coordinator of Park Hill Church in North Little Rock was recognized in the Sept. 15 morning worship service for 10 years of ministry. Farris, his wife, Dorothy, and their sons, Marty and Alan, were honored at an evening fellowship where they were presented with a love offering and other gifts.

**Jimmie Garner**, retiring director of missions for Trinity Association, and his wife, Evelyn, were honored Sept. 19 with a program and fellowship at Maple Grove Church of Trumann. Gary Brown, pastor of Pleasant Grove Church, moderated the program which featured special music by Becky Garner Self, daughter of the couple, and Jeanie Carroll. Speakers for the program were pastor Jerry Miller of Eastside Church of Trumann; Helen Catlett of Valley View Church; Sue Chambers of First Church of Lepanto; Gene Brown of First Church of Trumann; Howard Pankey, director of Cedar Glade Encampment; Millie Gill, executive assistant to the editor of the *Arkansas Baptist News* magazine; Jimmie Sheffield, associate executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention; Jack Kwok, director of ABSC cooperative ministries; Ben Cox, a deaf member of First Church of Memphis, Tenn.; and deaf interpreters Shearlene Durham of Calvary Church, Harrisburg, and Fay Lanham of First Church, Memphis. Garner was presented with a gift of money and an engraved picture.

**Sudie C. Garner** will be honored with an Oct. 6 reception by El Dorado First Church. She is retiring as a volunteer secretary and



*Big Flat Church constituted in an Aug. 24 service moderated by Ed Powers, director of missions for White River Association. Eldon Hellums, pastor of Pyatt Church, brought the message of challenge. Pastor Dale Chapman and the 57 charter members were presented the church property deed by Bonnie Margason, a representative of the mission development council of First Church of Mountain Home, sponsoring church since 1968. The mission was launched in 1962 under the sponsorship of East Side Church of Mountain Home. Lay members of both sponsoring congregations have served the mission as Sunday School teachers and Vacation Bible School leaders.*

# ARKANSAS BAPTISTS

coordinator of the church's intercessory prayer ministry, launched by Woman's Missionary Union in 1988. Garner, who worked 25 years as secretary for a local oil company prior to serving the church as volunteer outreach secretary in 1987, has led in coordinating 27 prayer volunteers, 6,780 prayer requests and writing 20,581 prayergrams since the beginning of the ministry.

## Church news

**Vandervoort First Church** will celebrate 100 years of ministry Oct. 12-13 with special services. Dillard S. Miller, director of missions for Ouachita Association, will be the Sunday morning worship speaker.

**Harmony Church** of Perryville held a harvest revival Sept. 8-11 that resulted in 20 professions of faith, three additions by letter, 11 rededications and two commitments to Christian vocations. Larry Beatty of Pine Bluff was the evangelist and Danny Holmes, church music director, coordinated the music program. Robert P. Duhon is pastor.

**Bartholomew Association** churches participated in planning and providing leadership for Summerfest '96 that was held Sept. 9-11 at the Earl Willis Auditorium on the campus of Drew Central Schools in Monticello. Mark Matlock and Todd Proctor of Shepherd Ministries in Irving, Texas, led the event that had an average attendance of 558 and resulted in 122 decisions, including 37 professions of faith. Special guests during the week were Cindy Luper, a math teacher at Drew Central; Ben Crowley, a junior at Ouachita Baptist University; and Johnny McMurry, head football coach of the Monticello football team. A Sunday evening prayer rally preceded the youth event and featured Robert Upshaw from the Fellowship of Christian Athletes in Little Rock. Arkansas Baptist youth leaders assisting in coordinating Summerfest '96 were Doug Sanders of First Church of Monticello, Richard Wade of Second Church of Monticello and Jeff Noble of the Baptist Student Union at the University of Arkansas at Monticello.

**Hot Springs Church** held a deed signing ceremony and picnic Sept. 21 on an 11-acre site on Weston Road. Church members paid cash for the property, according to interim pastor Bill Steeger, a Ouachita Baptist University professor. The new 785-member congregation, currently meeting at Lakeside High School on Sundays and at Lake Valley Community Church on Wednesday evenings, plans to build a multi-million dollar complex on this property.



*Pleasant Grove Church of Conway broke ground Sept. 8 for a proposed building that will provide space for a sanctuary and offices. Mike Irby, chairman of the building committee and a deacon, is the son of the late Harmon Irby who helped build the rock church that will be replaced with the new facility. Breaking ground were members of the building committee, Ray Walters, David Andrews, pastor John Greer, Pat Rains, Barbara Erion, Kenneth Henry, Mike Irby and Ely Harrington and the church's oldest deacon, Doyno Hogan. A plaque commemorating the occasion was presented to Greer by Lonnie Williams, representing the contracting firm working with the church.*

**Booneville First Church** will begin a second Sunday morning worship service Oct. 6. A traditional worship service will be held from 9 to 10 a.m. The 11:15 a.m. service will feature a praise team, less formal attire and a contemporary format with drama.

**Mountain Home First Church** has launched a second Sunday evening worship service. The 6 p.m. contemporary service in the fellowship hall features music, a rhythm band, drama and Bible study. A traditional worship service will continue to be held in the church sanctuary at 6 p.m.

## Obituaries

**David Munroe Tate Jr.**, 69, of Batesville died Sept. 29 from complications due to acute leukemia. Tate, a member of First Church of Batesville, was minister of music there from 1981 until 1992. He also had served First Church in Camden 1962-81 and was minister of music and education for Calvary Church in Beaumont, Texas 1952-62. He was past president of Ouachita Baptist University Alumni Association, former second vice president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention and a member of the Arkansas Singing Men. His family was the 1978 Arkansas Music Family of the Year. Tate attended Rice University in Houston, Texas, and graduated from

Ouachita Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is survived by his wife, Hazel Cain Tate; two sons, David Eugene Tate of Memphis and John Daniel Tate of Los Angeles, Calif.; four daughters, Deborah Lynn McCann of Wichita Falls, Texas, Rebecca Elizabeth Faust of Luling, La., Amy Lois Tyler of Atlanta, Ga., and Carrie Hazel Hansen of Cabot; his mother, Retha Allen Tate of Longview, Texas; one sister; and seven grandchildren. Memorials may be made to First Church of Batesville or Ouachita Baptist University.

## Ordinations

**Pine Grove Church** of Little Rock recently ordained Mike Bennett, David Files, Jim Smith, Myron Smith and Larry White as deacons.

**West Memphis Second Church** ordained associate pastor David Thomas to the gospel ministry Aug. 25. A reception honoring Thomas, his wife, Tammy, and their daughters, Lyndsi and Hanna, followed.

**Siloam Springs First Church** ordained Jim Henegar and Donnis Turner as deacons Sept. 15.

**Hatfield First Church** recently ordained Terry Keener, Johnny Doyal and Doyle Judkins as deacons.

# RTVC facilities to stay in Texas after restructuring

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—The facilities of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission will continue in use in Fort Worth, Texas, in the restructuring of the Southern Baptist Convention, according to a report received by the SBC Executive Committee Sept. 16 from its Implementation Task Force.

A new North American Mission Board, to be formed in a merger of the SBC's current Home Mission Board, RTVC and Brotherhood Commission, will be based in suburban Atlanta, according to previous recommendations from the 10-member ITF, created by the Executive Committee after SBC messengers approved the "Covenant for a New Century" restructuring plan.

The ITF's Sept. 16 report noted NAMB's radio-TV "executive leadership team" would be based in Alpharetta, Ga., site of new facilities opened by the Home Mission Board in 1995, while radio-TV "operational facilities" will remain in Fort Worth, where the RTVC has been based since 1955.

The Brotherhood Commission facility in Memphis, Tenn., however, "has been officially listed for sale," the ITF reported to the Executive Committee.

Among other matters reported by the ITF:

■ "Benefits for retirees of affected agencies shall become the responsibility of successor corporations or the Executive Committee." The restructuring will reduce the number of convention agencies from 19 to 12. In addition to the merger forming NAMB, the restructuring includes the dissolution of the current Historical, Education and Stewardship commissions,

with a number of their responsibilities to be assumed by other SBC agencies.

■ Efforts are being made to assure "that no issues or people 'drop through the cracks'" in the SBC downsizing, the ITF reported. "Every effort is being made to arrive at a proper balance between caring for employees and conserving the assets of all affected agencies."

■ In an ITF recommendation approved by the Executive Committee, \$150,000

will be granted to the Association of Southern Baptist Colleges and Schools. The request was initiated by the SBC Education Commission for an orderly transfer of its ministries to the association. The grant will include \$100,000 from Education Commission funds budgeted for 1997 and \$50,000 from the Executive Committee in 1998 from funds received after the Education Commission's closure Dec. 31.

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## SBC leaders conduct 'quick, quiet' meeting

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—In a relatively quiet—and quick—meeting, the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee granted \$150,000 to a Baptist schools association following the early closing of the Education Commission and declined to act on a number of referred motions from the SBC annual meeting in New Orleans.

The Sept. 16-18 regular meeting of the Executive Committee concluded Tuesday at mid-afternoon following a one-hour plenary session where there was no debate and all votes on recommendations were apparently unanimous.

A shortened meeting appeared likely when the schedule eliminated a budget request presentation by each of the 19 SBC agencies, a regular part of the September meeting. Officials decided to do all of the budget preparation for the 1997-98 SBC year at the February meeting because of SBC restructuring.

The Association of Southern Baptist Colleges and Schools (ASBCS) will receive \$150,000 over two years in a request from the Education Commission approved by the Executive Committee. The Education Commission will dissolve Dec. 31, 1996,

and commissioners asked the Executive Committee to grant the funds from the commission's budget to help ASBCS get started. ASBCS will assume some of the functions of the Education Commission following its closure.

The Executive Committee took action, by declining to act in most instances, on several motions referred from the SBC annual meeting in New Orleans in June. Among the actions were decisions to:

■ Affirm SBC Bylaw 16(5) has "sufficient instruction to the Committee on Nominations to ensure that the convention's interests are honored and declines to recommend any change to Bylaw 16(5)." The referral sought to prohibit agency heads and their elected staffs from suggesting candidates for service on their governing boards.

■ Affirm the SBC in annual session should continue to "exercise with care its right to elect qualified ministers and laypersons as its officers and declines to recommend any change in the SBC Constitution." The referral sought to require either the SBC president or a vice president to be a layman.

■ Request the Christian Life Com-

mission study the feasibility of a system of voting by proxy on all investments held by entities of the SBC "so that Southern Baptists' moral views can positively impact corporate America."

■ Decline to research holding satellite or regional meetings of the Pastors' Conference and the SBC annual meeting, citing no direct responsibility for the Pastors' Conference and increased costs, diluted fellowship and increased complexity in conducting the annual meetings as requested in the referral.

■ Refer to the new North American Mission Board a motion to develop national television and radio spots to reach people for Christ, strengthen families and enhance the image of Southern Baptists.

■ Affirm the SBC's Inter-Agency Council for its plans to support Christian schools and home schools and the Baptist Sunday School Board's weekday education program assignment, in recommending no further study.

■ Decline to study the establishment of a four-year, liberal arts university owned by the SBC. The committee cited more urgent priorities of missions and evangelism.

## Pre-Registration for Preschool Child Care

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Preschool child care will be offered to messengers and their families during the annual meeting of the Pastors' Conference, Ministers' Wives' Conference and the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. Pre-registration for preschoolers, infants through five year olds, is necessary to provide quality care with a planned program. No child care will be provided for school-age children at any session. Please complete the registration form below and mail immediately. The reservation deadline is **November 8**.

**Note:** Children of parents attending sessions of the Pastors' Conference and the Convention need to be picked up during the breaks for meals. Preschool child care will only be provided during the sessions listed below.

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

### Please check sessions needed:

Ministers' Wives Conference • Monday, Nov. 18  9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. (Sack lunch)

Pastors' Conference • Monday Nov. 18 (You may choose two sessions.)

8:45 a.m. to 12:00 noon  1:45 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.  8:15 p.m. to 8:45 p.m.

State Convention • Tuesday, Nov. 19 (You may choose two sessions.)

8:15 a.m. to 11:35 a.m.  1:15 p.m. to 4:40 p.m.  8:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

State Convention • Wednesday, Nov. 20  8:15 a.m. to 12:00 noon

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# Virginia conservative leaders establish new state convention

By Robert Dillard  
Virginia Religious Herald

RICHMOND, VA (ABP)—Conservative Southern Baptists in Virginia broke new ground in a 17-year battle with moderates when they formed a new state convention Sept. 16, separating from the 173-year-old Baptist General Association of Virginia.

The 3-year-old Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia voted at the group's annual meeting to take the unprecedented step. It is the first formal split of a state Baptist body over doctrinal differences since a political/theological debate erupted in the Southern Baptist Convention in 1979. Doyle Chauncey was employed earlier this year as SBCV executive director.

"After wandering in the wilderness, (conservatives) are now entering the promised land," outgoing SBCV president Bob Melvin of Fredericksburg said in a prayer immediately following the vote.

Virginia Baptist conservatives have been at odds with the moderate-led BGAV over a decision six years ago by the state association to allow its churches to withhold financial contributions to the SBC and facilitate donations to the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

Conservatives' ire has also been provoked by the BGAV's vigorous opposition to tuition tax credits and government-sponsored prayer in public schools, as well as its support of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs and Americans United for the Separation of Church and State.

The final straw, some conservative leaders say, was a bylaw change two years ago making church representation at BGAV meetings primarily contingent on financial gifts to Virginia Baptist causes instead of the national denomination. That move diminished the number of messengers from conservative congregations unwilling to make more than minimal contributions to the BGAV.

## Need for split questioned

Reginald McDonough, BGAV executive director, disputed the new group's concerns that they were being excluded from representation in the state association. "Some of us have worked very hard in Virginia to be inclusive and allow the widest possible participation," he said. "I would have hoped that we could have modeled an inclusive family that allows for every Virginia Baptist to have a place to stand with integrity."

The conservative group's apparently unanimous vote to separate was in marked contrast to last year's annual meeting, when an identical motion failed. Some observers were surprised by an absence of debate on the motion, although the unanimity delighted the 500 delegates, who responded to the result with shouts of "Praise God!" and a standing ovation.

Approximately 115 churches have contributed to the SBCV since July 1995,

according to a list distributed at the SBCV meeting. Among the churches listed are some of the largest conservative congregations in the state, including Grove Avenue Baptist Church in Richmond, where Jerry Rankin, president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, is a member; First Baptist Church of Norfolk, whose pastor, Bob Reccord, chairs the Implementation Task Force for SBC restructuring; and First Baptist Church of Roanoke, whose pastor, Charles Fuller, chaired the SBC Peace Committee.

Bill McCrell, the SBC Executive Committee's vice president for convention relations, indicated the Executive Committee will relate to both state groups in Virginia.

A statement released by Merrell noted: "Our legal counsel advises us that the Southern Baptist Convention relates directly to individual churches from various states through the messengers the churches select for that purpose. The bylaws do not prevent cooperation with more than one convention of Baptists from a geographic area.

"Constitutionally, though the convention is independent and sovereign in its own sphere, it does not claim, nor will it attempt, to exercise any authority over any other Baptist body, including any convention of Baptists."

Executive Committee president Morris Chapman said the SBC will continue to relate to all Southern Baptist churches in Virginia and that he hopes persons from both the BGAV and the SBCV will be represented on SBC committees.



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# Gospel taking fragile root among Kurds

By **Erich Bridges**  
SBC Foreign Mission Board

RICHMOND, VA (BP)—The world seems to have confirmed yet again the old Kurdish saying: "The Kurds have no friends, except the mountains."

The mountaintops... and Christian workers, who have helped ease the Muslim people's hardships since the Persian Gulf War while spreading the gospel among them.

War and suffering opened the door, both to the 4 million or more Kurds in the north and the 16 million Iraqi Arabs who live in the southern part of the country. Christians are working and praying to share God's love with both these "Last Frontier" people groups, who have little access to the gospel.

Five years ago the United States and its Desert Storm allies encouraged millions of Kurds in northern Iraq to rise up against Saddam Hussein after his crushing defeat in Kuwait. They did — with disastrous results.

Saddam's still-intact forces hit back with typical brutality, driving thousands of Kurdish families into the freezing mountains. Children and the elderly quickly began to die. The U.S.-led coalition responded by beginning "Operation Provide Comfort," a supposedly safe haven in the north for Kurds until Saddam's expected fall from power — which never came.

On Aug. 31 Saddam's police forces

returned to the Kurds' northern home — this time at the invitation of one Kurdish faction fighting another. The move drew little reaction from the United States beyond a few air strikes at the other end of the country. "Operation Provide Comfort" is apparently over.

Southern Baptists and most other Western aid workers left Iraq in September for their own safety. Their Kurdish co-workers are desperately trying to get out to escape Saddam's secret police.

"We're trying to get our Kurdish workers out of there," a Southern Baptist worker said in a recent phone interview from Ankara, Turkey. The worker, who asked not to be identified for security reasons, oversees relief and medical work that Southern Baptists have performed in northern Iraq since the end of the Gulf War.

"We have about 60 (Kurdish) staff, and about 300 people including all their family members," he said. "We've been here for a week talking to the U.S. Embassy, representatives of the U.S. Office of Disaster Assistance (OFDA), UNICEF, the U.N. High Commission for Refugees and others. We can't get them to give us a definite answer."

Even if 1996 marks the end of outside Christian presence among the Kurds of Iraq, the gospel of Jesus Christ has been planted once again.

"There is a church in northern Iraq," said a Southern Baptist worker in the

Middle East. "It's small and pretty weak, but there is a church."

The "Jesus" film has been translated for Kurds. By the end of this year, a New Testament translation should be completed — with the whole Bible expected to be available soon in both major Kurdish dialects.

Kurdish converts are proclaiming the gospel, including some who challenge their people to review their own history. Before embracing Islam long ago, this ancient people — possibly descended from the biblical Medes — was heavily influenced by Christianity.

"I think God opened up the doors" after the war, the worker observed. "God uses crisis to wake people up and bring them to their knees."

Many Kurds also have opened their eyes to behold some new friends. Iran-style Islam has a foothold in parts of Kurdistan, but numerous Kurds are "disillusioned with Islam," said the Southern Baptist worker. "Saddam calls himself a Muslim and they're persecuted by him. Iran, Turkey and Syria persecute them. Muslim countries come in and build mosques for them, but that's about it. They're nice mosques, but the Kurds are still poor, hungry and uneducated."

Christian workers, meanwhile, came to feed the hungry, heal the sick and rebuild towns destroyed by Saddam.

"Kurds say, 'The Muslims don't help us, but the Christians do,'" the worker noted. "There have been Christians up there showing the love of Christ for five years."

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## Education Commission to close at end of year

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—The Southern Baptist Convention Education Commission, established in 1915, will shut down Dec. 31, the commission's seven-member staff has been told.

The commission was scheduled to be dissolved at the end of June 1997 as part of the denominational restructuring, reducing the number of SBC agencies from 19 to 12. The "Covenant for a New Century" restructuring plan was approved by the SBC in 1995, with a final bylaw approval in June 1996. The new SBC structure is to be in place at the end of the June 1997 annual meeting in Dallas.

The Education Commission voted in late June to leave the final details of when the commission would dissolve up to its administrative committee. Commission

chairman E. Douglas Hodo, president of Houston Baptist University, notified commission employees of the closure through executive director Stephen P. Carleton in late August.

### Timing surprises staff

The closure at the end of the year surprised the staff, Carleton said, adding that "my only regret...is that I feel responsible for misleading my staff. After the SBC in New Orleans approved the budget I submitted, which would have funded the agency through June 19, 1997, I gave the staff false hope that this was a date they could use for personal planning."

Carleton said the commission "had every right" to set the closure date. Still, he said some of the staff had turned down

opportunities to take other jobs because the commission had provided generous retention incentives to encourage staff to stay until the agency closed.

An aim of the Dec. 31 closure, legally a merger with the SBC Executive Committee, is to allow funds to be channeled to the Association of Southern Baptist Colleges and Schools (ASBCS), which has agreed to assume some of the functions of the Education Commission.

The SBC Executive Committee voted during its recent meeting to endorse the proposal to channel \$150,000 over two years from the commission's 1996-97 budget to help the ASBCS develop a staff. Following the Dec. 31 closure, the SBC Executive Committee will be responsible for distributing any remaining funds.

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**Needed** — Part-time youth minister. Send resume First Baptist, 101 N. Elm, Jacksonville, AR 72076-4606; 501-982-1519.

**Seeking** — Part-time minister of music or music/youth. Send resume to Personnel Committee, Central Baptist Church, P.O. Box 69, Mineral Springs, AR 71851.

**Wanted:** Minister of education/youth. Contact Search Committee, FBC, P.O. Box 1339, St. Francisville, LA 70775.

**Seeking** — full-time minister of music and youth. Experience in drama is important. If interested, please send resume to Trinity Baptist Church Search Committee, 918 E. Main St., Blytheville, AR 72315; phone 501-763-6041.

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**Accepting resumes** — Part-time minister of youth. Send resume to Gassville Baptist Church, PO Box 158, Gassville, AR 72635.

**Wanted** — Part-time youth director. Send resume to: Calvary Baptist Church, 319 Hwy 4 East, Camden, AR 71701.

**Seeking applicants** — Church in St. Louis County, Missouri, is seeking applicants for full-time pastor. Membership of 400, Sunday School attendance avg. 100. Anyone interested in position, and experiencing God's leading, please send letter and resume to: Pastor Search Committee, 1745 Craig Road, St. Louis, MO 63146.

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Classified ads must be submitted in writing to the ABN office no less than 10 days prior to the date of publication desired. A check or money order in the proper amount, figured at 90 cents per word, must be included.

## MISSIONARY NOTES

**Steve and Sharon Ford**, missionaries to Portugal, are in the States (address: 4559 S. Third St., Louisville, KY 40214). He is a native of Magnolia and she is the former Sharon Curtis of Memphis, Tenn. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1983.

**Gary and Susan Fulton**, missionaries to Guatemala, are in the States (address: 1208 Hester St., Jonesboro, AR 72401). He grew up in Lepanto. The former Susan Eddington, she grew up in Tyrone. They were appointed as Southern Baptist foreign missionaries in 1992.

**Albert and Karen Hodges**, missionaries to Senegal, are in the States (address: 1912 Brookhaven, Jonesboro, AR 72401). He lived in Alpena while growing up. The former Karen Atwood, she was born in Paragould. They were appointed by the FMB in 1978.

**Leon and Kathy Johnson**, missionaries to Zimbabwe, are in the States (address: Rt. 1, Box 62, Malvern, AR 72104). He was born in Piggott and she is the former Kathryn Kumabe of Honolulu, Hawaii. They were appointed as FMB missionaries in 1982.

**Robert and Janice Mooney**, missionaries to Uganda, are in the States (address: 615 Luah St., Pineville, LA 71360). He was born in Marvell. She is the former Janice Anglin of Louisiana. They were appointed in 1987.

**Dirk and Libby Pearce**, missionaries to Senegal, are in the States (address: 3532 Ramona Dr., Fort Worth, TX 76116). Son of Southern Baptist missionaries, he grew up in Nairobi, Kenya. The former Libby Tullos, she grew up in Texas. Both consider Monticello their hometown. They were appointed in 1987.

**Mark and Laura Shook**, Baptist representatives to Mexico, are on the field (address: Cerro del Creston No. 148, Camp Churubusco, Coyoacan, 04200 Mexico). He was born in Russellville. The former Laura Dunham, she considers Houston, Texas, her hometown. The Shooks were appointed in 1994.

**Lee and Phyllis Walker**, missionaries to Chile, are in the States (address: 107 Frederick, Brandon, MS 39042). Born in Texarkana, he considers Little Rock his hometown. She is the former Phyllis Orr of Louisiana. They were appointed in 1982.



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Isaiah 40:31

## TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

### RA events offer boys opportunities to camp, compete, fellowship

Two Royal Ambassador events in November will offer participants camping and fun in conjunction with Southern Baptists' annual RA Week. Camp-O-Rama will be held Nov. 1-2, immediately prior to RA Week, Nov. 3-9. A statewide RA Fellowship Banquet is set for Nov. 4.

Camp-O-Rama, for all RAs, will be held at Spring Lake Baptist Camp near Lonedale. Harry Black, director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Brotherhood department, said the event will feature Saturday "campcraft games and contests such as a log pulling, log sawing, and fire-building as well as canoeing and paddleboating. Church groups and individuals will be awarded points based on skill and participation for the games."

Black said that participating groups must "bring your own tents and campcraft equipment and meals are on your own."

RA RAs may arrive at the camp Friday as early as 4 p.m. to set up their campsites. The program will begin at 9 p.m. with a campfire meeting.

The cost for the Camp-O-Rama is \$5 per person, to be mailed to the ABSC Brotherhood department at P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203, before Oct. 25.

The RA Fellowship Banquet, held at Immanuel Church in Little Rock, "is an opportunity to have fun with Royal Ambassadors and their leaders from all over the state," Black noted, adding that the event

includes "all the pizza you can eat."

The program will feature Clyde Spurgin and his friend, "Archie." Spurgin is pastor of First Church in Desha and is a popular ventriloquist in Baptist churches.

Black said the program also will feature a testimony from Mark McGowan of East Side Church in Paragould about his recent Challenger mission trip to Venezuela.

The cost for the banquet is \$4 per person, to be mailed to the ABSC Brotherhood department at P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203, before the Oct. 30 deadline.

For more information about the banquet, Camp-O-Rama or promoting RA Week, contact Black toll-free in state at 1-800-838-ABSC or locally in Little Rock at 376-4791, ext. 5158.

### Acteens leaders gather for retreat Nov. 8-9

Acteens leaders will have an opportunity to fellowship, learn about new Acteens resources and swap ideas at the Acteens Advisors Retreat Nov. 8-9 at Cold Springs Camp in Conway.

"This is a time to encourage and

challenge advisors to increase their girls' missions vision," noted Angela Lowe, an associate in the Arkansas Baptist Woman's Missionary Union department.

Guest speaker will be Barbara Joiner, an Accent writer and author of *Count It All Joyful* and "Devotional Thoughts" in the *1996-97 Acteens Journal*. "Barbara Joiner has a special place in her heart for Acteens," Lowe commented. "She has worked with Acteens for 20 plus years."

The retreat will begin Friday at 7 p.m. and last until 2 p.m. on Saturday. The dress is casual, sweatshirts and jeans and participants will also need to bring a sleeping bag, pillow, towel, washcloth, snacks and soft drinks. Baptist Book Store supplies and new resources will be available, but leaders are encouraged to bring their Bible and *Accent* magazine.

The cost for the retreat is \$30 for lodging, meals, sweatshirt and conference materials or \$17 for lodging, meals and notebook. The registration deadline is Oct. 29.

For more information or registration forms, contact the WMU office at 1-800-838-ABSC, ext. 5137 or locally at 376-4791, ext. 5137.

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# COLLEGE DIGEST

## Ouachita Baptist University

OBU earns national ranking— For the second consecutive year, *U.S. News & World Report* has ranked Ouachita as one of the best values among regional liberal arts colleges and universities in the South. The magazine ranked Ouachita in two categories, discount price and sticker price. Each reflects the cost of attending an institution compared to its quality.

Ouachita ranked sixth in the South in sticker price, defined as the institution's quality rating divided by its total cost of tuition, fees, room and board. Ouachita ranked fourth in the South in discount price, which factors in financial aid.

**Preview, Parents' Day** — Ouachita will have a full day of activities Oct. 12 when it sponsors its annual Preview Day, Parents' Day and Upward Bound Parents' Day.

Preview Day is for high school juniors and seniors and their parents. Registration opens at 8:30 a.m. Parents' Day and Upward Bound Parents' day will honor parents of students with registration beginning at 9:30 a.m.

Activities during the day will include a picnic lunch at noon, pep rally at 12:30 p.m. and football game at 2 p.m.

**Theologian to speak** — Ouachita's religion department will host a series of

presentations this month by Bruce M. Metzger, emeritus professor of New Testament at Princeton Theological Seminary. Metzger's visit will include preaching Oct. 13 at 10 a.m. at Hot Springs Church in the Lakeside High School Auditorium and an Oct. 15 lecture on "The Teachings of Jesus: Form and Content" at 7:30 p.m. in McBeth Recital Hall at OBU.

**Composer honored nationally** — For the 31st consecutive year, W. Francis McBeth, distinguished university professor and composer laureate of Arkansas and former chairman of the music division's theory-composition department, has been honored nationally in receiving an American Society of Composer, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) Award for his music compositions. McBeth retired last spring after serving 39 years in the Ouachita faculty.

## Williams Baptist College

**Spears wins ASCAP honor** — Gay Spears of the Williams Baptist College music faculty has been chosen to receive a 1996-97 American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) Award. The award is based on Spears' collection of original compositions.

**Halford earns TranSouth honor** — Williams Baptist College athletic director Carol Halford has been named administrator of the year for the TranSouth Athletic Conference. The honor is given as Halford leads Williams into its first year in the conference.



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## Family Bible

### *Falsehoods will fall*

By Jim Lagrone, pastor,  
First Southern Church, Bryant  
Basic passage: Jeremiah 28-29  
Focal passage: Jeremiah 28:1-17  
Central truth: A prophet of God  
shares only the truth of God.

■ *Everyone wants to know the future.* We want to know if things are going to get better. We want someone to guide us to the promised land. Unfortunately, in Jeremiah's time, there was a prophet who wanted to tell the people what they wanted to hear. It made him popular. Everyone wanted to hear him tell his story of the breaking of the yoke of the Babylonians. The only problem was, however, it was not from God – therefore it was not true.

■ *The good news prophet.* Hananiah was a prophet who only wanted to tell the people good news. He wanted to tell good news so badly, that he had to ignore and then challenge the real prophet, Jeremiah. He was trying to give the people what they wanted to hear. Or maybe he was trying to share what he wanted to see. Nevertheless, he shared his own vision and told people it was of God.

■ *The prophets' test.* The test of any prophet of God in Old Testament times was whether or not his prophecies came true. The truth would be revealed! Jeremiah even stated that the truth would be shown in the results of his prediction. But that was not enough for Hananiah. He felt he needed a more dramatic visual aid and broke the yoke off of the neck of Jeremiah. It was a powerful demonstration of his confidence in his prophecy.

■ *The proper response.* If it is of God, it will come to pass. If not, the truth will be revealed and the messenger will fall. Hananiah paid for his rebellion with his life. When anyone claims, "thus saith the Lord," they must realize the message of God is sacred and true and had better not be abused for personal gain.

We are surrounded already by too many would-be prophets who are sharing only what they feel and claiming that God has given them the proper word that no one else has. Their words will be revealed for what they are in time. Our challenge is to not be persuaded from God's truth. Being popular is not the same as being truthful.

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## Life and Work

### *No other gods*

By Darrell Cook, associate director,  
Baptist Student Union,  
Arkansas State University  
Basic passage: Exodus 20:1-3;  
Psalm 100:1-5; Jeremiah 2:9-13;  
Luke 10:25-28  
Focal passage: Exodus 20:1-3  
Central truth: God alone is worthy.

There are countless reasons why I love my wife. I love her because many of her strengths help me in some of my weakest areas. I love her because of the way she cares for our family. I love her because I enjoy her inner and outer beauty.

It is easy to think of many things my wife does for me that provide me with even more reasons to love her, but a good old fashioned "I love you" can be much more meaningful than an "I love you because...." There is a rewarding depth of relationship that comes when I express love for who she is beyond love for what she does for me. The same is true in our relationship with the Father. We are called to love Him for who He is.

When God said, "You shall have no other gods before Me" (v. 3), He was declaring to the Israelites who He was. They had just been delivered from a land of polytheism and would travel through many more such lands. He wanted them to understand that they needed to look no further than "...the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery" (v. 2). He alone was worthy of their attention and affection.

Loving God for who He is does not mean that we never say, "I love you because...." When God pointed to the deliverance from Egypt, He was using an example of what He had done to point the Israelites to who He was. Also, the Psalmist tells us to "forget not all His benefits" (Psalm 103:2) and then presents a myriad of examples of His goodness.

The "other gods" of our day may be finances, social status, sports and recreational activities, or countless other distractions that pull us away from the complete sufficiency found only in Christ. Like the Israelites who were breaking this commandment before Moses could come and share it with them, it is easy for us to be pulled into placing these "other gods" before Him without letting the truth of God's love and provision for us sink in. The realization of who He is removes the fake luster of other gods and reveals the foolishness of trying to follow them.

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## Explore the Bible

### *The new kingdom*

By Bob Harper, pastor, First Church,  
White Hall  
Basic passage: Matthew 3-4  
Focal passage: Matthew 3:1-2, 13-17;  
4:1, 17-19  
Central truth: The earthly  
beginnings of the new kingdom  
portray the purpose and plan of  
Jesus' ministry.

John the Baptist announced that something new was about to begin: The leader of the kingdom of God had become flesh and now dwelt among us. John called for mankind to repent and embrace this new kingdom. His call shook the religious people of the day. John knew this new kingdom would call for radical changes in people's lives. This call for repentance still needs to be heard today.

Jesus' baptism publicly portrayed this new kingdom. Jesus did not need baptism for repentance. His baptism demonstrated His commitment toward God's kingdom and laid the foundation for all those who would follow Him. Obedience to God's command was followed. The Father was greatly pleased. The example for us was set. This spiritual high point was then followed by a time of temptation for Jesus. It works that way in our lives, too.

Jesus passed the test with flying colors. Satan wanted Jesus to focus on selfish concerns, but Jesus proved that He was on earth to be about His Father's business. Scriptural responses answered every temptation. Such responses should be our response to temptation. We can learn much from Jesus' example. He was tempted in every way, just like we are. God's Word always meets the challenge of our every temptation. We must hide it in our heart.

Jesus began His preaching ministry with the same message as that of John the Baptist. Repentance is the only proper response to the message of Christ. The teachings of Jesus focused on God's kingdom and man's need to become a part of this kingdom that is both a present reality and a future hope. Life in the kingdom, whether present or future, is centered around God and controlled by God. Simon Peter and Andrew began to understand this reality when Jesus called them to "become fishers of men" and they at once left their nets and followed Him. We too would do well to immediately follow the One who came "preaching the good news of the kingdom."

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## Family Bible

### The duty of a watchman

By Jim Lagrone, pastor,  
First Southern Church, Bryant  
Basic passage: Ezekiel 2:1-3:21  
Focal passage: Ezekiel 3:16-21  
Central truth: The righteous are responsible to God to warn their generation to avoid sin.

Freedom is a priceless treasure we Americans hold dear, but with freedom comes responsibility. If one chooses to take on a task from God, then one must realize that accountability to Him comes with the job.

■ *We are responsible to watch.* We are believers in the truth of God. And just as Ezekiel, we are told by this Scripture to be a watchman on the wall. The watchman protected the city and gave an early warning to the rest of the city if an enemy approached. The enemies we see today are not an opposing army. We see the sins of greed, crime, abuse, sexual impurity, drunkenness....The list seems endless. If we are faithful to our generation, we will sound the alarm that a nation cannot continue in sin and survive the wrath of God.

■ *We are responsible to tell.* What are we to tell? We are to tell the truth—the truth of God. Our obligation is not to share our thoughts or opinions. We are to share with others the way to God through Jesus Christ. We are to share that sin is still sin. We are to share that God will hold sinners accountable for their actions. It is a sin for us to remain silent.

■ *We are responsible for our own response.* God tells us through the prophet that we are supposed to share and we are not held responsible for someone else who makes their own choice. But there lies the truth for us to hear. We have to share so that people will understand that there is a choice. Then they make their choice. But they cannot decide without all of the facts. We must share the truth. Be a faithful watchman.

Never forget that the watchman is responsible to God if he falls asleep on the job. Election is not a free ride.

## Life and Work

### A jealous God

By Darrell Cook, associate director,  
Baptist Student Union,  
Arkansas State University  
Basic passage: Exodus 20:4-6,  
Deuteronomy 4:9-24; Jeremiah  
7:1-15; Colossians 1:15, 2:9  
Focal passage: Exodus 20:4-6  
Central truth: God is a jealous God.

Working with college students, I get ample opportunities to watch them make decisions that have a deep impact on the directions their lives will follow. I witness decisions about changing majors, decisions about dating and marriage, decisions about changing majors again, decisions about faith, decisions about changing majors again, etc. If only all life decisions were as easy as the decision offered in Exodus 20:5-6.

You choose. Would you rather have your name and your choices cursed by the immediate generations of your descendants or would you rather have your name and your choices blessed by thousands of generations to come? This was the ultimate no-brainer, yet the Israelites of the exodus consistently flirted with the warning behind this choice.

The warning took the form of the second commandment, "You shall not make for yourself an idol" (v. 4). God told of His jealousy, "punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me" (v. 5). He told of His grace, "showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments" (v. 6).

Many have a difficult time embracing the fact that jealousy is a character trait of God, but His jealousy points to His intimate desire to have a relationship with us. He holds us jealously close to Him because He knows that if we choose an idol or any direction that leads away from Him, we head foolishly toward ruin. His jealousy points to judgment that can reach for three or four generations, but His jealousy also points to grace that can reach for a thousand generations.

His jealousy is a righteous jealousy, preventing us from wasting our obedience and worship on an idol or any other purposeless direction. Although our initial reaction to the word "jealousy" is often negative, we should praise God for His jealousy that pulls us from harm and draws us into His intimacy.

## Explore the Bible

### Working alive for Him

By Bob Harper, pastor, First Church,  
White Hall  
Basic passage: Matthew 5:1-16  
Focal passage: Matthew 5:3-10, 13-16  
Central truth: Disciples of Christ are to influence their world so that all who know them will see God working in them.

A traffic light is a very necessary part of our lives these days. These signals help protect us, give us timed directions for making our journey and help us reach our destination in an orderly fashion. The busier the intersection, the more necessary the function of this little signal.

Many accidents and even fatalities occur when we don't obey the signals. Our Scripture text contains many signals for life and proclaims the blessed happiness of those who abide by its directions. God's desire is for those in the kingdom to be blessed and happy. We must be a "salty lighthouse" before men "that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."

Jesus' teaching shows us that to be the light that God wants us to be for the world, we must first take on the ethical standards portrayed in the beatitudes. These expectations of behavior are to be goals for daily living. They are signals for how life in the kingdom is to be lived. In summary form, Jesus gives us the kingdom standards for those belonging to the kingdom to give warning, direction and light to those who need to become part of the kingdom.

Each beatitude is a condensed sermon on how we as humans can find happiness for ourselves and proclaim the good news to others. At the conclusion of the beatitudes, Jesus quickly warns His followers to beware because not everyone will follow Him or His teachings. Persecution will come. That's why we are to be salt and light; a "salty lighthouse," giving warning and direction to those who are still unsure of their destination.

As Christians we are to be an earthly signal pointing to a heavenly destination. When we do our job correctly, many people are helped to reach the proper destination in an orderly fashion. If we fail to be the salt and light, we become a faulty signal that could promote more wrecks and traffic jams than we prevent.



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## U.S. Senate condemns worldwide Christian persecution

WASHINGTON (BP)—Members of the U.S. Senate have added their voices to evangelical leaders decrying the worldwide persecution and martyrdom of Christians by adopting a resolution Sept. 17.

The resolution, authored by Sen. Don Nickles, R.-Okla., and Sen. Sam Nunn, D.-Ga., "unequivocally condemns the egregious human rights abuses and denials of religious liberty to Christians around the world," calling upon "the responsible regimes" to halt their oppression of religious minorities. While non-binding, the resolution expresses the sense of the U.S. Senate.

The Senate resolution also implores the Clinton administration to "expand and invigorate the United States' international advocacy on behalf of persecuted Christians."

The U.S. House of Representatives is expected to act on a similar resolution offered by Rep. Frank Wolf, R.-Va.

## BSSB trustees honor Draper, affirm financial gains

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—Trustees of the Baptist Sunday School Board celebrated the fifth anniversary of leadership by president James T. Draper Jr., and a second year of positive financial results during their semiannual meeting Sept. 23-25 in Nashville, Tenn.

In a surprise celebration at the beginning of the meeting, trustee chairman Nick Garland presided at a program of appreciation. He observed that Draper is "setting a course that's going to make the Sunday School Board a leader into the 21st century."

Later in the meeting trustees approved a 1996-97 budget of \$281,423,135 after hearing the BSSB expects a second consecutive year of positive financial results for the 1995-96 year ending Sept. 30. The 1996-97 budget represents an increase in revenue of \$20,576,710 or 7.9 percent over the 1995-96 projection of \$260,846,425.

Draper said good financial results and stabilized paper costs will allow the board to cancel a planned 3 percent across-the-board literature price increase approved by trustees in February. The prices of some individual products will increase in instances of improvements in color or paper.

## Georgia Baptist leaders censure college president's book

MACON, GA (ABP) — Georgia Baptist Convention leaders have censured Mercer University president Kirby Godsey over his new book, *When We Talk about God... Let's Be Honest*, released this summer by Smyth & Helwys Publishing.

Sections in Godsey's book apparently reject original sin and question the importance of the virgin birth. Other teachings are being interpreted as embracing universalism and rejecting the divinity of Jesus.

The Georgia Baptist executive committee overwhelmingly passed a resolution urging Godsey to recant of views expressed in the book and asking Mercer trustees to respond to the committee's concerns.

The resolution states that in his book, Godsey "has departed significantly from Baptist doctrine" and urges him to "prayerfully reconsider his theological convictions."

Two weeks before the Georgia executive committee action, the Baptist Sunday School Board pulled the book from shelves at the 63 Baptist Book Stores and Lifeway Christian Stores across the nation.

A merchandising bulletin sent to store managers said a review of Godsey's book "pointed out some concerns with his major beliefs that are in conflict with and contradict the doctrines found in Holy Scriptures."

## FDA officials call RU-486 safe, final approval nears

WASHINGTON (BP)—The Food and Drug Administration pushed the RU-486 abortion method to the verge of final approval Sept. 18.

The FDA informed The Population Council, which holds the U.S. patent to the abortion drug, that it had determined RU-486 was safe and effective but needed more information on such issues as its manufacture and labeling before making a final decision. The FDA's communication to the New York-based group is known as an "approvable letter."

The action followed by only a week news that the FDA had given the go-ahead for the Planned Parenthood Federation of America to hold clinical trials on another drug-induced abortion procedure. The Planned Parenthood testing will involve about 3,000 women in 17 cities.

Both pro-life and pro-choice advocates seem to agree that the approval of abortion drugs may significantly increase the number of abortions in the country beyond the current 1.5 million a year.