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October 17, 1996

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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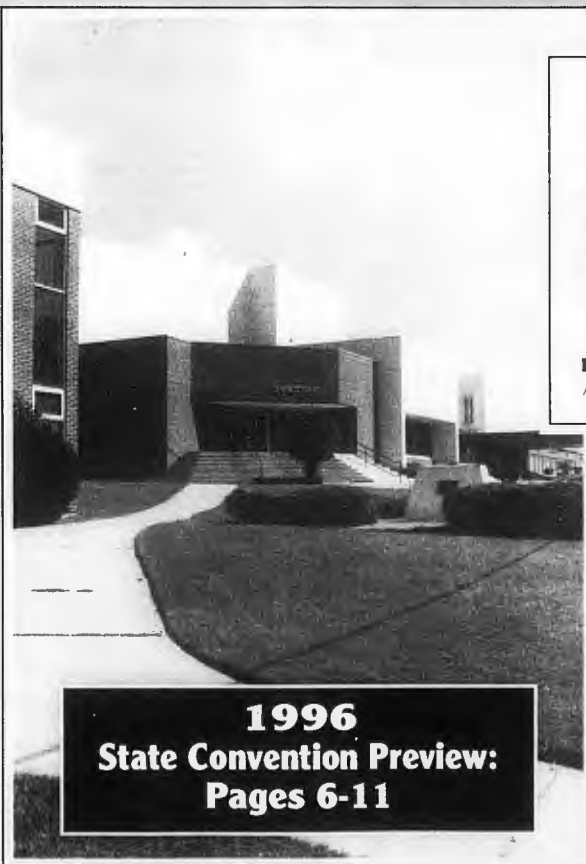
OCT 22 1996



ARKANSAS BAPTIST

Volume 95, Number 21

October 17, 1996




STRENGTHEN
Families

ARKANSAS BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION

**1996
State Convention Preview:
Pages 6-11**

Highlighting the theme, "Strengthen Families," Arkansas Baptists will gather Nov. 19-20 at Geyer Springs First Church in Little Rock for the 1996 Arkansas Baptist State Convention annual meeting.

Spiritual awakening emphasis scheduled to begin Oct. 27

Highlighting the urgency of prayer and fasting has become a major focus for Ronnie Floyd in recent months. Following an extended personal fast in 1995 and another one earlier this year, Floyd has preached at numerous state and national gatherings about the role of prayer and fasting in seeking spiritual awakening in America.

Floyd, pastor of First Church, Springdale, also serves as chairman of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee and president of the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference. Delivering the convention sermon at this year's SBC annual meeting in New Orleans, he called on Southern Baptists to set aside a week this fall to emphasize prayer and fasting in churches throughout the convention.

Floyd's proposal features a four-part schedule, beginning with a call for pastors to preach on the subject of prayer and fasting Sunday morning, Oct. 27. He suggested that the Sunday evening service feature a solemn assembly in which church members are called "to repentance of sin and to cry to the Lord for mercy."

He urged that Wednesday, Oct. 30, be set aside as "a day of humiliation, prayer and fasting" in which Christians "pray and fast for the purpose of personal spiritual revival, revival in their church and for revival in America." The emphasis will continue on Sunday, Nov. 3, with pastors being encouraged to preach about "spiritual revival in our personal lives, our churches and in our nation."

Floyd began his national emphasis during a sermon at the 1995 Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference as he shared that "the Lord spoke to me and told me to pray and fast for 40 days for revival in

America, my church and in my life.

"Because of that journey with God," he added, "my life will never be the same."

During the 1995 Arkansas Baptist Pastors' Conference, Floyd asked, "How do you return to the Lord? With fasting, weeping and mourning...How much will it cost? It will cost you a lot. Will you pay the price?"

Floyd continued his call for prayer and fasting during messages at the 1996 Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference, SBC annual meeting and last month's SBC Executive Committee meeting.

Insisting that "the most desperate need in the Southern Baptist Convention is a mighty spiritual awakening," Floyd added, "God's gateway to supernatural power in your life, your church, the SBC and our nation is by humbling ourselves through prayer and fasting."

In preparation for a convention-wide response to prayer and fasting, Floyd has written a 32-page booklet titled, "God's Gateway to Supernatural Power: A Resource, Testimony and Practical Guide on Prayer and Fasting." The Baptist Sunday School Board published and distributed several thousand of the booklets.

"Fasting should be a discipline in every believer's life," noted Emil Turner, executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. "There are times when fasting and praying must become a priority and this is one of those times."

"I hope our pastors will participate and encourage their congregations to participate," Turner added, "and as a result experience a greater sensitivity to the Holy Spirit leading in our convention, our nation and our individual lives."

Cover Story



Convention preview 6-11

Highlighting the theme, "Strengthen Families," Arkansas Baptists will gather Nov. 19-20 at Geyer Springs First Church in Little Rock for the 1996 state convention annual meeting.

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Arkansas CP: Dollars are up, percentages down

By Russell N. Dilday
Associate Editor, Arkansas Baptist

Arkansas Baptists can celebrate "the positive side" of Cooperative Program giving in the state, said Jimmie Sheffield, but warned that there is the "other side of the coin" to consider in assessing state Cooperative Program giving trends. October is the month Southern Baptists celebrate the Cooperative Program, the Southern Baptist Convention's method of supporting missions and ministry efforts at state conventions and the SBC.

"On the positive side," noted Sheffield, associate executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, "we have had a good increase in total dollars. For the last five years we have averaged almost a 3.5 percent increase over the previous year and we have had a 33 percent increase in dollars since 1987."

In the five years Sheffield mentioned, total CP receipts in Arkansas have risen steadily from \$13,807,488 in 1991 to \$15,545,269 in 1995. While the total numbers give a good impression of giving, Sheffield said they also reveal a decline.

"On the other side of the coin, we've had a decline in the percentage of undesignated church receipts given through the Cooperative Program," he explained. That decline is revealed by taking the annual undesignated receipts reported by Arkansas Baptist churches and comparing them to total CP giving by the churches through the ABCS.

The five-year results show that churches, while giving more total dollars, are giving a lower percentage of their receipts to Cooperative Program ministries. In 1991, churches reported an average 11.674 percent of receipts going to the Cooperative Program, a 22 percent decrease from the previous year. By 1995, the average had dropped to 10.926 percent.

Sheffield noted that "based on the data we have," one of the reasons for the decline, "in my opinion...is that churches are keeping more money at home to do missions as the local church defines it. If you look at the increase in total undesignated dollars given to the local church, they are rising at a steady rate, yet the percentage going to the Cooperative Program keeps going down."

Sheffield defined "undesignated receipts" as any gift sent to the state convention by churches for general missions funding of ABCS and Southern Baptist Convention causes. Designated receipts, he continued, include "anything that comes

Year	Undesignated Church Receipts	Total CP Gifts	% of Receipts	% change from previous year
1991	\$118,266,472	\$13,807,488	11.674	-0.22%
1992	\$125,606,601	\$14,418,091	11.478	-0.20%
1993	\$130,323,108	\$14,981,532	11.495	0.02%
1994	\$137,372,569	\$15,275,940	11.120	-0.38%
1995	\$142,273,202	\$15,545,269	10.926	-0.19%

CP GIVING TRENDS

into our state office that goes to a certain cause." Designated contributions also include the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions, the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for home missions, world hunger and other special gifts.

ABSC executive director Emil Turner said "the biggest factors" that affect the decrease in percentage giving may be "the members who no longer appreciate the Cooperative Program, a lack of missions education or a lack of understanding for what the Cooperative Program does."

State convention president Rex Horne, pastor of Immanuel Church in Little Rock, credits education for his congregation's strong Cooperative Program support.

The church gave more than \$414,000, or 18 percent of its budget, for undesignated CP gifts in 1995. The church's 1996 CP gifts are expected to surpass \$490,000.

Horne credited the church's missions programs for much of its education, adding that "when we promote the work, we

don't talk about giving to the Cooperative Program, but through it."

According to Turner, "I think, as a state convention staff, that we need to do a better job of talking about what the Cooperative Program does and pastors and churches will have to have a better education on the value of the Cooperative Program than they have had in recent years."

"The dollar amount we sent on to the SBC last year was more than \$6 million," he added. "The Cooperative Program also funds ministries to children, universities, matching annual contributions, church staff, evangelistic programs and training for church members."

While the ABCS staff needs to increase communication about Cooperative Program ministries, Turner acknowledged that "the greatest reservation people have is the funding of our staff." He emphasized, however, that "the greatest thing we have to offer is people."

Currently, the ABCS keeps 58.23 percent of undesignated receipts for missions causes in-state and forwards 41.77 to SBC causes. The percentage of distribution is at the discretion of each state convention.

That 41.77 percent of funds forwarded to SBC causes puts Arkansas second among state conventions in percentage given to the SBC. Turner voiced concern that "churches are not endorsing that level of giving by their level of giving."

"I would like the churches in the ABCS to be the leader among all state conventions in the percentage given through the Cooperative Program."

CP trends mirror individual giving patterns

While church giving percentages to the Cooperative Program have declined in recent years, percentage gifts to churches by Arkansas Baptists also have dropped, said Jimmie Sheffield. "It is now less than 2.5 percent of their total income that they give to their church."

Sheffield said that while total income giving percentages have decreased, dollar amounts given by individual Arkansas Baptists have increased, but not by much. In 1990, the average Arkansas Baptist gave \$41.36 annually in undesignated gifts through the Cooperative Program. By 1995, that figure had only climbed to \$46.80 per person.

Sheffield noted "three things that stick out in my mind" to explain why church members are not giving even a tithe — 10

percent — of their income, including:

■ "Consumer-driven society — we want things to satisfy us and are giving less to charity and mission work."

■ "The second, and the one that jumps out at me," he noted, "is that many people in the church feel that they don't have any real reason to give. They feel that all we talk about in churches is institutional survival."

■ "I also learned that American children four to 12-years-old have at their disposal \$12.6 billion and we don't do anything to educate children on giving," he remarked. "Americans spent \$2.5 billion on gum last year, \$12 billion on candy and \$49 billion on soft drinks, but only \$2 billion on worldwide missions causes from all religions put together."

Ouachita board votes to be self-perpetuating

Convention leaders respond with vote to escrow university's CP funds

By Trennis Henderson
Editor, Arkansas Baptist

Trustees of Ouachita Baptist University voted Oct. 10 to immediately resume responsibility for naming their own successors, citing a provision in the school's original charter filed in 1887. In response to the trustees' action, the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Executive Board's executive committee held a called meeting Oct. 14 and voted to escrow Ouachita's Cooperative Program funds "until the convention itself directs otherwise or until this issue is resolved."

Calling the series of events "a heart-breaking set of circumstances," state convention executive director Emil Turner said, "The executive committee was disappointed by Ouachita's action and felt there were other remedies available to Ouachita than what they chose. The heart of the executive committee is that Ouachita continue to be an institution that is not just fraternal to the state convention but vital to the state convention."

Executive Board president Charles "Chuck" McAlister, who chairs the board's six-member executive committee, said the escrowed funds will be released to Ouachita if the convention and university can successfully reconcile their differences. He added that the escrowed funds will not include designated gifts or convention funds budgeted for student scholarships.

Affirming the desire to maintain "a spirit of reconciliation," McAlister said, "We hope we will be able to arrive at a reconciliation that is acceptable to all Arkansas Baptists and to Ouachita."

In other actions, the executive committee voted to research the convention's legal options and to appoint an at-large committee to meet with Ouachita representatives to discuss reconciliation options. "No one is suggesting we get involved in legal action," Turner pointed out, "but we want to understand what our legal standing is."

The historic basis for OBU's decision is found in the school's original charter which states that the trustees are "invested with full power of self-perpetuation by appointing their successors." The trustees amended the charter in 1914 to allow the convention to elect the school's trustees.

In a press release following the trustees' vote, Ouachita president Ben Elrod said the latest trustee action was taken to "guarantee a return to a more inclusive trustee selection process." He noted that

the effort was designed "to restore broad participation in the process and to remove Ouachita from the line of fire of denominational dispute."

In letters mailed Oct. 11 to Ouachita students, parents, alumni and pastors, Elrod wrote that "stability is necessary for an institution to carry out its mission and add to its strength. That stability," he added, "cannot be found in the current climate of factionalism in Baptist life."

Along with resuming control of trustee selection, Ouachita trustees plan to adopt bylaw changes which would include consultation with the state convention nominating committee, Arkansas Baptist churches and alumni prior to electing new trustees.

In addition to convention messengers electing the school's trustees for more than 80 years, Ouachita was budgeted to receive more than \$2.4 million from the state convention's 1996 Cooperative Program allocations.

Power to withhold funds

As part of that partnership, the Executive Board bylaws empower the board's executive committee to "authorize the executive director to withhold funds from any institution or agency which fails to comply with the policies of the convention or the Executive Board."

OBU trustee chairman William H. "Buddy" Sutton said he hopes the board's action "will not be perceived as a strongly significant action except for taking the election of trustees out of the political arena. There was a concern for stability which we very much want to achieve without regard to one faction or another in the convention political arena.

"There is the strongest desire in every way to remain aligned with the convention," emphasized Sutton, a former state convention president. "Our desire is to assure the convention that nothing is intended to be a divorcement from the convention."

State convention president Rex Home is pastor of Immanuel Church in Little Rock, where Sutton is a member. "I don't know of anybody who would feel a sense of joy about what has taken place," Home said of OBU's decision. "I don't feel happy this step has been taken although you understand leaders do what they believe is best for the future of the institution. They're doing what their charter gives them authority to do."

Prior to last week's action, the school's trustees were elected each year by con-

vention messengers following nomination by the state convention nominating committee. The nominating committee is a rotating nine-member committee, with three members appointed each year by the state convention president.

Acknowledging that the trustee nomination process "has been an ongoing concern" in Baptist life, Home added, "To come to this point shows how crucial the college thinks this is for the future."

Elrod said the OBU trustee board had four openings this year. "I submitted eight names for consideration after being asked to do so" by the nominating committee, he explained. When none of the eight names were among the four nominated by the committee, Elrod said school officials felt ignored in the nominating process.

Voicing concern over "the general air of conflict which seems to bring these things about," Elrod said, "We've fallen into a pattern in Southern Baptist life where the nominating committee becomes a battleground. That's not the way it should be.

"We're not mad at anybody," the OBU president insisted. "We're not wanting to break with the convention. That's the last thing on our minds. We simply wanted to get the school out of line of political fire and remove ourselves from the battlefield."

Calling the OBU trustees' decision a "tragic act," nominating committee chairman William Hatfield said "removing the university from the oversight of the state convention is a grievous wound to Arkansas Baptists and a hindrance to the Kingdom of God."

"In our system, messengers to the state convention elect a president, who appoints people to the nominating committee, who in turn nominate trustees — the supervisors of the presidents of the entities — whose names are submitted to the messengers at the next state convention for their approval or rejection," said Hatfield, pastor of First Church, Dierks. "This is an effective way of keeping our entities accountable to the people in the pews. It has worked well for years, and I see no reason to change it."

Although he is "saddened that we had to take this action," Elrod said university officials "are deeply committed to the proposition that this is best for Ouachita at this time."

"It's hard to predict what will happen," he added. "Any time you take a difficult position, there is always some disruption. We will be responsive to anybody's invitation to sit down and talk about how we can make this situation workable."

Don't let differences erode cooperation

The primary responsibility of the trustees of Ouachita Baptist University is to take action in the best interest of the university's present and future. The primary responsibility of Arkansas Baptist State Convention Executive Board members and other convention leaders is to take action in the best interest of the state convention's present and future.

Despite a positive, productive partnership for more than a century, leaders of the two entities occasionally have conflicting priorities and interests. Such was the case last Thursday when Ouachita's trustees voted to resume responsibility for electing their own successors, a right that previous trustees turned over to state convention messengers in 1914.

While trustees may have the legal right to take such action, their decision appears to conflict with the intent of the state convention's articles of incorporation which specify that "trustees shall be sensitive to the expression of the convention's will in all matters."

Beyond the legal ramifications of such action, perhaps the most significant issue for most Arkansas Baptists is why Ouachita officials felt a need to re-establish a self-perpetuating trustee board. Ouachita president Ben Erlod has candidly acknowledged that the measure was enacted by trustees "to remove Ouachita from the line of fire of denominational dispute."

As an example, Erlod submitted eight names for consideration to the state convention nominating committee which was responsible for nominating four trustees to serve on Ouachita's board. Arkansas Baptist agency leaders tradi-

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



By TRENNIS HENDERSON

tionally offer recommendations to the nominating committee each year, usually at the invitation of the committee chairman.

Although the nominating committee remains free to nominate any individuals they choose, their report often includes at least some of the names suggested by agency officials. One result of the process is a heightened sense of cooperation and trust in Arkansas Baptist life.

This year, however, the nominating committee chose not to accept any of the names suggested by Ouachita's president. They opted instead to nominate four other Arkansas Baptists, all four of whom are currently serving as trustees or Executive Board members on the national level in Southern Baptist life.

Admitting that he felt his suggestions were ignored by the state convention nominating committee, Erlod said an even greater concern was that "the whole process of trustee nominations and elections seemed to be the touchpoint where Ouachita always got embroiled in denominational politics."

As a result, OBU officials felt it was in the school's best interest "to take action to remove ourselves from the battlefield."

Unfortunately, however, the action may have merely moved the battle from one field to another. With both the trustee selection process and an annual Cooperative Program allocation of nearly \$2.5 million involved, the trustees' decision will certainly prompt a number of responses from Arkansas Baptist leaders and churches.

Anticipated reactions will range from anger to affirmation for the school's action. Regardless of whether one opposes or endorses Ouachita's decision, the key is to maintain a cooperative Christian spirit which doesn't jeopardize the witness or reputation of Arkansas Baptists.

Hopefully, convention and university officials can negotiate a win-win compromise that will allow both entities to move forward in their ministries among Arkansas Baptists. Until that time, all Arkansas Baptists should make a personal commitment to pray and speak about this issue in such a way that Baptist cooperation in our state is enhanced rather than eroded.

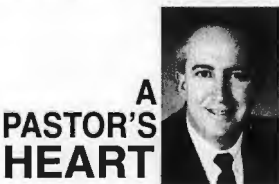
As Arkansas Baptists gather next month for the state convention annual meeting, this year's theme is "Strengthen Families." The Tuesday evening session theme will specifically highlight the call to "Strengthen the Arkansas Baptist Family."

Hasty, emotional reactions to the current situation will not strengthen the Arkansas Baptist family. If we fail to treat one another as family in the difficult moments, why even bother to promote such a theme?

How important is the Arkansas Baptist State Convention?

The first Arkansas Baptist State Convention meeting I attended was in 1986. Dr. Moore introduced me as one of the "new Arkansans." This year, I will have the responsibility of that task. I look forward to this convention. It will be my first as executive director. Arkansas Baptists will gather to celebrate seeing people saved. We will rejoice in starting new churches and in knowing that God has changed the lives of people in Arkansas.

Is the convention important enough to merit disruption of our schedules, ministries and responsibilities? Yes. Remember that the first chapter of Acts records a business meeting. Yes, the convention is important! In a world of selfishness, we demonstrate that God does more through our cooperation than He does through us separately. Yes, the convention is important! In a state with more than a million unchurched residents, the convention



By EMIL TURNER
ABSCE Executive Director

reminds us that we are to seek and save the lost. Yes, the convention is important! In a world in which Satan works to destroy all that is good, we demonstrate that He who is in us is greater than He who is in the world. I'll see you there!

■ Have you read *Jesus Works Here* by

Robert Tamasy? (Broadman & Holman, 1995). Tamasy is president of the Christian Business Men's Committee. He has edited a great collection of testimonies by Christians who face challenges in business. The sections on coping with company reorganizations and terminations are worth the price of the book. Good stuff!

Executive director's schedule:

- Oct. 18 (a.m.) Master Singers/Singing Women Retreat, OBU
- Oct. 20 (a.m.) First, West Memphis
- Oct. 21 (p.m.) Northwest Arkansas Association, Bella Vista
- Oct. 22 (p.m.) Greene County Association, West View, Paragould
- Oct. 27 (a.m.) First Southern, Bryant (p.m.) First, Blytheville
- Oct. 28 (p.m.) Mississippi County Association, East Side, Osceola
- Oct. 29-30 New Orleans Seminary



PREVIEW OF THE 1996
**Arkansas Baptist
 State Convention**
 NOVEMBER 19-20
 Geyer Springs First Church, Little Rock

Tuesday Morning

November 19

"Strengthen the Kingdom Family" (Eph. 2:19)

8:15	Pre-session Music.....	Pam Wessell
8:30	Congregational Singing.....	Rob Howell
8:35	Scripture and Prayer.....	Faron Rogers
8:40	Call to Order.....	Rex M. Horne Jr.
8:45	Welcome.....	Paul Sanders
8:50	Recognition.....	Gov. Mike Huckabee
	Appointment of Committees.....	Rex Horne
	Enrollment of Messengers.....	Gene Ellis
	Adoption of Order of Business.....	Jim Lagrone
	Tellers Committee Instructions.....	Gary Akers
	Resolutions.....	Del Medlin
	Charter/Bylaws Report.....	David Napier
8:55	Southern Baptist Convention Report.....	Tom Eliff
9:05	Announcements.....	Rex Horne
9:10	Recognition of Denominational Guests.....	Rex Horne
9:15	Recognition of Missionaries.....	Rex Horne
9:20	FMB Appointment Service.....	Jimmie Sheffield
9:25	Congregational Singing.....	Rob Howell
9:30	BIBLE STUDY.....	Charles Fuller
10:00	New Arkansans.....	Emil Turner
10:05	European Partnership Report.....	Harry Black Doyle Plummer
10:10	Iowa Partnership Update.....	Jimmy Barentine
10:15	Annuity Board Report.....	Brad Thompson
10:25	Congregational Singing.....	Rob Howell
10:30	Cooperative Program Awards.....	Jimmie Sheffield
10:40	Williams Baptist College Report.....	Jerol Swaim
10:55	Congregational Singing.....	Rob Howell
11:00	Worship in Song.....	One Heart
11:05	MESSAGE.....	Jack Graham
11:35	Benediction.....	John McCallum

Tuesday Afternoon

November 19

"Strengthen Members of the Family" (Deut. 4:9)

1:15	Pre-Session Music.....	Master Singers Instrumentalists
1:30	Congregational Singing.....	Phil Wilson
1:35	Scripture and Prayer.....	Lee Lawson
1:40	Worship in Song.....	David Stanley
1:45	BIBLE STUDY.....	Charles Fuller
2:15	Miscellaneous Business.....	Rex Horne
2:25	Convention Nominating Committee.....	William C. Hatfield
2:35	EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORT.....	Charles McAlister
3:00	Foreign Mission Board Report.....	Fred Sorrells
3:10	Children's Homes Report.....	David Perry
3:25	1997 Theme Interpretation.....	Jimmie Sheffield
3:45	Congregational Singing.....	Phil Wilson
3:50	Worship in Song.....	Arkansas Singing Women

4:10	MESSAGE.....	Charles Petty
4:40	Benediction.....	Neal Bennett

Tuesday Evening

November 19

"Strengthen the Arkansas Baptist Family" (1 Cor. 12:14)

6:00	Pre-Session Music.....	Immanuel Choir and Orchestra
6:10	Congregational Singing.....	Lynn Madden
6:15	Scripture and Prayer.....	Larry Wilson
6:20	Special Music.....	Immanuel Choir
6:30	PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.....	Rex Horne
7:00	Congregational Singing.....	Lynn Madden
7:05	Ouachita Baptist University Choir.....	Charles Wright, Director
7:20	Ouachita Baptist University Report.....	Ben Elrod
7:35	Congregational Singing.....	Lynn Madden
7:40	Worship in Song.....	Master Singers
8:00	MESSAGE.....	Emil Turner
8:30	Benediction.....	William Fuller

Wednesday Morning

November 20

"Strengthen the Family's Future" (Phil. 3:13)

8:15	Pre-Session Music.....	Worship Band
8:30	Congregational Singing.....	Billy Bowie
8:35	Scripture and Prayer.....	Ronny Wycaster
8:40	Recognitions.....	Rex Horne Baptist Memorial Health Care System, Memphis Baptist Health, Little Rock Former Presidents Retired Baptist Workers
8:50	Congregational Singing.....	Billy Bowie
8:55	BIBLE STUDY.....	Charles Fuller
9:25	ELECTION OF OFFICERS (President)	
9:35	Arkansas Baptist Foundation Report.....	David Moore
9:45	ELECTION OF OFFICERS (First Vice President)	
9:55	News Magazine Report.....	Trennis Henderson
10:05	ELECTION OF OFFICERS (Second Vice President)	
10:15	Christian Civic Foundation Report.....	Larry Page
10:25	Seminary Report.....	Paige Patterson
10:35	Bold Mission Prayer Thrust.....	Dave Greenman
10:40	Congregational Singing.....	Billy Bowie
10:45	Worship in Song.....	Powell Brothers
10:50	CONVENTION SERMON.....	Kerry Powell
11:20	Miscellaneous Business.....	Rex Horne
11:30	Resolutions.....	Del Medlin
12:00	Presentation of New Officers/Benediction	

Organist: Tim Blann, Second Church, Little Rock
 Pianist: Pam Wessell, Geyer Springs First Church

Speakers to highlight 'Strengthen Families' theme

Highlighting the convention theme, "Strengthen Families," Arkansas Baptists will gather Nov. 19-20 at Geyer Springs First Church in Little Rock for the 1996 state convention annual meeting.

In addition to business items scheduled throughout the two-day meeting, messengers and guests will have the opportunity to hear four messages and a series of three Bible studies during the annual event.

Charles Fuller, pastor of First Baptist Church, Roanoke, Va., will lead Bible studies during the convention's Tuesday morning, Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday morning sessions.

Fuller, a graduate of the University of Richmond and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, served as chairman of the Southern Baptist Convention Peace Committee. He currently is chairman of the Home Mission Board trustees and is a former president of the Virginia Baptist State Convention.

Speakers from Texas and North Carolina also will share messages during the convention. Jack Graham, senior pastor of Prestonwood Baptist Church in Dallas, will preach on Tuesday morning, and Charles Petty, president of Family Success Unlimited in Raleigh, N.C., will speak Tuesday afternoon.

Graham, a graduate of Hardin-Simmons University and Southwestern Seminary,



Charles Fuller

Jack Graham

Charles Petty

has served as pastor of churches in Texas, Oklahoma and Florida. A former president of the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference, he currently is a trustee of Liberty University.

Petty, a native of Arkansas, describes himself as a family humorist. A graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Southwestern Seminary, he is a former pastor of churches in Arkansas and Texas.

Arkansas Baptists scheduled to preach during the annual meeting are state convention president Rex Horne, convention executive director Emil Turner and Kerry Powell, pastor of First Church, McGehee.

Home, pastor of Immanuel Church in Little Rock, will deliver the annual president's message Tuesday evening at 6:30 p.m. Home, who holds degrees from Lyon College, Southwestern Seminary and New Orleans Seminary, has been pastor of Immanuel Church since 1990. He previously was pastor of churches in Louisiana,

Oklahoma and Texas.

Turner, who began serving as ABSC executive director in January, will present his first annual message on Tuesday evening at 8 p.m. Turner, a graduate of Louisiana State University and New Orleans Seminary, is a former pastor of churches in Arkansas and Louisiana. He is a former trustee of the SBC Foreign Mission Board.

Powell will present the annual convention sermon at 10:50 a.m. during the meeting's final session on Wednesday morning. Powell holds degrees from Carson-Newman College, Southwestern Seminary and Trinity Theological Seminary. He also is a graduate of U.S. Navy Chaplains School and U.S. Air Force Chaplains School and served as a military chaplain endorsed by the SBC Home Mission Board. He has served as a trustee of Williams Baptist College and Midwestern Seminary as well as a member of the ABSC Executive Board.

In addition to the Bible studies and sermons, the program will include a report from SBC president Tom Elliff, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church in Del City, Okla., and a seminary report from Paige Patterson, president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, as well as comments from Gov. Mike Huckabee, a former president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

1996 convention committees appointed

Resolutions Committee

Del Medlin, pastor (chairman)
First Church, Cabot
Jeff Cheatham, director of missions
Arkansas River Valley Association,
Russellville
Roy Parker, pastor
Beech Street First Church, Texarkana
Ron Sanders, pastor
Life Line Church, Little Rock
Carolyn Shell, member
Friendship Church, Clinton

Credentials Committee

Gene Ellis, director of missions
(chairman), Garland County Association,
Hot Springs
Tommy Freeman, interim pastor
First Church, Norphlet

Kevin Lee, pastor
First Church, Arkadelphia
Herbert "Butch" Riddle, pastor
First Church, Ashdown
James Walker, pastor
Archview Church, Little Rock

Tellers Committee

Gary Akers, pastor (chairman)
Central Church, Pine Bluff
Charles Ballentine, pastor
Little Hope Church, Oden
Charles Barfield, member
Immanuel Church, Little Rock
Allan Greer, pastor
Parkway Place Church, Little Rock
S.D. Hacker, director of missions
Rocky Bayou Association, Franklin
Cliff Hutchins, pastor
Marshall Road Church, Jacksonville

Cliff Mayton, pastor
Immanuel Church, Warren
Richard Perry, pastor
Berry Street Church, Springdale
Robby Tingle, pastor
Central First Church, Lavaca
Matthew Watson, pastor
Trinity Church, Mabelvale

Order of Business Committee

Jim Lagrone, pastor (chairman)
First Southern Church, Bryant
Steve Tucker, minister of education
First Church, Bentonville
Robert Young, minister of music
Second Church, Hot Springs

Parliamentarian

Monty G. Murry, attorney
Texarkana

STATE CONVENTION PREVIEW

Arkansas Baptists nominated for service

ABSC Executive Board

Terms to expire in 1999

Arkansas River Valley.....	*Ira Taylor, Knoxville
Arkansas Valley.....	Thomas Morris, Brinkley
Ashley.....	Bobby Biggers, Wilmot
Bartholomew.....	Cliff Mayton, Warren
Calvary.....	*Morgan Cox, Augusta
Caroline.....	Elvis Smith, Ward
Caroline.....	*Melvin York, Des Arc
Centennial.....	Gregg Greenway, Almyra
Clear Creek.....	Chris Vinson, Van Buren
Concord.....	*Ed Saucier, Fort Smith
Concord.....	*Pete Ramsey, Fort Smith
Current-Gaines.....	Don Strait, Pochontas
Delta.....	Mike Fowler, Dermott
Faulkner.....	*Phil Boudreaux, Conway
Faulkner.....	Georg Andersen, Conway
Garland.....	*Gene Ellis, Hot Springs
Garland.....	Bill Heaton, Hot Springs
Greene.....	*Dan Minton, Paragould
Harmony.....	*Ed Smith, Pine Bluff
Liberty.....	*Tom Edwards, Camden
Liberty.....	Dwain Miller, El Dorado
Little River.....	Marty Polston, Nashville
Little River.....	Don Jones, Little River

Mississippi.....	Bill Fuller, Blytheville
Mississippi.....	*J. B. Lovett, Wilson
Mt. Zion.....	Tommy Stacy, Jonesboro
North Pulaski.....	*David Simpson, North Little Rock
North Pulaski.....	Charles Mays, Runyan
North Pulaski.....	*Marck Gibson, Jacksonville
Pulaski.....	Melinda Martin, Little Rock
Pulaski.....	Michael Perkins, Little Rock
Southwest.....	Mark Sparks, Magnolia
Southwest.....	*Wayne Williams, Texarkana
Southwest.....	Richard Young, Stamps
Tri-County.....	Gary Hair, West Memphis
Tri-County.....	Brad Banks, Forrest City
Trinity.....	Larry White, Harrisburg
Washington-Madison.....	Brian Coday, Springdale
Washington-Madison.....	Earl Adams, Lincoln
District 5.....	Marlyn Simmons, Little Rock
District 8.....	*Pam Worrell, Pine Bluff

Term to expire in 1997:

Mt. Zion.....	Tom Snyder, Jonesboro
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Terms to expire in 1998:

Black River.....	Danny Taylor, Tuckerman
Buckner.....	*Gary Martin, Huntington
Concord.....	Eddie Combs, Fort Smith
Northwest.....	Jim Richards, Rogers
Washington-Madison.....	Stanton Cram, Springdale

Children's Homes

Terms to expire in 1999:

Pam Veteto, Batesville
Robert B. Anderson, Brinkley
Jim Carter, El Dorado
*Mary Lou Heard, North Little Rock
Sandy Landers, Benton
*Ledell Bailey, Searcy

Baptist Memorial Health Care System, Memphis

Terms to expire in 1999:

*A. Watson Bell, Searcy
*James R. Wallace, North Little Rock
*Alvin Huffman III, Blytheville

BSU Advisory Committee

Terms to expire in 1999:

Don Blackmore, Gentry, District 1
*Bennie Foster, Heber Springs, District 2
*Bill Lacey, Fort Smith, District 4
David McCord, Murfreesboro, District 7
J. T. Wright, Glenwood, District 7
*Donna Cheatham, Russellville, Member at Large
Terms to expire in 1997:
Mark Sadler, Jonesboro, District 3
Linda Bond, Lake Village, District 8
Term to expire in 1998:
Rudy Davis, West Helena, District 6

Arkansas Baptist Foundation

Terms to expire in 1999:

Roger Reynolds, Forrest City
*Richard Gladden, Hot Springs

Mike Rainwater, Little Rock
Loyd Lindsey, Camden
*Bruce Murphy, El Dorado

Newsmagazine

Terms to expire in 1999:

*David McCormick, Dardanelle, District 4
*Mark Baber, Marion, District 6
*Otis H. Turner, Arkadelphia, Member at Large
*Eddie McCord, Mt. Ida, Member at Large
*Lyndon Finney, Little Rock, Member at Large

Historical Commission

Terms to expire in 1999:

Louise Mitchell, Brinkley, District 6
Rosa Wise, Rogers, District 1
Mark Lashley, Dardanelle, District 4

Ouachita Baptist University

Terms to expire in 1999:

David Miller, Heber Springs
*William H. Sutton, Little Rock
*Pauline Morrow, Mena
Rex Terry, Fort Smith
Bill Elliff, Little Rock
*Larry Kircher, Bald Knob
Stephen Davis, Russellville
*Cotton Cordell, Hot Springs

Williams Baptist College

Terms to expire in 1999:

Libby Thompson, Austin
*Gordon J. Topping, Pine Bluff
*Kenneth Sulcer, Osceola
*Amelia Frankum, Newport

Wendell Ross, Van Buren
*J. Larry Bone, Fort Smith
*Tom Williams, Bryant
*Carol Belford-Lewallen, Pochontas

Term to expire in 1997:

Don Moseley, North Little Rock

State Joint Committee on Cooperative Ministries

*Dillard Miller, Mena
*Kerry Powell, McGehee

Charter/Bylaws Committee

Terms to expire in 1999:

*Monty Murry, Texarkana
*Charles Allen, Conway

Program Committee

Term to expire in 1999:

Wes George, Wynne

2001 Convention

Date: Nov. 6-7, 2001
Place: First Church, Russellville

1997 Convention Preacher

Preacher: David Miller, Heber Springs
Alternate: Ben Rowell, Rogers

1997 Convention Dates

The Convention Nominating Committee recommends that the date for the 1997 convention be changed from November 11-12, 1997 to **November 4-5, 1997.**

* denotes second term of service

1996 Executive Board recommendations

Recommendation No. 1

1997 Budget

I. State Causes

1. Administration.....	\$316,410
2. Business Services.....	128,928
3. Accounting.....	196,343
4. Computer Services.....	131,043
5. Annunity.....	23,910
6. Baptist Student Union.....	805,479
7. Brotherhood.....	142,228
8. Church Music.....	194,027
9. Cooperative Ministries with National Baptists.....	106,281
10. Discipleship Training.....	218,797
11. Evangelism.....	292,295
12. Ministry of Crisis Support.....	119,829
13. Missions.....	555,139
14. Church Leadership Support.....	123,549
15. Stewardship.....	99,252
16. Sunday School.....	326,523
17. Woman's Missionary Union.....	352,082
18. Media Service.....	75,226

19. Arkansas Baptist Assembly.....	217,181
20. Camp Paron-Operating.....	61,270
21. Camp Paron-Improvement Fund.....	15,504
22. Expanded Church Annuity Plan.....	399,913
23. Baptist Student Union-Buildings.....	132,400
24. Convention.....	136,972
25. Historical Commission.....	10,750
26. Non-Department Programs and Other Causes.....	563,410
27. Printing Services.....	51,762
28. Salary Increase Reservc.....	74,176
TOTAL EXECUTIVE BOARD PROGRAMS.....	\$5,850,678

29. Children's Homes and Family Ministries.....	\$465,191
30. Arkansas Baptist Foundation.....	272,328
31. Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine.....	232,521
32. Ouachita Baptist University.....	2,527,258
33. Williams Baptist College.....	761,175
34. Ministerial Scholarship Fund.....	136,418
TOTAL STATE PROGRAMS.....	\$10,245,569

II. Southern Baptist Convention..... \$7,349,432

TOTAL BUDGET..... \$17,595,000

Recommendation No. 2

1998-2002 Unified Budget Formula

II. Southern Baptist Convention Causes

The percent increase for Southern Baptist Convention causes shall be equal to the average percentage increase of the previous five (5) years of church gifts to the Cooperative Program as a percentage of the total undesignated gifts to churches reported in the Annual Church Profiles. The maximum increase each year shall be one percent (1%), but in no year will the percentage be decreased.

III. State Causes

Arkansas Baptist State Convention agencies, institutions, Executive Board programs, and other state causes shall receive an increase in their respective Cooperative Program allocations equal to the percentage increase in the amount allocated to the Arkansas Baptist State Convention over the prior year. If the state distribution is a decrease from the prior year, then all shall receive an equal percentage reduction equal to the percentage reduced to the state portion of the Cooperative Program distribution.

VII. Budget Formula Period

This formula will be operative beginning in the budget year 1998 through the budget year 2002 at which time a review will be made by the Executive Board.

Recommendation No. 3

1997 Arkansas Baptist State Convention Arkansas Awakening Projects*

The Executive Board recommends the approval of the 1997 Arkansas Awakening Projects.

In 1997, the Arkansas Awakening emphasis is "Strengthen the Family." The following are priority projects that highlight the emphasis.

- Associational Smaller Membership Church Leadership Conferences
- Legacy Builders Retreat
- Children's Music and Family Worship Celebration
- Family Worship Workshop
- Institute for Christian Discipleship
- Super Summer
- State Evangelism Conference
- Mission Arkansas Family Alert
- Home Improvement
- Sunday School Convention
- Week of Prayer for Strengthening the Family

*Each department has projects that relate to Arkansas Awakening goals. The projects will be distributed during the annual meeting.

Recommendation No. 4

Extending Arkansas-European Baptist Convention Partnership

The Executive Board recommends that the Arkansas-European Baptist Convention Partnership be extended through Dec. 31, 1999.

Background: This partnership

originated Jan. 1, 1994, as a joint partnership of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, and the European Baptist Convention.

Arkansas Baptists voted during the 1995 convention to extend the three-year partnership through Dec. 31, 1997. The leadership of the European Baptist Convention has expressed appreciation for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention and its participation with them in taking the gospel to the English-speaking population of Europe. Dr. James Hefflin, Arkansas native and general secretary-elect of the European Baptist Convention, and the European Baptist Convention Partnership Committee have expressed a strong desire for this partnership to continue.

Dr. John Floyd, Foreign Mission Board area director of Europe, spoke on behalf of the FMB to encourage an extension of the partnership.

Amendment to Article V: Section 1, Nominating Committee

The Charter and Bylaws Committee recommends the following amendment to the Bylaws of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. The change is noted in bold.

The President shall also name the Chairman, who shall have served at least one year on the committee.

This amendment was approved by the 1995 Convention and must be approved in two successive annual meetings.

ABSC auxiliary meetings to be held Nov. 18

Participants at three meetings preceding the 1996 Arkansas Baptist State Convention will focus on developing men, the home and leadership skills.

The Arkansas Baptist Pastors' Conference, Ministers' Wives Conference and Religious Education Association will meet in separate gatherings Nov. 18 at Geyer Springs First Church in Little Rock.



Tom Elliff

Barbara O'Chester

Mark Short

Pastors' Conference

Pastors' Conference participants will look inwardly Nov. 18 as they hear ways of "Becoming the Man God Uses." The annual meeting of pastors will be held in the Geyer Springs sanctuary.

Pastors' Conference president Bill Elliff said he had originally planned the theme to focus on revival and spiritual awakening, but realized that "in order to have revival, there must be men God can use in revival. Therefore, the conference is focusing on what has to happen in the life of a pastor or spiritual leader of a church for them to become a useable tool for God."

The morning session, which begins at 8:45 a.m., will include the messages "Becoming a Man of Prayer" by Gregg Greenway, pastor of First Church in Almyra; "Becoming a Man of Perseverance," by H.D. McCarty, pastor of University Church in Fayetteville; and "Becoming a Man of Pattern," by Don Whitney, assistant professor of spiritual formation at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

The afternoon session, which begins at 1:45 p.m., will feature "Becoming a Man of Principle," by Ronnie Rogers, pastor of Lakeside Church in Hot Springs, and "Becoming a Man of Purity" by Junior Hill, a vocational evangelist from Hartsville, Ala.

The evening session, which begins at 6:15 p.m., will feature "Becoming a Man of Purpose" by Hill and "Becoming a Man of Passion" by Southern Baptist Convention president Tom Elliff, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church in Del City, Okla.

Ministers' Wives

"Heaven Help the Home" is the theme for the Ministers' Wives Conference, to be held in rooms 202-203 at the church.

"I teach school and I see a lot of broken homes," explained Ministers' Wives Association president Judy Greer. "I told our keynote speaker, Barbara O'Chester, in planning the conference that 'I just want something uplifting. We need something that is positive.'"

"We know the Lord is the only one who can help any home," said Greer, wife

of John Greer, pastor of Pleasant Grove Church in Conway. "This conference will reflect all ages, from young to the more mature."

The program will feature Bible study leader O'Chester, who directs the Great Hills Retreat Ministry in Austin, Texas, and Greg Kirksey, pastor of First Church in Benton, speaking on "Emotional and Spiritual Help for the Family."

The cost for the conference, which begins at 9:30 a.m. and concludes at 2:30 p.m., is \$8.50 per person and includes a luncheon and coffee, juice and pastries during morning registration.

For more information, contact Greer at 32 Summerfield, Conway, AR 72032. To register, send registration fees by Nov. 8 to Janet McCord, P.O. Box 1035, Murfreesboro, TN 37158.

Religious educators

Arkansas religious educators will prepare for the next century as they study their meeting theme, "Developing

Leadership and People Skills in the Third Millennium."

The program, which will be held in room 204 at Geyer Springs, will feature Mark Short, executive director of the Louisiana Baptist Convention.

ABREA president Monica Keathley, an associate in the ABSC Woman's Missionary Union department, said meeting planners "wanted to offer church staff an opportunity to sharpen their skills and gain some motivation for their tasks."

"These sessions will offer tools which will help us develop good leadership and people skills for the future," she said. "Mark Short is an expert in organizational matters and administrative matters and has a reputation for being someone who knows leadership."

Short is a former professor at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, associate pastor and manager of Gloriaeta (N.M.) Conference Center.

The program will begin at 1:30 p.m. and conclude following a 5:15 p.m. dinner.

The cost for the meeting is \$15 per person and includes dinner. Members may include their spouses for dinner for an additional \$7, or may attend the meeting without dinner for \$8 per person.

For more information, contact Keathley at the ABSC toll-free in state at 1-800-838-ABSC or locally in Little Rock at 376-4791, ext. 5137. To register, send registration fee to Jan Kelley, at the ABSC, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203.

Child care available during ABSC, meetings

Child care for preschool-age children will be available Nov. 18-20 at Geyer Springs First Church in Little Rock during the Arkansas Baptist State Convention and related meetings, but participants must pre-register their children by Nov. 8.

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

Pastors' Conference participants may leave their preschool children Monday during any two of the three conference sessions: 8:45 a.m. to noon, 1:45 to 4:30 p.m. and 6:15 to 8:45 p.m. No meals will be served and no child care will be provided between sessions.

During the convention's Tuesday ses-

sions, care will be provided to messengers and their families during any two of the three sessions: 8:15 to 11:35 a.m., 1:15 to 4:40 p.m. and 6 to 8:30 p.m.

Wednesday, child care will be available during the remaining session, from 8:15 a.m. to noon.

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

All pre-registrations must be made through Geyer Springs First Church. To pre-register, complete the reservation form on page 11 of this issue of the Newsmagazine and send it to Linda Halbrook, Geyer Springs First Baptist Church, 5616 Geyer Springs Rd., Little Rock, AR 72209; phone 501-565-3473 or fax 501-562-4189.

Committee chair calls for early resolutions

Resolutions committee chairman Del Medlin, pastor of First Church in Cabot, said the resolutions committee is inviting messengers with proposed resolutions to send them to the committee for early review.

Anyone desiring to present a resolution to the committee should mail a copy of the proposed resolution to Medlin by Nov. 1. Medlin requested that, if possible, each resolution be presented on one page of typed copy.

Proposed resolutions should be mailed to Medlin at First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1023, Cabot, AR 72023-1023. Resolutions also may be presented on the floor of the convention at the appropriate times during regular business sessions.

Churches which elect qualified messengers for the Nov. 19-20 annual meeting may obtain the appropriate number of messenger registration cards from their associational director of missions' office.

Baptist-related institutions schedule alumni meetings

■ Golden Gate Seminary

Noon, Nov. 19
Geyer Springs First Church, Room 110A
Tickets: \$8, for reservations, contact Sid Carswell at 501-227-5388

■ Midwestern Seminary

Noon, Nov. 19
Geyer Springs First Church, Room 114A
Tickets: \$7, send reservations to Nadean Bell, 1205 NW 11th, Bentonville, AR 72712

■ New Orleans Seminary

Noon, Nov. 19
Geyer Springs First Church, Room 103A
Tickets: \$7, for reservations, contact Patty Camp, NOBTS Alumni Office, 1-800-NOBTS-01, ext. 3291

■ Southern Seminary

Noon, Nov. 19
Geyer Springs First Church, Room 101A

Speaker: Daniel Aldin, vice president for academic administration/ dean of theology, Southern Seminary
Tickets: \$8, contact Dr. Bill Steeger, Box 3720, Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia, AR 71998; phone 501-245-5599

■ Southwestern Seminary

Noon, Nov. 19
Geyer Springs First Church, Rooms 105-107A
Speaker: Steve Lyon, professor of pastoral ministry, Southwestern Seminary
Tickets: \$8, contact Butch Riddle, P.O. Box 728, Ashdown, AR 71822; phone 501-898-5196

■ Ouachita Baptist University

5 p.m. fellowship dinner, Nov. 19
Geyer Springs First Church, Room 105-107A
Tickets: \$6 each, available at OBU convention booth
Phil Hardin, coordinator

Pre-Registration for Preschool Child Care

Arkansas Baptist State Convention • Pastors' Conference and Ministers' Wives' Conference November 18-20, 1996 • Geyer Springs First Baptist Church, Little Rock

Preschool child care will be offered to messengers and their families during the annual meeting of the Pastors' Conference, Ministers' Wives' Conference and the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. Pre-registration for preschoolers, infants through five year olds, is necessary to provide quality care with a planned program. No child care will be provided for school-age children at any session. Please complete the registration form below and mail immediately. The reservation deadline is 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. 6:15 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. 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

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

Mail to: Linda Halbrook
 Geyer Springs First Baptist Church
 5616 Geyer Springs Road
 Little Rock, AR 72209
 (501) 565-3473 FAX (501) 562-4189

I will ___ will not ___ be able to bring a silent/vibrating pager/beeper to assist in contacting parents, if needed.

Dismissal 'leaves scars'

Results of forced termination affect ministers, families, churches

By Russell N. Dillard

Associate Editor, Arkansas Baptist

"The worst form of pain that I have ever suffered is rejection," said Joe, who was terminated from his ministry position following an unexpected vote of dismissal by the church's deacons.

Noting that there were "no accusations and no reasons given," Joe added, "It was simply a matter of people in places of power that did not like the straightforward preaching style I used. If the Bible says it, I repeat it and some people can't take that."

"But it was the worst pain," he repeated. "It leaves scars."

Along with the pain and scars of forced termination of staff members comes the spiritual, emotional and economic crises for terminated ministers and their families.

"When a minister is terminated, initially there is a lot of hurt and pain followed by disappointment, anger, denial and blame," said J.D. Stake, who counsels church staff and their families as the director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention's ministry of crisis support. "In instances of dissatisfaction with duties, you see the minister and his family with a lot of anger, denial and blame toward members of the congregation, especially the leadership."

Foremost among termination crises, said Stake, is "a crisis of belief" for the minister and his family. "They usually believe God led them to a church, so a forced termination creates a spiritual crisis: 'How could this happen?'"

"Sometimes it creates doubt," he pointed out. "'Was it God who really called us here?' In the extreme, they ask, 'I wonder if God called me in the first place?'"

The pastor, his wife and family begin to interpret those events, he explained, expressing "self doubt and thoughts of inadequacies, lack of self-esteem and identity problems."

"They may withdraw from their peers," Stake added. "Here's where shame, embarrassment or deep feelings of worthlessness and rejection set in. Some take it as a challenge they will not be defeated, but for some, it is a traumatic experience."

Julie, whose husband, Mark, resigned

his pastorate following a protracted dispute with church leaders, said that because of the termination, "at first you're real hurt. It almost felt like a marriage — you make a commitment to the church and they make one to you."

"For a couple of weeks, you're really hurt, wounded," she acknowledged. "What are they trying to do? Why are they spreading rumors?" we asked. Every time we thought it would pass, something else would happen. If they had done this to a young guy just out of school, it may have ruined his call. We had a foundation."

L.B. Jordan, who has helped ministers and churches through termination situations as a director of missions and as former director of the ABSC church leadership support department, said feelings of inadequacy or anger sometimes claim entire ministries.

"They often go into other kinds of work," said Jordan, who is now retired and living in Arkadelphia. "An acquaintance of mine who pastored a church for almost 20 years was terminated and...as a result, he has never used his college and seminary training again as a pastor because of his inability to handle pain and anger in a Christian way. He only comes

to church now for weddings and funerals."

The disbelief and anger may hit the spouses and children of terminated ministers hardest.

"I remember the Saturday after it happened that my children and wife were in a bedroom crying, they were so hurt," recalled Joe. "My daughter said, 'I don't see how anyone can do this to daddy.'"

"One of the worst things about forced termination is that the children, especially if they are old enough to understand anything about it, suffer terribly when they go to school," Jordan said. "I have heard some of the terrible, abusive things children have said as a result of what they hear at home. Some (ministers' children) never get over it and never relate to a church again."

"If the kids are in school, they may have the embarrassment of their father being fired or moving," agreed Stake. "It creates a lot of stress. Here's where you get into depression, anxiety or anger issues."

"Wives go all the way from blaming

their husbands to church members," he noted. "Kids do the same thing. They say, 'If only my dad would have cooperated.' Others deny any responsibility on their parents' part. You can be sure there's not much neutrality."

On top of the spiritual and emotional crises, Stake added, "One of the big things that happens is that it plunges them into an economic crisis."

"They have no place to live, no money and no job," he said. "If the wife is working, she may have to quit her job to move or depend on her salary entirely."

In counseling terminated ministers, Stake said, "I have to get into — psychologically and spiritually — the role of the male. He is the provider and if he can't do that, it is a big-time issue with him."

Churches 'also suffer'

Individual church members and entire congregations involved in a forced termination also suffer, said Bruce Swihart, current director of the ABSC church leadership support department.

"There is a group, quite often, that is offended because a pastor is terminated," he said. "They may pull out because of support for him and start another congregation. There may be some who pull out and go to other congregations. There are still others who are so hurt they pull out and don't go anywhere, saying, 'If this is what it's like in church, I won't go.'"

"There is a loss of leadership, in terms of what they do in the church," he said, "and there is a loss of finances that causes programs to atrophy or diminish. So a church that has a vital ministry can, overnight, be floundering."

"The impact on people in the church who were saved or made significant spiritual growth decisions in their life while this man was pastor" also is significant in a forced termination situation, said Jordan. "You never have a termination where there is not some loss of membership."

"But what if the members stay?" Swihart asked. "Suppose there isn't a great host of people evacuating? You have to deal with mistrust or motives. Some churches are difficult enough where there are not formal groupings, but (in forced termination situations) two or three groups may sit in certain areas of the church. They are polite, but they don't cooperate with each other."

"With the people in the church who go through this, one of the results is guilt," said Jordan. "I've dealt with church members who have gone through a termination



Conway County pastor representative of many state bivocational ministers

and still feel hurt and guilty because of what they did. Sometimes the folks most involved in pursuing and initiating forced termination sit further back in the congregation. Others who like the power move up and are center stage."

Sometimes, the effects of a forced termination reach the next pastor or pastors, added Swihart. "It affects missions programs. It has put them in a state of decline. Their new pastor comes in and he just can't get the church generated and going again. Sometimes it makes him a short-timer."

"Another part of fallout," said Jordan, "is that the community knows about the mean-spiritedness of a thing, the church becomes secondary and they lose the respect of the community."

"After a while, they turn inward and have no growth," he said.

Jordan added that another factor of forced terminations is that "there are pastors and staff that need to be terminated when there seems to be no alternative. Articles don't need to be published that show that everything is the membership's fault. There are churches that have prayed about it and need to do it."

Jordan offered three reasons for justifiable terminations, including theology, immorality and laziness, "where a man simply will not work." He cautioned, however, that "when you get beyond those three, the congregation is on thin ice. It gets to be a personality thing."

'God still loves us'

Getting over the grief and anger of his forced termination became a personal issue for Joe, who consoled his family after his termination. "I was determined to start getting over it and told them, 'Now let's get some things straight: God still loves us, the church still loves us, but some influential members don't, and this will be a wonderful opportunity for us to see if we believe what I've preached these years or if they are just words.'"

With his leadership and God's help, Joe said he and his family have, for the most part, recovered from his termination. "I've woken up 5,000 times in the middle of the night just angry. My will has forgiven, but not my emotion."

"I'm the norm for the ones who get over it, though, not the ones who stay sick and get put up on the shelf," he insisted.

"Keeping our sense of humor" has helped Julie's family deal with Mark's termination.

Although their experience was "a sad situation," she added, "We've put it into the perspective of eternity and it seems small. We've gotta keep on doing God's will. God has asked us, 'Are you going to talk the talk or walk the walk?'"

Bob Ulrey slows his school bus to a stop on a Conway County dirt road Wednesday afternoon and lets another student off on his long rural route. But while his mind is on driving safely and making his stops, it is also reviewing the sermon he will deliver in just two hours.

"When I'm driving the bus I'm always putting myself ahead and reflecting on what I need to be doing," he said.

Ulrey, pastor of First Church in Center Ridge, is a bivocational pastor, sharing his duties with his congregation with his duties as a substitute teacher and bus driver for Wonderview and Nemo Vista schools, "teaching everything from band to home economics," he added.

There is a practical side to being a school teacher and bus driver for his ministry, as well. "It puts me in contact with some of the same kids and families that I work with in the church field. It lets them see me in a different light and in different situations and allows me to see them on their turf."

Bruce Swihart, director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention's church leadership support department, said that

"about 50 percent of our churches" are led by bivocational pastors like Ulrey.

Oct. 20, Bivocational Ministers Appreciation Day, is the date set aside by Southern Baptists to recognize the sacrifice of bivocational ministers.

Home Mission Board figures estimate that Ulrey is among more than 12,000 bivocational pastors ministering in the Southern Baptist Convention — nearly a third of the active Southern Baptist pastoral force. There also may be up to 35,000 bivocational ministers of music, education and youth serving in the SBC, as well.

Swihart added that bivocational ministers answer a crucial need among small Arkansas Baptist churches. "Half aren't large enough to support a full-time minister, but have full-time needs. Even though a man may be considered bivocational, he may just have two full-time jobs."

Ulrey noted that the kids at his secular job are "conscious" of his ministry. "Most of them call me Brother Bob on the bus and at school."

He said that his ministry position also

places him in a position of availability for students. "If they ask me a question, I respond. A lot of times they will ask me questions about something going on in their homes or questions about Scripture. But, during school time, I'm not as open to engage in those kinds of conversations. I have to be fair to the school."

The church, located in a rural community, averages 32 in Sunday School. His pastorate is the second bivocational position the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary graduate has held.

He noted that his choice to become a bivocational pastor was "deliberate." "It's an exciting and challenging ministry perspective. It's a deliberate ministry choice, serving certain kinds of churches with certain kinds of ministries."

"I grew up in a church that was served by a bivocational minister... and my brothers were both bivocational ministers," he said.

"This kind of ministry is viable. It takes some relief off the church and it makes our focus different. I'm out in the real world. It makes me appreciate what members go through as far as time."

Emphasizing that the "toughest part" of his job is time, Ulrey added, "When I'm doing one thing, like studying, I feel like I need to be visiting and when I'm visiting, I'm thinking, 'There's some reading I have to do.' It always seems like there's never enough time."

Swihart agreed that lack of time is the enemy of the bivocational minister. "People may say, 'Oh, he's a part-time preacher,' but funerals don't come on the weekend, he has to visit people and he has to balance that with his 40-50 hours of employment and with family, study, relaxation and meditation needs."

"It's been really exciting," said Ulrey, who has been pastor at Center Ridge for more than a year.

"There were some things they were doing before they ever heard of me," he explained. "Then, when I got on the field, the Lord blessed our relationship. We have gone through Experiencing God, we had an outdoor brush arbor meeting last month and we're going to have a revival meeting at the church in a couple of weeks. Everyone is expecting a word from the Lord."



Church news

Rehobeth Church of Moorefield observed its 170th anniversary with a homecoming celebration Oct. 6. Emil Turner, executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, spoke at the 11 a.m. worship service which was followed by a noon potluck meal. The New Covenants provided music for a 1:30 p.m. service.

Rudy Church in Clear Creek Association observed its 100th anniversary Oct. 5-6 with homecoming activities which included a Saturday evening service, featuring former pastors Mark Soucy, Herbert Stout and John Volk. Sunday services included a 9:30 a.m. coffee reception, followed by music and sharing from former members and pastors' wives. Pastor Jim Hughes was speaker for the 11 o'clock celebration worship service. Dinner on the grounds and a 9 p.m. reception concluded the celebration. The church will dedicate its newly remodeled facilities Oct. 20 when Jack Ramsey, director of church extension for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, will be speaker.

Hot Springs Second Church recently hosted a citywide crusade led by John



ARKANSAS ALL OVER

By MILLIE GILL

Jacobs and the Power Team that resulted in 7,000 attending, 603 professions of faith and 88 baptisms. The five-day event also included ministering to 6,500 students in Garland County and Hot Springs schools. Associate pastor Mike Smith, crusade coordinator, said the church is continuing to experience weekly baptisms as a result of the crusade. Chuck McAlister is pastor.

DeValls Bluff First Church held revival services Sept. 22-25 led by evangelist Charles Mays, pastor of Runyan First Church of North Little Rock. Pastor Jim Schmidt reported the revival resulted in five professions of faith, two additions by letter, one baptism, one assurance of salvation, three rededications and eight decisions to become soul winners.

Wilmot Church dedicated a \$200,000 facility Sept. 22 that was constructed with insurance funds received after the original sanctuary and education building were

destroyed by fire in November 1995. Pastor Bobby Biggers preached the dedication message and music was provided by Reesa Waller Crook of Dermott, a former music director. Special guests were former pastors Dee Birdwell of Arkadelphia, Gordon Bergstrom of Austin, Texas, Philip Bowles of Hamburg and Harry Noble of Parkdale.

Linwood Church of Moscow observed its 45th anniversary Oct. 6 with former pastor Ronald Burks, currently pastor of Elliott Church of Camden, as speaker. Youth of the church presented a skit and special music. Earl Ashley is pastor.

Immanuel Church of Pine Bluff hosted Gov. Mike Huckabee, a former pastor of the church, as the featured speaker for the recent dedication of a new media center that is directed by Charles Black. John Brock is pastor.

Staff changes

Richard Lee Elligson is pastor of Bethany Church, Manila. Elligson is a graduate of Towson State University, Towson, Md., and Mid-America Seminary. He previously was a pastor in Virginia. He and his wife,

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ARKANSAS BAPTISTS

Cheryl, have two children, Angela Rene and Richard Lee Jr.

Luke Criswell began serving Oct. 6 as pastor of Second Church of Pine Bluff, coming there from First Church of Humphrey. He has served other Arkansas churches, including Unity Church of DeWitt and Belleview Church of St. Charles. He and his wife, Wanda, also have served as relief houseparents for Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries. They have one son, Harold Lloyd Criswell of Conway, and four grandchildren.

Gary "Mickey" Wallace began his ministry Sept. 25 as pastor of Clear Lake Church near Blytheville, coming there from Zion Hill Church of Melbourne. He previously was pastor of Flora Church of Viola. He and his wife, Carolyn, have two children, Susan Waller of Carlock, Ill., and Wesley Wallace of Franklin.

Eric Stanton has joined the staff of Fairfield Bay Church as minister of youth and music. He is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University. Stanton is the son of Ted and Mary Stanton, Southern Baptist foreign missionaries to Caracas, Venezuela.

Tim Walker, a student at Williams Baptist College, began serving Sept. 15 as associate pastor for First Church of Tuckerman. He and his wife, Patricia, moved to Tuckerman from Ward.

Bert Self recently resigned as pastor of First Church of Monette. He previously was pastor of Grace Church of Augusta. He is a graduate of Arkansas State University

and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Becky, have one son, Jonathan.

Roy DeSilvey is serving as supply pastor for the recently reorganized Synamore Church in Rocky Bayou Association. DeSilvey, who is retired, has served as a church planter with the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board and the states of Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas.

John McClanahan began serving Sept. 29 as interim pastor of Green Meadows Church of Pine Bluff. He retired in 1995 as pastor of First Church of Pine Bluff, following 29 years of ministry.

People

Jesse Reed, retired evangelism director for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, observed his 60th anniversary in the gospel ministry Oct. 6 when he preached at Hurricane Lake Church, Benton. He preached about "The Glory of Going On" in honor of church member Clarence Shell who will retire Oct. 31 as director of the ABCS evangelism department.

Tommy Cunningham, pastor of First Church, West Memphis, recently was honored by the trustees of Mid-America Seminary in Memphis, Tenn., as the school's 1996 outstanding alumnus.

Vera Bolding, 94, a charter member of Sunset Lane Church in Little Rock recently was honored with a plaque in recognition of her part in the organization of the church, first constituted as Mountain View

Church, as well as her 50 years of ministry as a teacher. In addition to her service at the church, Bolding ministers to residents at the Good Shepherd Retirement Center where she lives by providing food for those who are ill, reading material to the visually impaired and witnessing to those in need. Minister of music and youth Michael Berry presented the plaque and Bolding's nephew, Thad Moore, a minister from Holly Springs, Miss., was the guest speaker.

Patty Huston, the church organist for Rosedale Church of Little Rock was recently honored for 18 years of perfect attendance in both Sunday School and morning worship.

Obituaries

Mason Warren Craig, 74, of McGehee died Oct. 5 following a lengthy illness. A retired Baptist minister, he had been pastor of First Church of McGehee and was a member of First Church of Stuttgart. Craig had served as a trustee of Baptist Health Systems and Williams Baptist College as well as a member of the Arkansas Baptist Executive Board. Survivors include his wife, Edith Craig of McGehee; four sons, Robert Craig of McGehee, Thomas Craig of Humphrey, Jim Craig of Stuttgart and John Craig of Wideman; one daughter, Paula Reaves of Monticello; one sister; 10 grandchildren; and one great-grandchild.

Willie Franklin Couch of El Dorado died Oct. 6 at age 88. He was a member of East Main Church in El Dorado which he had assisted in organizing while serving Liberty Association from 1954-62. Couch also had assisted in organizing First Church of Clinton. He had been pastor of churches in Arkansas, Texas and California. He was an alumnus of A and M College in Magnolia, Ouachita Baptist University, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Survivors are two sons, Kyle William Couch of El Dorado and Dana Franklin Couch of Little Rock; one brother; one sister; and one grandchild.

Ordinations

East Side Holly Island Church of Rector ordained Dan Robertson as a deacon Sept. 29.

Highland Drive Church of Jonesboro ordained Philip Cole as a deacon Sept. 29.

Dover Church ordained Danny Minks as a deacon Sept. 29.

Camden First Church ordained Tom Burger as a deacon Oct. 6.

Rapha Dinner Banquet at the Arkansas Pastors' Conference



Jack Graham

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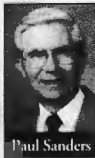
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Paul Sanders

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Cooperative Program gifts top previous year's record

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—The Southern Baptist Convention ended its 1995-96 fiscal year with a record \$148,185,076 in Cooperative Program gifts, surpassing by nearly \$2.5 million the record set last year, according to Morris H. Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee.

For the SBC's fiscal year, Oct. 1 through Sept. 30, the total for 1995-96 is 1.68 percent, or \$2,445,587, above last year's record of \$145,739,489.

"Through the Cooperative Program, Southern Baptists evangelize, send missionaries, plant churches and educate ministers," Chapman said. "Once again, they have supported these grand efforts in historic style. For the third consecutive year, old giving records have been broken."

"The continued generosity of Southern Baptists bears witness to their resolute commitment to be faithful to carry out the Great Commission. This is a good report on the health of our convention, but more than that, this is good news for a world in need of our faithful witness."

Compared to the 1995-96 SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget of \$141,629,127, the gifts for the past year exceeded the budget by \$6,555,949 or 4.63 percent.

Designated gifts also set a record. For 1995-96, designated gifts totaled \$138,446,505 compared to the previous year's record total of \$132,830,194, an increase of \$5,616,310 or 4.23 percent.

Adding the record CP gifts plus designated gifts for the 1995-96 year, Southern Baptists gave nearly \$300 million last year for national and international mission and education efforts.

Since the budget was surpassed for the year, the allocation of the overage will be distributed according to an SBC-approved formula. One-half of the \$6.55 million will be distributed according to the present Cooperative Program Allocation Budget formula. Among those allocations, the Foreign Mission Board will receive 50 percent of \$3.27 million, or approximately \$1.64 million in additional CP funds over the budget; the Home Mission Board's

portion of the overage will be approximately \$640,000.

Another \$3.27 million will be distributed according to the SBC Capital Needs Budget, which is scheduled over a 10-year period, 1990-91 through 1999-2000, with capital needs funds distributed annually on a percentage basis. Included in the capital needs budget are the six SBC seminaries, the Home Mission Board and the Radio and Television Commission.

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Jewish response

B'nai B'rith protests Southern Baptist call for Jewish evangelism

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—B'nai B'rith has launched a campaign against the Southern Baptist Convention's 1996 resolution on Jewish evangelism and is using the campaign to raise funds.

B'nai B'rith, founded 153 years ago, describes itself as "the world's oldest and largest Jewish organization." Conducting programs in "community service, public affairs and disaster relief," its headquarters are in Washington, with members in 56 countries.

In a national mailing, B'nai B'rith urged readers to mail an attached, form letter-type postcard to SBC offices in Nashville, Tenn. The cards state that "the outrageous Southern Baptist Convention resolution advocating an active program of converting Jews to Christianity is both condescending and contemptuous," adding that "this profoundly disrespectful action demonstrates a basic lack of respect for Judaism as a sister religion."

The letter also seeks contributions "to expose and overturn the SBC resolution." The appeal was mailed to about 100,000 people, said Robin Schwartz-Kreger, B'nai B'rith's director of media relations.

Several thousand postcards have been received by the SBC Executive Committee and are being answered by Executive Committee president Morris H. Chapman.

"The Resolution on Jewish Evangelism, adopted by the Southern Baptist Conven-

tion in New Orleans, Louisiana, June 13, 1996, states that 'We are indebted to the Jewish people, through whom we have received the Scriptures and our Savior, the Messiah of Israel,'" Chapman wrote. "I believe it demonstrates respect rather than 'a basic lack of respect for Judaism as a sister religion,' as your communication asserts.

Baptist theology affirmed

"The resolution does not suggest or imply that Jewish people should forsake their Jewish identity or their Jewish values," Chapman continued. "The resolution implies no coercion and no rejection, religious or social. It only affirms the communication of New Testament theology that grows out of Old Testament history and prophecy, in which Baptists have been involved for centuries.

"As examples of what can result when Jewish persons embrace Messiah Jesus," Chapman concluded, "I encourage you to take note of numerous congregations of 'Messianic Jews' in the United States and Israel who celebrate their Jewish culture and historic religious rituals as well as their devotion to Messiah Jesus."

In the B'nai B'rith mailing, international president Tommy Baer described the SBC resolution as "calling for a nationwide effort to convert Jews to Christianity.

"At B'nai B'rith," he added, "we have a

simple message for the Southern Baptist Convention: Leave our children alone."

Phil Roberts, director of the Home Mission Board's interfaith witness department, said Baer's letter evidences the resolution "has been largely misunderstood and misrepresented by the press and by much of the Jewish community.

"All we're talking about here is evangelism, which is the sharing of our faith in a loving way with those around us, which is an intrinsic part of who we are.

"That people would be shocked that we as Baptists would still be proclaiming that Jesus Christ is the way and means for salvation is commentary on our society and culture, in which everyone believes every other religion is equal to the next one," Roberts said.

"We would certainly not hold that," he continued. "We would hold that the gospel is unique and it does have exclusive claims for itself and that Christ alone is the Savior and atonement for sins, and His resurrection and victory over sin and death are unique events in the history of the world that the world needs to know about.

"Our confessions, our theology, our practice, our biblical foundations call us to that," Roberts insisted. "And to ask for us to repudiate the resolution is asking us to deny ourselves and our faith in Christ, and that's an impossibility."



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Skills inventory under way at agencies for NAMB

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—Employees of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, Radio and Television Commission and Brotherhood Commission have been asked to complete a skills inventory to "help assure all employees get the maximum consideration for North American Mission Board positions."

The inventory information will be compiled for an Implementation Task Force personnel subcommittee and will be accessible by categories such as skills and education, according to David Hankins, chairman of the NAMB transition communications team and vice president for convention policy for the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee. Hankins said the inventory information will be completed this month.

The three agencies will combine to form the North American Mission Board in

June 1997 as part of the current SBC restructuring. To assist displaced employees in finding employment, Hankins said he will contact SBC agencies and state conventions to learn of available positions. Efforts will be made to set up a process where displaced employees can be considered for these positions. Hankins said it has not been determined how many

of the approximately 500 employees of the three agencies will be affected.

In other NAMB transition news the Implementation Task Force agreed during a recent retreat to recommend a primary organization for NAMB. The group agreed the purpose of NAMB should be "to give leadership to Southern Baptists in reaching North America for Christ."

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 Statement of Churches, Organizations, and Circles
 Membership as of 12/31/96

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ABSC BROTHERHOOD DEPARTMENT	1000 N. 10th St.	Little Rock	AR	72202	1,234
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ABSC BROTHERHOOD DEPARTMENT	1000 N. 10th St.	Little Rock	AR	72202	1,234
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TRAINING

'Shape City for Christ' is focus of regional Metro Models meeting

Participants at the regional Models for Metropolitan Ministry Conference will study ways of "Shaping the City for Christ" Dec. 9-11 at Levy Church in North Little Rock. The conference, jointly sponsored by the missions department of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention and the Home Mission Board, "will feature locally and nationally recognized church ministries as models," Tommy Goode explained.

Goode, church and community associate in the ABSC missions department, emphasized the need for renewed commitment by churches in urban centers. "Many of our stronger churches have abandoned the city for suburbia, while many of the churches that remain in the city struggle with issues of survival and relevance."

The conference, he noted, "provides success models of churches that are effectively reaching their area and shares innovation in ministry that are proven in the urban context. It also provides a meeting where there is a sense of coming together of churches that minister in the modern city."

The Metro Models conference is an annual emphasis for church leaders in the South Central Region Urban Training Cooperative that includes the Baptist state conventions of Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Tennessee.

The program will feature Kennon Callahan, author of *Twelve Keys to an Effective Church*. Goode said Callahan's "major contribution has been to help churches purposefully think through their primary functions in such a way as to maximize their impact for the gospel."

The program also will showcase Arkansas urban ministries at Second Church in Jacksonville and Gloryland Church in North Little Rock. "Second, Jacksonville, is noted for its impact on its city through innovative ministry and Gloryland for growing a church planted in the projects, reaching people who have been left behind by the traditional church and by society."

Other conference speakers will include Dan Crow, pastor of Pittsburgh Baptist Church in Pittsburgh, Penn.; Joe Ratliff, pastor of Brentwood Baptist Church in Houston, Texas; and testimonies from Arkansas laypeople involved in ministries.

The cost for the conference is \$35 per person and includes materials and lunch on Tuesday. For more information, contact Goode at the ABSC missions department toll-free in state at 1-800-838-ABSC or locally in Little Rock at 376-4791, ext. 5150.

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Associational leaders to explore evangelism techniques

Associational leaders may explore innovative techniques to reach every person in Arkansas with the gospel during the Arkansas Baptist Evangelism Workshop Dec. 12-13. The event will be held at Camp Paron from noon Monday to noon Tuesday on those dates. The target group is director of missions, associational directors of evangelism and associational moderators.

"This year, the format for the conference is new," noted Paul McClung, an associate in the Arkansas Baptist State Convention evangelism department. "It will be in a real workshop format.

"We will be looking at ways to get the gospel into every home in Arkansas by the end of the year 2000," he continued. "Our main strategy will come from the local church and association."

The strategy, known as saturation evangelism, is aimed at accomplishing Bold Mission Thrust, the Southern Baptist Convention emphasis on spreading the gospel by the year 2000.

Stan Clark, saturation consultant for the evangelism section of the Home Mission Board, will be one of the featured workshop leaders. "Stan is the one who helped develop the plan for the Crossover events, especially in Las Vegas," McClung pointed out. Clark also is leading a group writing saturation evangelism materials.

The other leader will be Jerry Wilkins, director of missions for Tuscaloosa Baptist Association in Alabama. "He has a huge map on the associational wall," McClung explained. "Every church comes and circles an area that they will assume responsibility for — and in the areas not circled, Wilkins recruits volunteers to go in and see if there is a need for a church."

"We will be looking at what Russellville is doing with Project Jericho," McClung noted. "A car caravan is driving around an 84-mile circle around the churches in Russellville, praying for those within the circle." At the end of seven weeks, the emphasis will culminate with a mass rally at Tucker Coliseum with a commitment to visit every home inside the circle by the end of the year.

"We're looking for innovative and creative ways of getting the gospel into every home that will involve mega-churches, county-seat type churches and smaller membership churches," McClung explained. "We're looking for ways that associations and churches can cooperate, not compete with each other in order to accomplish this goal."

"The best research the HMB can give us states that there are a million unsaved people in Arkansas," he noted. "The encouraging part is that one of four will let you share the gospel with them in its entirety, today. Of those, another one in four will pray to receive Christ."

"To put it in perspective, if we had the ability to get all those people together in one place, 50,000 would receive Christ," McClung explained. "But in the last church year, Arkansas churches baptized only 13,000."

Associational leaders will be receiving a mail-out detailing plans for the retreat. The registration deadline is Dec. 6. For more information or to register, contact McClung toll-free at 1-800-838-ABSC or locally at 376-4791, ext. 5132.

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Church position — Childhood Education Director. Send resume to David Hastings, Florida Boulevard Baptist Church, 10915 Florida Blvd., Baton Rouge, LA 70815.

Searching — Part-time youth minister. Send resume to Indian Springs Baptist Church, P.O. Box 488, Bryant, AR 72089.

Plaint needed — FT/PT. Remount Baptist Church, NLR. Call Bonnie at 501-372-1443.

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Wanted — Minister of Education/Youth. Contact Search Committee, FBC, P.O. Box 1339, St. Francisville, LA 70775.

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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 80 cents per word, must be included. Multiple instances of the same ad must be paid for in advance. Classified ads shall be restricted to church-related subject matter.

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YOUTH

Youth evangelism conference to focus on 'Courageous Faith'

The 1996 Regional Youth Evangelism Conference will offer an end-of-year training, inspiration and entertainment option Dec. 30-31 for youth on Christmas break.

The event, formerly known as Joy Explo, is sponsored by the Arkansas Baptist State Convention evangelism department and will be held in the State House Convention Center in Little Rock.

Department associate Randy Brantley said that despite the name change, "our format is the same, heavy with concerts, evangelism training and quality preaching."

Brantley noted that the event's keynote speaker is "Buster Soaries, a black pastor from New Jersey who is a popular youth speaker." Soaries will be speaking on the conference's theme, "Courageous Faith."

Participants also will hear sermons from ABSC executive director Emil Turner and youth evangelist Ronnie Hill and concerts from Rebecca St. James, East to West and Two Hearts.

Participants also have an option to parti-

cipate in the Joy Explo Band and Choir, which will perform during the program.

"The choir and band provide a high-quality choral and band music experience for young people which challenges them to musical and spiritual growth," said Glen Ennes, an associate in the ABSC church music ministries department.

Ennes said the opportunities are open to any Arkansas Baptist teen in grades 9-12 recommended by a church music director, youth minister or pastor.

The cost is \$8 per person for regular seating and \$10 per person for limited "Gold Circle" seating. Participating churches are responsible for their own lodging and meals.

The deadline for registering for Gold Circle seating is Dec. 1. The deadline for registering for Joy Explo Choir is Nov. 11 and for Joy Explo Band is Dec. 2.

For more information about the conference, contact 1-800-838-ABSC toll-free in state or locally in Little Rock at 376-4791.

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Family Bible

The ultimate punishment

By Jim Lagrone, pastor,
First Southern Church, Bryant

Basic passage: Ezekiel 18

Focal passage: Ezekiel 18:30-32

Central truth: The soul who sins is the one who will die.

Modern life has brought to us many modern problems. It could be argued that one of the biggest problems is a failure to assume responsibility for one's actions. There are many who seek to blame problems on someone else. God reminds us here that the soul who sins is the one who will die. We may have reasons to complain, but we do not have reason to blame another for our sin.

■ **Focus not on your father's faults.** Ezekiel tells us not to look at our father as the one to blame if we choose to sin. That is so contrary to our situation in the latter part of this century. No one seems to be responsible for their own actions. The prophet even told us that if your father is wicked, it still does not give you an excuse to be wicked.

■ **Focus on your own faults.** The prophet stressed to all who will listen to turn away from your sins. God's law is both sensible and fair, regardless of how one may feel about it. The greatness or wickedness of your father will not determine the fate of your soul. Be responsible for your own relationship to God.

■ **Repent and live.** The final words of this chapter declare a truth found time and time again in Scripture. Repent and seek forgiveness and God will grant that forgiveness. His ways are just. His ways are truth. He will judge according to His own standard.

But, in His grace gift, He gives us the opportunity to repent and not face condemnation. What a wonderful gift! A holy God wants relationship with His creation. We do not have to die in our sins. We can repent. We can change our attitudes and actions! So, in the words of the prophet, repent and live!

Life and Work

Valuing His name

By Darrell Cook, associate director,
Baptist Student Union,
Arkansas State University

Basic passage: Exodus 20:7; Malachi 1:10-14; Luke 11:1-4; James 3:9-12

Focal passage: Exodus 20:7; Malachi 1:10-14

Central truth: God's name is to be valued.

I know I'm not the only one irritated by the way foul language permeates the products of the entertainment industry. Often, when I ask students for their reviews of a current movie, I'll receive the report, "The plot was pretty good, but the language was horrible." With these products vying to desensitize us to foul language, we wonder how far the line of decency can be pushed.

Whenever I hear a parade of offensive words, it is the use of the Lord's name in vain that is most likely to raise the hair on the back of my neck. This is as it should be. The commandment is clear. Speech that attempts to bring dishonor to His name is the foulest of speech.

Unfortunately, when I hear someone use the Lord's name in vain, I too often find myself judging someone or patting myself on the back for not speaking in this vile manner. It is easy to overlook the positive side of the commandment, the call to revere His name.

Through Malachi the Lord declared, "In every place incense and pure offerings will be brought to My name, because My name will be great among the nations" (Mal. 1:11). The Israelites made choices in their words and deeds that did not honor God, even in worship. He indicted them for lighting "useless fires on My altar" (v. 10) and for speaking and acting with contempt for the Lord's table (v. 12).

He twice reminded them in verse 11, "My name will be great among the nations." They (and we) needed to be reminded of the value of His name. Though they grumbled, the greatness of His name was unchanging. Though they showed contempt and lost perspective, there was to be no questioning of the value of His name.

When we value His name, it heightens our worship. When we value His name, it clarifies our witness. When we value His name, the foolishness of using His name in vain is exposed and others can see that His name "will be great among the nations."

Explore the Bible

The kingdom way

By Bob Harper, pastor,
First Church, White Hall

Basic passage: Matthew 5:17-48

Focal passage: Matthew 5:17-20

Central truth: Jesus came not to abolish the law, but to fulfill God's intention for the law.

Almost every child in trouble has pleaded their case before their parents with something similar to this: "I didn't know that was what you meant when you were explaining the rules." Of course, the truth is they probably did understand far more than what they let on to knowing. Hearing the rules and guidelines is one thing. Following them is quite another. We adults are pretty good at "dumbing up" when we are questioned, as well. "Oh, is that what you meant?" is a common form of excuse for our behavior, too.

Jesus confronted this type of excuse in our text by repeatedly saying, "You have heard that it was said... But I tell you..." and giving us six illustrations showing how righteousness in the kingdom should far exceed the righteousness the people were proclaiming. Not only did Jesus teach the real intent of God's law, but He lived it out in front of the people every day as a shining example for all to observe.

This was not a new law. Jesus was just sharing what God intended from the beginning. Jesus showed us through these illustrations that the intent in our hearts is the root from which the actions of our lives bear fruit.

Murder results when we don't deal with our anger, unforgiving spirit and unwillingness to settle matters quickly before they fester and explode. Christian actions should be emptying the courtrooms instead of filling them up.

Adultery and divorce result as we move away from God's intentions for one man and one woman rightly related to each other. Cleaning up our hearts and minds will help banish this sin from our lives.

Simply telling the truth, not retaliating for evil, and loving one's enemies also help us move toward being perfect so we can live by God's intent instead of our interpretations!

Family Bible

Sin carries a great price

By Jim Lagrone, pastor,
First Southern Church, Bryant
Basic passage: Ezekiel 3:22-5:17
Focal passage: Ezekiel 5:14-15
Central truth: The persistent sin of a people against God will always result in the sinner's punishment.

Ezekiel was a prophet with a strong priestly background, which explains his emphasis on the temple in Jerusalem, the glory of the Lord, the actions of Jerusalem's priests and the future temple. The prophet did not suffer from a lack of courage, boldness or faith in delivering his message.

■ *Judgment must come.* The people had sinned. The religious leaders had not told the people how far they had fallen from God. Sin cannot be confessed and forgiven until we understand its gravity. The people then, as now, suffered from a lack of agreement with God on sin's seriousness and consequences. One can almost hear the people say back then that "God will not punish us. We are not that bad. We are doing the best we can and God understands my problems." God does understand and His judgment falls upon those people and nations that forget Him.

■ *Four signs of impending judgment.* The prophet gave four signs of impending judgment. The first was the sign of the brick (v. 4:1). Ezekiel drew an outline of the city of Jerusalem on a clay tablet. In the second sign, the prophet illustrated the siege to the city by laying dirt or sticks around the brick. He then added an iron pan to illustrate the severity of the siege and represent the barrier between God and His sinful people. The fourth sign, Ezekiel lying on his side, is hard to interpret. Scripture tells us that he was lying on his side to illustrate the sin of the people — both Judah and Israel. The difficulty is that some interpret this as a future prophecy. Nevertheless, the signs gave a specific direction to the coming judgment.

■ *The humiliation of judgment.* God will punish the wicked, but there is a greater humiliation for those who claim to know God who suddenly find themselves on the wrong side of His wrath. Other nations would find Israel as a reproach and mock her, yet they would be horrified at what was happening to Jerusalem and it would serve as a warning to them. It should serve as a warning to us. God is not mocked by the sin of a nation. The effects of rebellion against Him will result in judgment, no matter how great the nation thinks it is.

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Life and Work

Different convictions

By Darrell Cook, associate director,
Baptist Student Union,
Arkansas State University
Basic passage: Exodus 20:8-11; Mark 2:23-28; Acts 20:5-7; Romans 14:5-8
Focal passage: Exodus 20:8; Romans 14:5-8
Central truth: Exercise convictions as unto the Lord.

How do you "remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy" (Ex. 20:8). The interpretations of how best to observe this commandment have been numerous across the years. Rabbinic traditions have detailed the number of steps one can take on the Sabbath without it being considered work. Performing simple tasks such as tying a knot or extinguishing a fire were also seen by some as not keeping the Sabbath holy.

Keeping the commandment in modern times for some has meant not patronizing a restaurant on Sunday. For others it has meant waiting until after sundown to do laundry or some other household task.

If we tried to practice all or most of the traditions behind this commandment, we would quickly feel overwhelmed. We would have to sort through many traditions that contradict one another. We would grow weary just keeping track of all the things that we are to avoid doing, defeating one of the primary purposes of the commandment: the call to rest.

With conflicting traditions and endless regulations, how does a follower of Jesus obey this command today? In his letter to the church at Rome, Paul dealt with the problem of differing interpretations of obeying the same commandment.

He wrote, "One man considers one day more sacred than another; another man considers every day alike" (v. 14:5). He then told the Romans to exercise their personal convictions as unto the Lord. This points the believer to two points of assistance in dealing with matters of differing interpretations. First, exercising convictions as unto the Lord helps the believer to slow down and examine the heart issues to make sure the conviction is based on neither convenience nor legalism. Second, convictions that are taken to the Lord are less likely to be used as measuring sticks or judgment seats against another.

When we carry out personal applications as unto the Lord, we seek His heart on what a commandment like "remember the Sabbath" really means.

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Explore the Bible

The spirit of our actions

By Bob Harper, pastor,
First Church, White Hall
Basic passage: Matthew 6-7
Focal passage: Matthew 6:1; 7:7-8, 12, 21, 24-27
Central truth: Jesus wants us to evaluate the spirit of why we do what we do.

Pride is a dangerous characteristic. Far too often, what we do is determined more by what men will think about us than what God thinks. Our motivation determines the reward for our actions. Jesus said the Father rewards us for the intent with which we carry out our righteous actions, not because of who is watching us at the time. The spirit of pride is the opposite of the spirit of the kingdom.

■ *The sincerity of our Christian character is shown by the example of our lives.* Giving in secret allows God to reward us openly. The intent of our management of God's blessings is more important than the amount of our gift. Everything we have has been given to us by God. We must remember that He has just let us manage it for a while.

■ *Our communication with God is to be sincere and personal.* God is not an answering machine, even though we sometimes talk to Him in this manner. Be truthful in your prayers. God already knows what the truth is. Truthful communication not only benefits you, but also all those around you.

■ *Jesus encouraged fasting to be a private act of devotion to God.* He cautioned us to place far more emphasis on our treasures in heaven than our possessions on earth. Then He warned us that to spend our energy and efforts worrying about the concerns of this life takes away from our ability to seek His kingdom and live righteously first. Jesus assured us that God will take care of us if we will take care of first things first.

■ *Asking, seeking and knocking with the right intent in our heart will bring about the right results (7:7-8).* Following the Golden Rule (v.12) can become a contagious Christian characteristic. The key verse is found in 7:21. Only the person who "does the will of my Father in heaven... will enter the kingdom of heaven." The spirit of our actions really do have eternal consequences.

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Florida board seeks to define cooperating churches

JACKSONVILLE, FL (BP)—The Florida Baptist Convention's state board of missions has approved a document that defines a cooperating church and association by theological, declaration, financial and statistical parameters.

The document defining the parameters of cooperation between the state convention and churches and associations is "vitaly important to the ongoing work of the Florida Baptist Convention," said state convention executive director John Sullivan. "We are seeking to define some things that have not been defined before.

"I'm not asking for theological uniformity or conformity of every church in Florida," Sullivan said, "but we are seeking doctrinal integrity."

According to the document, all new churches must request affiliation based on agreement with the Baptist Faith and Message statement, a majority of the congregation voting to seek affiliation, annual contributions through the Cooperative Program and filing an annual church profile. A denominational polity and practice committee would be established to govern all procedures to determine cooperation.

The proposal is expected to be presented to the state convention Nov. 11-13.

SBC, Roman Catholic teams discuss biblical inerrancy

WASHINGTON (BP)—A team of eight Southern Baptists met recently with a team of eight Roman Catholics to discuss the inerrancy of Scripture.

While both groups affirmed inerrancy, they had different definitions, according to Mark Coppersger, a member of the Baptist team and president of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. The Southern Baptists insisted on the Bible's historical accuracy, Coppersger noted. He said the Catholic team described their concept of inerrancy as more a matter of divinely inspired usefulness.

This was the second meeting of, the recently reconstituted Southern Baptist Convention-National Conference of Catholic Bishops Conversation. The annual meetings are aimed at addressing misunderstandings the two groups may have of one another.

Annuity Board: No '97 hike in medical coverage rates

DALLAS (BP)—There will be no Jan. 1, 1997, rate increase for the Personal Security Program (PSP) Comprehensive Medical Plan offered by the Southern Baptist Annuity Board to individual participants employed by Southern Baptist churches and associations.

"We are very pleased to pass on our good experience to the participants in our plans," noted Annuity Board president Paul Powell. "The last increase, Jan. 1, 1996, has been sufficient to cover claims and give us security for the entire year of 1997."

Joel H. Mathis, senior vice president for insurance services, said monthly rates for the medical plan have been increased only one time since July 1992.

Grassroots ideas invited for possible BSSB name change

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—Southern Baptists across the nation are invited to submit suggestions by Nov. 1 for a possible new name for the Baptist Sunday School Board as the agency studies the possibility of a more descriptive identity.

BSSB president James T. Draper Jr., said factors leading to the study included awareness that "the current name is not descriptive of the broad range of the board's products and services."

After all input has been received and evaluated, a 19-member employee committee will formulate a recommendation to the board's administration in early January 1997, with a report to be presented to the board's trustees in their February meeting.

For tabulation purposes, suggested names should be mailed on a postcard, or a 3-inch by 5-inch index card enclosed in an envelope, addressed to: Name Change, 127 Ninth Avenue, North, Nashville, TN 37234-0189.

Moyers' series on PBS to explore stories in Genesis

NEW YORK (ABP) — Adam and Eve, Noah and Potiphar's wife are coming to television this fall in a 10-part dialogue on the Old Testament book of Genesis produced by Bill Moyers. But some interpretations in "Genesis: A Living Conversation," premiering this week on PBS, are not the ones you learned in Sunday School.

In each episode, an interfaith panel debates not only eternal themes like the nature of faith, the struggle between good and evil and the path to redemption, but also contemporary issues like racism, the role of women, dysfunctional families and concern for the environment. Panelists will include Christian, Jewish and Muslim scholars as well as novelists, poets and journalists.

The program debuted Oct. 16 on PBS and is scheduled to air at 5 p.m. on consecutive Sundays beginning Oct. 20. Local schedules may vary.