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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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ARKANSAS BAPTIST

Volume 95, Number 22

October 31, 1996



Jim and Liz Tate, houseparents for the Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries Emergency Receiving Home in Judsonia.



Mending Broken Hearts

Arkansas Baptists will observe the Thanksgiving Offering for the Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries, which has been "Mending Broken Hearts" for 102 years, on Nov. 24.

ABSC reconciliation committee named to meet with OBU trustees

State convention leaders have named a five-member "reconciliation committee" to meet with representatives of Ouachita Baptist University's board of trustees. Establishing the committee was one of three actions approved by the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Executive Board's executive committee in response to the Oct. 10 vote by OBU trustees to resume responsibility for naming their own successors (see Oct. 17 issue, page 4).

Executive committee members also voted to escrow Ouachita's Cooperative Program funds "until the convention itself directs otherwise or until this issue is resolved." The third action authorized researching the convention's legal options, but state convention executive director Emil Turner emphasized that "no one is suggesting that we get involved in legal action."

Turner said the reconciliation committee, appointed by Turner and ABSC Executive Board president Chuck McAllister, will be presented for approval to the full Executive Board during the board's Nov. 18 meeting immediately prior to next month's state convention annual meeting.

Individuals appointed to the committee include McAllister, pastor of Second Church, Hot Springs, and state convention president Rex Horne, pastor of Immanuel Church, Little Rock. Also appointed to the committee are Stephen Davis, pastor of First Church, Russellville; Bill Elloff, pastor of First Church, Little Rock; and Barry King, pastor of Tumbling Shoals Church.

Davis and Elloff were among the four new trustees proposed for Ouachita by the state convention Nominating Committee prior to Ouachita's move to elect

their own trustees. The two also were among four new trustees elected Oct. 10 by Ouachita's board although neither Davis nor Elloff has decided whether to accept the trustee positions offered by Ouachita. King is a current member and former chairman of the ABSC Nominating Committee.

Elloff said he plans to delay his decision about the trustee position "until the work of the reconciliation committee has been done."

Echoing Elloff's view, Davis remarked, "I need to see what's going to happen. Hopefully there can be some reconciliation take place. The best thing is to keep a family relationship and not walk away from each other."

OBU's five-member bylaws committee will meet with the reconciliation committee to discuss the relationship between Ouachita and the state convention. Judge John Ward, a member of Park Hill Church, North Little Rock, is chairman of the bylaws committee. Other OBU trustees serving on the committee are Larry Kircher, a banker and member of Central Church, Bald Knob; Wesley Kluck, a pediatrician and member of Second Church, Arkadelphia; Paul Sanders, pastor of Geyer Springs First Church in Little Rock; and Diane Williamson, a homemaker and member of First Church, El Dorado.

Turner said the goal of the proposed reconciliation process "is to resolve this issue to the satisfaction of all Arkansas Baptists."

OBU president Ben Elrod said he views the process as "a beginning toward some sort of understanding of positions that each group has staked out."

Cover Story

ABN photo / Russ Dilday



Mending hearts

7

Jim and Liz Tate have been "Mending Broken Hearts" for seven years as house-parents for the Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries. Many Arkansas Baptist churches will observe the agency's Thanksgiving Offering Nov. 24 through special gifts.

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ARKANSAS BAPTIST

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State convention structure study

How will OBU trustee action impact timing, implementation?

By Trennis Henderson

Editor, Arkansas Baptist

Midway through a two-year process to evaluate structures and relationships throughout the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, primary attention was focused on anticipated organizational changes for the ABSC Executive Board staff. But that was before recent action by Ouachita Baptist University trustees to make the university's board self-perpetuating.

How will OBU's decision impact the current structure study? "I see that we'll be able to go ahead with the Executive Board study," said state convention executive director Emil Turner. "Work related to the institutions and agencies probably will be slowed down. How we handle this situation (with Ouachita) will make an impact on how we handle restructuring related to our institutions and agencies."

Prior to OBU's action, study committee members had voted to revise the study process in order to present recommendations to the full Executive Board by March 1997, five months earlier than initially planned. The earlier date would permit convention leaders more time to communicate proposed changes to churches and associations before a final vote by convention messengers in November 1997.

Committee chairman Tim Reddin, director of missions for Central Association, said committee members will likely revise the timetable again to allow more time to evaluate proposals related to the state convention's five institutions and agencies.

"We're going to go ahead with the Executive Board portion," which will be presented next week to the board's operating committee, Reddin noted. He said recommendations related to the convention agencies and institutions will be postponed "until after another meeting of our steering committee to determine how this will impact our plans."

The 13-member steering committee chaired by Reddin and three related subcommittees were established last year by the ABSC Executive Board. The committee's overall assignment is "to study and recommend a plan by which the Arkansas Baptist State Convention can most effectively meet the challenges of the 21st century."

Specific topics of study include ministry challenges, organizational mission statements, program assignments and

financial support. In addition to evaluating the work of the Executive Board staff, subcommittees examined relationships with Ouachita, Williams Baptist College, Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries, Arkansas Baptist Foundation and *Arkansas Baptist News-magazine*.

During an interview prior to Ouachita's Oct. 10 action, Reddin said the subcommittee "with the largest assignment was the one with the Executive Board assignment," adding that "the most complicated changes will come in that area."

Even before the current developments at OBU, the study committee's work related to agencies and institutions focused primarily on "issues of trusteeships and relationships with the convention," he added.

"Our goal is...to see more people saved and more believers come to more effective discipleship."

—Tim Reddin
Chairman,
Structure Study Committee

Reddin said committee members will continue their efforts to "fast track" the proposals related to the work of the Executive Board staff. "The earlier we can present the will of the Executive Board, the more prepared everyone will be for the transition," he explained.

Since proposals will not face final messenger approval until November 1997, Reddin said convention leaders "will have to budget and program for two parallel tracks in 1998" — one reflecting the current structure and one reflecting the proposed structure. "That's a very complicated process," he pointed out.

Concerning proposed Executive Board staff structure, Reddin said, "The structure we're creating doesn't assume a larger staff or a smaller staff. It depends on how positions and responsibilities are assigned. That's an administrative function."

According to Turner, "One of the first and most important questions I'm asked concerning restructuring is related to personnel.

"The committees have not made

personnel decisions," he explained. "The goal is not to reduce the number of personnel but to maximize the impact of those who serve the churches.

"After the structure is approved, personnel decisions can be made," the executive director added. "There is no mandate to reduce the number of personnel."

Acknowledging that "attrition is a very real factor with or without restructuring," he pointed out, "It is possible the number of personnel involved in state convention work will be smaller but it is certain the number we have will be more effective."

Reddin said a primary goal in the structure study was to determine "what drives our structure."

"For the most part, we've sought to define how we can assist the basic structure of the church," he explained. "In the past, we've done that more according to programs. The new structure will be less programmatic and focus more on functions and outcomes. We're also moving from departments to ministry teams with more inter-connectedness."

Reddin said interviews with focus groups across the state "gave us more than permission to change — they gave us a mandate to change.... Our goal is not to build a more beautiful structure but to see more people saved and more believers come to more effective discipleship."

Turner agreed that the committee's research "revealed that we need to be more responsive to the needs of the local churches and more focused on the impact we make than on the activities in which we are involved.

"At the study committee level, there seemed to be the understanding that the status quo was not making the necessary impact," he said. "Changing the structure is critical to making greater impact."

Evangelism is an ongoing emphasis in Turner's administration. "My desire as executive director is that what we do results in more people being saved," he affirmed. "We know the Lord wants us to reach lost people in Arkansas.

"Everything we do should result in lost people in Arkansas becoming Christians," he emphasized. "I believe we're going to reach more lost people through a restructured organization.

"I hope that five years from now, because we restructure, we will see more people being baptized and active in local churches, closer relationships between our agencies and institutions and that we are exercising a maximum level of stewardship of all the resources we have."

A PASTOR'S HEART



By EMIL TURNER
ABCS Executive Director

Heartbreak. It requires no definition because it is experienced more than it is understood. Heartbreak is what I felt when I learned of the vote of Ouachita Baptist University's trustees to become a self-perpetuating board. Since 1914, messengers from ABCS churches have elected OBU's trustees. The decision by the trustees removed the process from the messengers of our churches. I felt hearts breaking all over Arkansas.

In response, the executive committee of the Executive Board voted to do three things. First, to study our legal position

(the vote was to study — not to sue). Secondly, to recommend a committee to the Executive Board to seek reconciliation. This committee will meet with a similar group representing OBU's trustees. Thirdly, to escrow OBU's share of Cooperative Program funds while reconciliation is being sought.

The escrowed funds could be used to offset the expenses of seeking reconciliation (our budget included no money for this contingency), but would not be assigned to any other agency. The Executive Board will recommend these actions to the convention for affirmation or rejection in November.

Let me assure each Arkansas Baptist that I desire a reconciliation that will satisfy our convention. I believe such a reconciliation is possible. But, it will require hearts that are compassionate and heads that are clear. I do not agree with the actions of OBU's trustees. My concern is that we resolve this in a way that maintains OBU as a constitutional institution, not merely a fraternal one. This is not a time for arguments and alienation. It is a time for fasting, praying and seeking God's will.

In Joshua 22, we are told of a division between people who loved each other and who had fought side by side. It was sharp, potentially hostile, and had within it the seeds of destruction. Good-hearted men confronted each other and were reconciled by God's Spirit. May the Lord do so again.

I believe...a reconciliation is possible. But, it will require hearts that are compassionate and heads that are clear.

■ Have you read *Jesus, CEO* by Laurie Beth Jones? (Hyperion, 1995). Not all of this book will be acceptable to Baptists, but it contains some tremendous insights into leadership and some creative, biblical ideas for preaching.

Executive director's schedule:

Nov. 3 (a.m.) Salado; (p.m.) First, Cabot
Nov. 7 (p.m.) Henderson State University
BSU dedication, Arkadelphia
Nov. 13 (p.m.) Bingham Road, Little Rock

REX HORNE

President's perspective

Strengthen the Family



"But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace" (James 3:17-18).

Many, if not all of you, have read or heard of the recent actions of Ouachita's board of trustees and the response of the executive committee of the Executive Board of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. No one denies that this matter is foremost in many Arkansas Baptists' minds.

The verses with which I began this article are preceded by those that describe wisdom that is earthly, sensual and devilish. This wisdom is marked by bitter envying and strife. It is wisdom from below. Wisdom, heavenly wisdom is needed every day. As we near our state convention meeting, my prayer is that God will grant all of us wisdom.

As president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, I pledge to you my intent to lead our annual meeting in a way that evidences the spirit of Christ and the truth of God's Word, not only in a general way but specifically as it applies to wisdom. For this to occur, there must be more than proper parliamentary procedures and an orderly program. The presence and wisdom of our Lord must be evidenced.

The word that characterizes heavenly wisdom is *pure*. God's wisdom works in purity, where lives, attitudes and motives are clean. This wisdom I desire is characterized not by a disputatious spirit but a conciliatory one. The theme of this year's convention is "Strengthen the Family." When our concerns are family concerns, there should be a way to peace.

It is a wonderful experience to have a family. Recently, our oldest daughter came home from college. It had been several

weeks since we had seen Ashley. We knew the day and time she would arrive. When Ashley drove into the garage that day, she blasted her car horn. She knew her family would be coming out of the door to welcome her home...she was not disappointed.

Important matters await us at our convention. Already there are plans being made concerning meetings between members of the Executive Board and members of Ouachita's board of trustees. I have been pleased to observe those who are asking for and then applying wisdom that comes from and pleases our Lord.

As we near our state convention meeting, my prayer is that God will grant us wisdom.

When the "horn" sounds Nov. 19 to begin our convention, until the concluding prayer around noon on Wednesday, let us pray for wisdom for ourselves and our Arkansas Baptist family. Then, we can practice that wisdom that we have prayed for and that God stands ready to grant.

Rex Horne, pastor of Immanuel Church in Little Rock, is president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

Should OBU board be self-perpetuating?



Yes

By William H. "Buddy" Sutton
Chairman, OBU Board of Trustees
State Convention President, 1991-93

As we are poised to enter the 21st century, Ouachita Baptist University stands uniquely positioned to serve the cause of Christ with an impact that literally reaches around the world. In spite of its modest size, Ouachita has become the school of choice for more children of missionaries serving abroad than any other school in the United States. As overall enrollment has gone over the 1,600 mark, the international attraction for OBU has increased to the point that more than 10 percent of the student population is from foreign nations or missionaries based in foreign nations.

During the Grant-Elirod era, Ouachita's commitment to its mission of a quality education in a Christian atmosphere has attracted unprecedented support. For instance, it is difficult to find a campus building that was not built or totally renovated during these years of splendid progress. This progress has been the result of private contributions from those who have confidence that Ouachita will stay the course in fulfilling its commitment to sound, conservative Christian education. Without that confidence, Ouachita cannot survive because its support is entirely voluntary.

The action taken by the board of trustees on Oct. 10 was solely for the purpose of securing stability and removing Ouachita from the winds of convention politics. When Ouachita was formed more than 100 years ago, its charter provided that its board of trustees would elect new trustees as replacements were needed. In 1914, it was provided that trustees would be selected by the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. Both selection systems worked well during their times.

In years past, the selection system has functioned in an atmosphere of mutual trust. Dialogue existed as it must between the state convention nominating committee and Ouachita. Ouachita's needs were heard and trustees were chosen to fit those needs.

This year that dialogue that is so necessary for the selection of trustees with an undivided loyalty to Ouachita was totally rejected. Not one of Ouachita's suggestions for four new trustee positions was considered. Without comment or communication of any kind, four previously undiscussed nominees were chosen. In such a process, the winning side next year could be encouraged to follow the same criteria for trustee selection. This, Ouachita cannot stand. To avoid it, the board voted to return to the old charter which charged trustees with the responsibility for filling vacancies on the board.

No OBU board member nor any member of the administration seeks alienation from the ABCS. With great sobriety and sweet-spirited conviction, the board voted overwhelmingly to simply remove Ouachita trustee selection from the perils of convention politics.

The present trustees and those who will be selected in the future are accountable to all Arkansas Baptists, not just those of one political alignment. More importantly, they know that they are accountable to God for one of His precious institutions. They will be judged in the future, as they have been in the past, by the toughest standard - voluntary support conditioned on a satisfactory product and faithful performance.



No

By Ronnie Rogers
Pastor, Lakeside Church, Hot Springs
State Convention President, 1993-95

Ouachita's Trustee Action is lamentable and wrong on several counts:

It violates Article VII of the Articles of Incorporation of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, which states in part, "The Convention shall elect trustees who shall serve as directors to manage and operate the institutions and agencies that the convention may possess," and... "the trustees shall be sensitive to the expressions of the convention's will in all matters." This was placed in the convention's articles to prohibit any agency from doing what Ouachita has done.

It severely restricts participation. For over 80 years Ouachita's trustees were elected by the messengers to the ABCS, who now represent and were elected by over 500,000 Arkansas Baptists. Now, trustees will be elected by 24 persons. Do not be misled, they were not granted "greater authority," but absolute authority in trustee selection.

It repaid loyalty with disloyalty. Arkansas Baptists have been loyal to support Ouachita with millions of dollars in Cooperative Program money, personal donations and thousands of students because Ouachita was an ABCS school. The moment the trustees voted to reject the trustees nominated by our convention, Ouachita ceased to be an ABCS school and defiled the loyalty which has been demonstrated toward them.

Dr. Elirod said, "...Nothing else about the institution will change. We will be in the same relationship with the ABCS as before," this is like telling your spouse, "I want a divorce - eliminating legal obligations and accountability - but nothing else will change." Buddy Sutton, chairman of the board, said, "There is the strongest desire in every way to remain aligned with the convention," yet they took the strongest action possible to separate from the convention. If every institution took the action that Ouachita took, there would be no SBC or ABCS. Their words say all is the same; but their actions say we want your money, students and prayers, but not your trustees or input.

It violated the trustee principle. Ouachita's trustees were entrusted by Arkansas Baptists with their institution, and the trustees betrayed that trust.

It violates Baptist polity and sets a bad example. Dr. Elirod said they felt "ignored" when none of his recommendations were accepted by the Nominating Committee. We teach Baptists to "speak your peace, vote your conscience and go with the majority," but Ouachita's action teaches "do it my way or I won't play."

It is based on a lack of trust in Arkansas Baptists to elect trustees who will be good for Ouachita. How odd, since the present trustees were placed on Ouachita's board, and the president was hired by trustees who were elected by the people they have now excluded, and the process they repudiated.

It is piracy on the Baptist seas. It may be technically legal, but it is morally reprehensible. Some other Baptist universities have severed governance ties with their state conventions; Mercer, Baylor, etc. However, each university who has done this has, without exception, been captized by the waves of liberalism.

For the sake of doing what is right, best for the Kingdom, ABCS and Ouachita, we plead with you to rescind your decision.

POINT COUNTER POINT



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Ministers need friends

October is Clergy Appreciation Month. As a pastor's wife, I would like to mention a need shared by many pastors and their families all year long, and that is to be considered as a friend, not just a "pastor's family."

We have opened our home to many people in the church. We do this not out of obligation, but because we like the people in our church and enjoy having friends! However, for the most part, we have not experienced others including us in similar functions except the annual Sunday School class Christmas parties.

From talking with friends, even our very best friends, we get the impression that laypeople in the church have assumptions about the staff and their families. First, "We can't invite them over, they're too busy." If we are too busy, we will be honest, ask you to try again, and feel thrilled that you thought of us! Second, "My house is not clean, neat, fancy enough for the pastor's family." With three children, my house is never clean enough, but we want to enjoy friends, not compare spotless floors! Third, "They probably only spend time with so-and-so." Many pastors live far away from their families and enjoy friends of all ages who can be "family."

To paraphrase Proverbs: "Better a slightly burned hot dog lovingly served by a friend, than countless gourmet meals without friends." Please pray about how you can be a friend to your staff and their families.

A Pastor's Wife

Laymen experience pain

I have witnessed firsthand what pastors have experienced in the "forced termination" articles. I have been involved in three different situations of terminations. I have seen the hurt, pain, frustration and anger the pastors have experienced.

The question I have is, "What happens to the laity who stand with and for the pastor?" What about the ones who spoke out against the wrong being done? What happens to the ones who are left in the church when the pastor leaves?

If they stay in the church how do they deal with the antagonism that others transfer from the departed pastor to them? How do they deal with the loss of fellowship, the label of a troublemaker and the loss of ministry?

I believe the laity are the forgotten ones. No one knows how to work with

them to solve the problem. Many just don't care what happens to them. They may suffer more than pastors.

Robert Milley
Wheatley, AR

Don't support gambling

Television commercials promoting gambling amendments coming up for your vote in November are so deceitful. It's sad that many church members believe gambling will generate revenue. If gambling is such a winner, why has the legislature had to partially refund both Oaklawn and Southland race tracks?

Nevada is the only state with legalized prostitution. How long will it be until Mississippi, Texas or Louisiana will have to join Nevada? Can Nevada's gambling industry survive without prostitution? Can Arkansas compete with the surrounding states without prostitutes, legal or illegal? Will prostitution account for many of the thousands of new jobs the gambling industry promises? Most likely.

It's comforting to know that Christians don't support gambling! Church members might, but Christians won't!

Jim Glover
Heber Springs, AR

Be a one-issue voter

When Christians look at the platforms of the various parties trying to get our votes this fall, how do we decide how we will vote?

Is there any one issue that stands out above all others? Is there a single issue that could cause us to lose the blessing of God — the blessing that has made us great? I believe there is. I believe there is one issue that will inevitably remove the blessing and replace it with judgment if we do not decide correctly on this one issue.

The issue that transcends everything else in moral and spiritual importance is the continued killing of unborn children. We do not know God if we do not know that this is an abomination to Him!

We Christians are way late and far too timid about this. There is no excuse any longer. We know that the unborn child is, in fact, a child. We know that it is human, that it is alive, and that it is innocent. If we, therefore, take its life, are we not guilty of murder?

Since abortion became legal and socially acceptable, we have killed seven times as many babies as Hitler killed Jews. If God judged Germany, will He not also judge us for a sin as heinous as ours? And will He not judge Christians who have not done all that we can do to stop the killing?

Yes, sometimes we are forced to be one-issue voters.

Edward E. Stacks
Mena, AR

Supreme Court strikes 3 of 4 gambling proposals

The Arkansas Supreme Court struck three amendments proposing the expansion of gambling in Arkansas from the ballot Oct. 21, leaving only one pro-gambling amendment for voters to consider in the Nov. 5 election.

The court struck Amendments 5, 7 and 8 from the ballot, leaving Amendment 4, which seeks, with local voter approval, to establish a casino at Oaklawn Park in Hot Springs and at two nearby sites and to institute a state lottery.

The stricken amendments all called for expanded gambling in the state through legalized lotteries and charitable bingo. All three were struck in part because justices found vague or misleading statements in their titles.

Page voices disapproval

Despite an apparent victory, Larry Page, executive director of the Christian Civic Action Committee, said he remained "disappointed."

"I would love it if all four amendments had been taken off the ballot," Page explained. "They (the titles) were confusing and complex...and voters would have been confused."

Page said the recently-narrowed ballot field will allow the CCAC to "hone in on Amendment 4. We will tweak our message with 4, informing the public about how harmful casino gambling is."

He said the CCAC will concentrate on information because "Amendment 4 was craftily drawn. It has a local option, but that's a no-brainer. When the city of Hot Springs voted on Sunday racing, the vote was three-to-one for it."

While the proposal "may look like a small step, it is the camel's nose under the tent," Page warned. "While initially it establishes a monopoly, it will represent eventually the opening of the floodgates" for more gambling.

Page urged Arkansas Baptists to defeat Amendment 4 by showing up at the polls to vote against the measure.

"Every vote counts. That sounds trite, but my fear is that if polls continue to look as they do in the presidential election, partisans on either side may stay away."

"Traditionally Christians don't participate well at the ballot box," he said. "God cares about the temporal world. He wants us to be salt and light and voting is one way we manifest it."

'We mend broken hearts'

Houseparents Jim and Liz Tate front line players in changing lives

The four teens burst into the door of the home, laughing and talking about their day at school. Each greet or hug Liz Tate as they pass her at the door.

Her husband, Jim, rounds the corner of the house as they make their way to their rooms to put away their books. "Hey, Pop!" says one with a smile.

The light atmosphere belies the lives of each of the teenagers. Though they now come home to a safe, warm environment, each is on the run: from abuse, neglect, family problems and, in some cases, substance abuse.

Liz and Jim Tate are houseparents at the Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries Emergency Receiving Home in Judsonia, one of six ERHs operated by the agency across the state. The ERH system is designed to provide immediate, short-term care to children that are placed in ERHs from one night to a month until they are reunited with family or long-term care is made available.

Veterans of the trade, the Tates spent more than six years as houseparents at the agency's Arkansas Baptist Home for Children in Monticello and have served in Judsonia for more than a year. Their experiences have taught them much about their wards.

"These kids have broken hearts," said Liz, "because broken hearts come from lots of things — from nobody cooking a meal for them to neglect. We get kids who nobody has ever fixed a meal for and we had one boy who said, 'I don't need counseling, I need you to just talk to me.'"

"We mend broken hearts," she said. "Mostly, kids who come here feel that nobody wants them, but it's just as normal for me to touch my kids as it is to breathe."

Like many parents, their conversation



Houseparent Jim Tate said his answer to trials faced by children at the Judsonia ERH is "to be there if they need me."

revolves around the children they presently have and those they have cared for in the past — all 140 of them, including two of their own. And, just as they mend the broken hearts of children, the Tates also can break the hearts of those who hear their stories.

Many, said Liz, come from abuse situations. "When some of the girls went to bed, they were afraid somebody was going to come down the hallway after them. Too often, we get them and they don't even know where their mother is. More often than you think, mother is an alcoholic."

Jim said that he tries to model fatherhood because residents often don't have a positive picture of fathers. "Too often it is somebody drinking and hitting their mother or abusing them."

He said many see him as a father figure "because most of them call me Pop" and that he has an answer to many of the problems of the children: "I try to be there if they need me."

In addition to a safe home, Liz and Jim take their kids to court as often as possible — the tennis court, that is. "If they are big enough to swing a racket, we take them to the tennis courts," she laughed. The Tates, who both have a personal love of tennis, use the sport to build relationships with the kids.

Because children in their care stay temporarily, do the Tates ever get depressed? "I grieve, but I don't get depressed," Liz answered. "Love heals. I always have another kid to love, so I get over my grief before it becomes depression. There is grieving, but if I were depressed, I wouldn't do this job."

"I get depressed more so than she does" because of the children, added Jim. "I guess it's because I have been used to dealing with adults through bivocational ministry. It's harder with kids."

Though she and Jim give residents care, "Love is most important" to the kids, Liz claimed, "love expressed as a safe place. I had a boy that didn't want to go home. He said it was 'nasty.'"

She also expresses her love for her kids "through food. I'm a country cook. Food is a comforter, especially with the children who have been hungry."

Their current charges seem to respond to that love well. "It's fun here, there's a lot of laughter," said one female resident.

"The people here actually care about me, I have friends at school and the people around here seem to accept you," noted another, a teenage boy. "But I still don't like going the dishes."

A second female resident commented that the Tates "love and care for you as if you are their own."

It's not all fun for the Tates, though. While another female said she likes life there, "I don't like going to church. It's not my religion."

"She says she hates God, but I love her. I never give love but that God doesn't give me love back," said Liz. "I can take just about anything as long as they don't run all over me and call me bad names — and some of them do."

In addition to witnessing to residents, the couple lead in daily Bible reading and in church activities. That Christian love leads many of the kids to respond positively, said Jim. "We show them love because we know they're not going to get love where they're going."

Thanksgiving Offering observed Nov. 24

The Emergency Receiving Home at Judsonia is one of 22 ministries of the Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries. To help keep ministries like ERHs operational, many Arkansas Baptists observe the agency's annual Thanksgiving Offering, held this year on Nov. 24.

"The Thanksgiving Offering is a part of our direct gifts from churches (budget line) that has a goal of \$660,000 for 1996," explained ABCHFM executive director David Perry. "We hope churches will observe it all month long by posting their Thanksgiving Offering poster, utilizing their bulletin inserts and placing their special offering envelopes for use by members."

"Our theme is 'Mending Broken Hearts,'" said Perry. "Webster defined mending as 'to make better' and we've been about making things better for children and families in Arkansas for 102 years. The offering is critical to 'making it better' for those who need our services."

For additional materials or information on the Thanksgiving Offering, contact John Ross, ABCHFM director of planned giving, toll-free in state at 1-800-838-ABSC or locally in Little Rock at 376-4791, ext. 5168.

'Worth the wait'

Promise Keepers Memphis meeting provides needed messages to men

By Russell N. Dilday

Associate Editor, Arkansas Baptist

I finally gave in. Partly out of curiosity and partly from friendly pressure from my buddies at First Church in Benton, I attended a Promise Keepers Men's Conference, this one at the Liberty Bowl in Memphis Oct. 11-12, along with almost 53,000 other participants.

I had given more than enough excuses for not going to previous Promise Keepers events: a busy schedule, travel, the need to stay home with a pregnant wife. I think I used yard work as an excuse once. I even used the great-grandmother of all excuses: "It's not Southern Baptist."

But the root of my hesitancy stemmed from the stories that returned with some of the men who had participated in past meetings. Their reports painted the meetings as part athletic event, part worship and part therapy.

"We cheered until we were hoarse."

"It was really meaningful to hold hands with the guy next to me and pray for him."

"The preaching was great."

"We went nuts."

I could recount each description with a mental excuse:

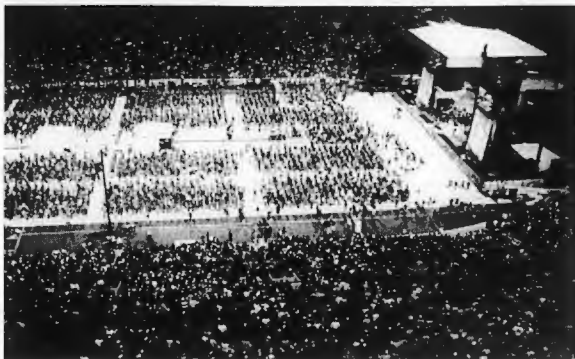
If I want to cheer, I can attend a football game. I'd blush if I held hands with someone with that much hair on his chest. I hear great preaching - between pastors' conferences, a state and national convention and an Evangelism Conference, I'll hear close to 60 sermons this year. And, despite what my wife says, I don't want anyone to think I went nuts.

But friends Chris McCarty and Tony Robeson, who had shown a change in their lives following their exposure to Promise Keepers, convinced me to attend.

The ecumenical conferences, which draw thousands of men annually to sports arenas and stadiums for worship and to hear Christian speakers call participants to be "Men of Integrity," have become a national phenomenon.

Part of that phenomenon has been the attendance at the conferences, which has grown from a group of 4,200 men that met in 1991 at a University of Colorado basketball arena to 727,342 participants who crowded into 13 stadiums nationwide in 1995 to hear the Promise Keepers message.

This year, the organization will host 22 conferences with a projected 1.1 million men attending. In addition, the group held a Clergy Conference for more than 39,000 clergymen in Atlanta in February, more than 450 local and regional seminars, and



Nearly 53,000 men gathered at the Liberty Bowl in Memphis to worship and hear messages on family and reconciliation at the Oct. 11-12 Promise Keepers Conference.

has established affiliations in Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

Another part of the Promise Keepers phenomenon is its ability to draw Christian men from different denominations to its events under a united banner. The organization is endorsed by scores of denominational entities, including the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission.

As we gathered for the conference, it seemed that every male in every denomination had come to Memphis for the conference. It is striking to hear the power of 53,000 male voices facing each other in a man-made bowl sing old hymns such as "How Great Thou Art" and "Be Thou My Vision" or newer choruses like "Man of the Spirit, Man of the Word."

The worship tone ranged from exuberance to stillness, all of it appropriate.

We did hear great preaching, too. Reminding us that "we serve a God who is aware of each of us individually" and that "we can communicate with Him individually," Bishop Charles Blake focused "on the man who was wounded and the thieves that wounded him" in relating the story of the good Samaritan.

Blake, a Church of God in Christ minister who serves as bishop of the First Jurisdiction of Southern California, warned that "so many are going fast, but going nowhere."

"Don't let the good shut out the best," he said. "God must be primary in our lives because we are dependent on Him and He knows what is best for us. If God is primary

in our lives, then everything else will fall into place."

He compared the plight of the wounded man with those of participants. "Thieves left him naked and wounded. If there is anybody here naked and half-dead on the road of life, listen to me: what are the things that leave us on the road half dead?"

Men are supposed to be sharp, strong, active," he added, noting that the world often leaves men "wounded in life by thieves."

"Who are the thieves? They are the evil forces that want to destroy you, wound you and ultimately kill you," he continued, naming idolatry, homosexuality, abortion, covetousness, extortion, drugs and drunkenness as life's thieves.

He added, though, that even "stripped, naked, wounded and half-dead, Jesus Christ can restore you, your life, your marriage. You don't have to travel alone."

Blake's sermon, the first of the meeting Friday night, came with an invitation. The man sitting next to me summed up the feelings of many of us with a "Wow!" as we watched nearly 700 men make the walk to the front to accept Christ as their Savior.

Later that evening, Promise Keepers founder Bill McCartney, former head football coach of the University of Colorado, echoed the conference's "Break Down the Walls" racial reconciliation theme as he told participants to "break down the walls" with love.

"I suggest to you that almighty God is looking for the one man who is obedient,"

PROMISE KEEPERS

he said. "What would it take for you to be that man?"

His answer was "the Great Commandment: Love the Lord your God with all your heart."

Urging men to cross racially-drawn lines, McCartney said that "we have a craving for significance, yet we need each other. We learn to love our neighbors more through relationships and death to self just like we learn to love God - through relationships and death to self."

He ended by challenging participants to go to Washington, D.C. in 1997 to "kneel together in humility and stand in unity." Promise Keepers leaders hope 1 million men will attend a prayer gathering on the mall in Washington next year.

The next day, we heard speakers and reviewed the "Seven Promises of a Promise Keeper," which included pledges of commitment to: "honoring Jesus Christ through worship, prayer and obedience to God's Word..."; "pursuing vital relationships with a few other men..."; "practicing spiritual, ethical and sexual purity"; "building strong marriages and families..."; "supporting the mission of his church..."; "reaching beyond any racial and denominational barriers to demonstrate the power of biblical unity"; and "being obedient to the Great Commandment and the Great Commission."

I sat with Chris and Tony most of the conference. This was the third meeting for both of them.

Chris, a relatively new Christian, noted that Promise Keepers "has taught me how to stay true to my convictions in a world that doesn't do that. Knowing that there are this many men out there that feel the same way I do is encouraging."

His attendance at the meetings also has changed his views on marriage. "The thing that sticks out in my mind is that Heather is my best friend, my partner and my mate, and I've been made even more aware of that through Promise Keepers," he said.

Tony said he came "for a renewing or a refreshing of the spirit. Everyone needs a rejuvenation, so you come to spend time with your brothers in Christ and get to know them a little better."

A 'laymen's convention'

"This is truly a laymen's convention," he observed. "There are a few that stood up a while ago that are trained as clergy. They have formal training, but the mass of men here are men that have learned about their faith from pastors, their local churches, their Sunday School teachers and their families. These are laymen that have given their time and finances to travel great distances to come here, hear the Word and praise God. They want to learn here and take that back to their local churches."

I also sat next to Andre Hayes of Memphis. More accurately, I had my knees in his back in the cramped bench seating of the stadium. A black man, it was as if

God put him there to emphasize my need to cross racial lines.

Andre, who said he "recently rededicated my life to Christ," added that he also is experiencing his "first taste of freedom in Christ" and wanted to attend the event as an expression of that freedom. I left that day not only with a new friend but a partner in accountability and a pledge to call him Nov. 12 to see how he's doing in his walk.

Charles Colson, founder of Prison Fellowship, honed in on the newly-developed unity I had found with Andre, emphasizing the "Unity of the Body of Christ."

Highlighting current social problems, Colson said, "The problem we have in the breakdown of standards is, 'How do Christians fight back?'"

The "Christian response," he said, "is to overcome evil with good" through political involvement, apologies, and by using "our principal weapon, the good of the gospel."

Most important to me, however, was the observation of fellow church members breaking down the walls of comfort we build around us in our local church.

I saw Don Parish not in the role of my Sunday School teacher, but as someone standing beside me in worship of God. Instead of peering at one of my molars, Dick Phelan, my dentist, prayed for me in my role as a denominational worker as he sat behind me. Mark Schieff moved from being a friend to a partner in accountability.

I also broke down personal walls, realizing that some of the excuses I gave for not attending past conferences came from the fear of letting my guard down around friends. I confronted the walls to my personal prayer life, my attitudes toward those whose race differs from mine and my need to daily renew my relationship with God and my wife. It was worth the wait.

I even held Tony's hand as we prayed together.

And I didn't blush once.



A group of men from First Southern Church in Bryant (far left) joined in worship Saturday afternoon on the floor of the Memphis Liberty Bowl. On Friday night, participants joined hands as they entered into prayer (upper left) during a conference-wide invitation. Arkansans were well-represented at the conference, as evidenced by banners (lower left) and Razorback sportswear.



"Jonah," a drama written by Jeanette Clift George, was presented by The After Dinner Players, a drama group which she organized. George is well known as the actress who played Corrie Ten Boom in the movie, "The Hiding Place."

Summit shows women ways they can 'share God's light'

By Millie Gill

Executive Assistant, Arkansas Baptist

"We are here to focus on sharing God's light with others and the first principle in sharing His light is to be sure you have it," declared Jeanette Clift George of Houston, Texas, when she spoke at Summit '96 Oct. 18-19 at Geyer Springs First Church in Little Rock.

George, a noted actress, author and playwright, was the keynote speaker for the program which was sponsored by Arkansas Woman's Missionary Union. The theme for the event was "Share the Light."

"I think the greatest need of today's Christian community is for it to find out what it is and what it has," George stressed. "We who are believers need to reaffirm that through the grace of God we are secure and equipped to share His light."

George, who is well known for her portrayal of Corrie Ten Boom in the movie, "The Hiding Place," further noted that because both her name and picture could be found in the book of the "Great Equippier," she was prepared for sharing His light.

"I have been redeemed by this 'Great Equippier,' which means He has purchased, paid for and taken me off the market," she added.

"Therefore, as I daily study His Word, He gives me the benefit of His finished work through which I can come with full confidence and full assurance into the

presence of the almighty God for the assignments He gives me to share His light."

George emphasized that Christians were inclined to become "terrified" when given "share His light" assignments by God. "You must, however, remember that when He confronts you with an assignment, regardless of how awesome it may look to you, He always will reward you with a blessing as He did His disciples when they were being tossed about on the stormy sea.

George concluded with a challenge to the 308 participants to be alert to God's assignments and do them "without grumbling. You have the light that God has given to you and I challenge you to let it shine, without grumbling, to a perverse and wicked generation."

Other speakers stressing the urgency of sharing the light were Ken Weathersby, a missionary and church planter from Tennessee, and Susan Partridge, who serves as an English teacher in China through Cooperative Services International.

'God has called you'

"God has called you as Women on Mission to share the light with the 184 million people in the United States who do not know Him," declared Weathersby. "He has called you to share it with those living in multi-housing areas, in shelters, on college campuses, in prisons and in rural America.

My prayer is that as you leave here today you will be leaving to share the light of Jesus as did the woman at the wall."

Partridge noted that Summit participants could reflect their light into China by giving of their resources, time and money and by going. "Many people in China today are not Christians simply because they have not heard the message," she explained. "I encourage you to go and if you cannot go, then give.

"I average 150 visitors a week who are anxious to hear the gospel so they too can have joy and purpose which they see reflected in the 150 CSI workers in China," Partridge concluded. "I challenge you to seek ways of sharing the light with the people of China so they too may have joy and purpose."

Seminar leader Beverly Coad of Fort Worth, Texas, a former Southern Baptist foreign missionary to Africa, challenged women to prepare to share their light through an extraordinary prayer life which would bring them to brokenness and total transparency before the Lord. "As you do this, God will empower you to share the light in His name.

"Time is the major ingredient of this prayer life," she said. "I am sending a daring call to you to examine your schedule and create prayer time because it is imperative that you communicate with God."

Nancy Morton, a single adult teacher for Immanuel Church in Little Rock, used Ephesians 4:32 as the focal passage for a seminar on forgiveness, noting that even though forgiveness was one of the hardest things for a Christian to do, it was the ingredient needed to free one to be the person God intends one to be.

"Forgiveness is not justifying, understanding or explaining why the person acted toward you as he did, it is not just forgetting about the offense and trusting time to take care of it," Morton said. "It is both asking God to forgive the person who hurt you and to forgive you for being angry or resentful against the person who offended you.

"You must remember you have a forgiving Father whose love and patience are unlimited and whose greatest concern is you, not your sin," she concluded. "His focus is on you and your willingness to forgive others, setting you free to share the light of a God whose son literally experienced hell on the cross for the forgiveness of all sins."

Event planner Monica Keathley, state Women on Mission director, closed by challenging participants to not let the light in which they had basked all weekend come to an end but rather "to go and let God's light shine through them into the world."

Girls in Action have 'Spectacular' time



Ltzette Beard and GA Jessica Hurst, both from First Church of Mountain Home, demonstrate how a hand can be used to outline Africa, where Beard had served as a journeyman.

The Girls in Action Missions Spectacular, held Oct. 10 at Immanuel Church in Little Rock, was attended by more than 1,160 enthusiastic girls and their leaders, making it the largest Arkansas GA event to ever be held, said Sandy Wisdom-Martin, state GA and Mission Friends director.

Wearing purple T-shirts inscribed with the event theme, "Hand In Hand," the GAs moved from seminar to seminar to hear Southern Baptist foreign missionaries, a journeyman and Arkansas volunteers tell of the languages, music, customs, dress and foods of the countries where they served.



Missionaries shared about their areas of ministry service.



GAs and their leaders from Highland Heights Church in Benton spent time praying in a mock Egyptian pyramid for the needs of that country. Prayer zones, where GAs could pray for missions around the world, were set up at the event.



GAs and their leader, Barbara White, of East Side Church in Mountain Home, visit together while eating their lunch.



Sandy Wisdom-Martin, state GA director, speaks to participants.

Staff changes

Phillip Smith has accepted the call to serve as pastor of First Church in Bentonville. He previously was pastor of churches in Louisiana as well as First Church of Lake City. Smith is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Laurie, have two children.

Captain Lovell was called as pastor of First Church in Monette Oct. 6. He retired in 1995 as pastor of First Church of Harrisburg and has been serving as chaplain of the Poinsett County Detention Center. A graduate of Bible Baptist College of Springfield, Mo., he also has been pastor of churches in Tennessee, Florida and Missouri. He and his wife, Ruby, have two children and five grandchildren.

John T. Evans began serving Oct. 20 as pastor of First Church in Ward, going there from Keo Church. He previously served at Yarbrough Church. Evans, who attended Yarbrough Seminary, is enrolled in Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary's Little Rock center. He and his wife, Kerry, have two children.

Larry White began serving Oct. 20 as pastor of Trinity Church in Benton, coming there from Owensville Church. He previously served Greenbriar Church of El Dorado, Texas. White is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Carla, have two children.

Phillip L. Harris began serving Oct. 27 as pastor of Piney Church in Hot Springs, coming there from Richmond, Ind. He is a graduate of Mid-America Seminary. Harris and his wife, Charla, have three children.

Steven Kyle has accepted the call from First Church in Blytheville to serve as minister of family life and youth. He has served the church for two years as minister of youth. Kyle, a graduate of Union University in Jackson, Tenn., currently is attending Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Max Garrison is bivocational pastor of Oak Grove Church in Springdale. A graduate of Ouachita Baptist University, he has previously served Owensville Church, First Southern Church of Bismarck and Pleasant Hill Church of Cabot. He and his wife, Rita, have two children.

Billy George Milam retired Oct. 14 as pastor in Lamar Church, following seven years of ministry. Milam, who has been a minister for more than 32 years, is an endorsed Southern Baptist Home Mission Board U.S. military chaplain and has served 20 years as a certified seminary extension



ARKANSAS ALL OVER

By MILLE GILL

teacher. He also has been a member of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Executive Board. Milam, who served 15 years in the U.S. Air Force and nine years in the Arkansas Air National Guard, is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Milam and his wife, June, have three children and nine grandchildren. They will be honored Nov. 3 with a retirement reception in Clear Creek Association offices.

Billy Kite announced his retirement as Ashley Association director of missions at the association's annual meeting Oct. 22 in Wilmot. Kite, who has served the association for more than 10 years and will retire Dec. 31, has been pastor of churches in Arkansas, Oklahoma and Iowa. He has been a member of the Executive Board of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention on which he has been a member of the missions committee, serving as chairman for one year. He also was a member of the operating committee, serving as chairman for two years. Kite was chairman of the search committee that named Emil Turner as executive director of the state convention. He recently completed 60 hours of study in interim ministry. His future plans include leading seminars on church growth and divorce recovery and assisting the Tennessee Baptist Convention for a limited time with bivocational pastor conferences. He and his wife, Ruby, will continue to reside in Crossett. Kite, who will be available to serve as an interim pastor, may be contacted at 900 Pecan, Crossett, AR 71635; phone 501-364-7772.

Chris Esch has joined the staff of Crosspoint Church in North Little Rock as minister of youth. A native of North Little Rock, he has served as both youth minister and summer intern for various churches. Esch is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University.

Don Davis has joined the staff of First Church in Beebe as minister of music, going there from First Church in Kensett. He is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Arkansas State University. A retired school music teacher, Davis has served as president of both the Arkansas Music Educators Association and Arkansas Church Directors Association. He also has been state chairman of the American Choral Directors Association.

Bob Hartmann resigned from the staff of Bella Vista Church Oct. 6, where he had served for more than eight years. He has accepted the call to serve as pastor of Sharon Church in Wichita, Kan. Hartmann is a graduate of Christian Brothers College of Memphis and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Leesa, have four children.

Sean McMahon resigned Oct. 13 as minister of education for Beech Street First Church in Texarkana. He has accepted the call to serve as pastor of McCarthy Church in St. Joseph, Mo. McMahon and his wife, Fairra, have four children.

People

Tommy Hinson recently was honored by First Church in Springdale in recognition of his 50th anniversary of service in the gospel ministry. Hinson, who serves as assistant to pastor Ronnie Floyd, served for more than 26 years as pastor of First Church of West Memphis. He also was pastor of First Church in Kensett, director of missions for Washington Madison Association and pastor of First Church in Paris. He also assisted in the establishment of Evangelism Explosion. Hinson is a graduate of Williams Baptist College, Baylor University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Jo, have three children and six grandchildren.

Jay L. Heflin, a Little Rock businessman, has been honored by Second Church in Little Rock as the recipient of the 1996 Brooks Hays Memorial Christian Citizenship Award. Heflin, founder and chairman of the board of Terminix Inc., is the first Christian businessman to receive the award. A member of Second Church, Heflin has served on the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, Arkansas Baptist State Convention Executive Board and as a trustee of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Ray Higgins is pastor of Second Church.

Michael Seabaugh recently completed seven years of service as pastor of Crosspoint Church in North Little Rock. He became pastor of Pike Avenue Church of North Little Rock in October 1989 and led that congregation to merge with Getsemane Church of North Little Rock in 1994, resulting in the formation of Crosspoint Church.

Scott Hinton observed his fifth anniversary of ministry as pastor of First Church in Sherwood Oct. 13. The congregation held a Sunday evening reception to honor Hinton, his wife, Kathy, and their three children. The family was presented with a love offering gift.

Groundbreaking ceremonies

Nancy Spakes recently was honored by First Church in Glenwood in recognition of 30 years of ministry as church pianist. The surprise party was attended by about 100 guests, including former staff members and family members. Erby Burgess is pastor and Paul Sivills is minister of music.

Allene Roberts recently observed her 25th anniversary of service as pastor's secretary for Baring Cross Church in North Little Rock. She was presented with a gift certificate by pastor Marty Watson.

Church news

Jasper First Church dedicated a facility Oct. 13 at its new location on Scenic Byway 7 North. The building, valued at approximately \$750,000, was constructed at a cost of \$400,000 because of assistance provided by construction volunteers. The 14,000-square-foot facility includes a sanctuary with a seating capacity of 274, 12 classrooms, conference rooms, offices, storage, nursery, sound room, fellowship hall and kitchen. Manuel Macks is pastor.

Little Rock First Church launched a new Sunday morning schedule Oct. 6 that includes an 8 a.m. Sunday School hour, followed by a traditional worship service at 9:15, and a second Sunday School hour. A contemporary worship service and third Sunday School hour are held at 10:45 a.m. Bill Elliff is pastor.

Highland Drive Church in Jonesboro began holding two Sunday morning worship services Oct. 13. The first service begins at 8:15 a.m., followed by Sunday School at 9:30 and the second worship service at 10:45.

Berryville First Church will host a Bible conference Nov. 2-7 with Major W. Ian Thomas. Services will begin at 7 p.m.

Salado Church near Batesville will observe its 50th anniversary Nov. 3 beginning with Sunday School at 10 a.m. Emil Turner, executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, will preach at the 11 a.m. worship service, which will be followed by a noon meal. The 1 p.m. program will feature In His Name, a men's quartet from West Church of Batesville. Opal Huff, a charter member and anniversary committee chairman, will present the church history. David Wesley is pastor.

Park Hill Church in North Little Rock is hosting 4HIM, three-time Dove Award Group of the Year, and Point of Grace, 1996 Group of the Year, in concert Nov. 14 at Barton Coliseum, Little Rock. Additional information is available by calling 501-372-8341.



Saline Church near Heritage recently broke ground for a 200-seat sanctuary. Those breaking ground were (left to right) former pastor Edison Wheeler; Lonnie Latham, former director of missions for Bartholomew Association; Jerry Forrest; Dewayne Ozment; Joe Anders; Wayne Griffin; pastor Tim Smith; Jeff Adams; Willis Laster; Steve Parnell; and Jack Forrest.



East Side Church of Mountain Home recently broke ground for a \$1.5 million sanctuary. Participating in the service were members of the building committee and church staff as well as former pastor Jack Kwok, now director of cooperative ministries for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, pastor Michael Shy and White River Association director of missions Ed Powers.



First Church of Jacksonville broke ground Sept. 29 at its new property site in the 400 block of North First Street. The church, which will celebrate its 125th anniversary in 1997, is launching into the next century by relocating and building new facilities. The master plan, adopted in 1995, calls for constructing five buildings in four phases. Phase one, estimated to cost \$4.5-5.5 million, will include space for 570 in Bible study classes, 300 in fellowship, administrative offices and a worship center to seat 664. Future phases will include a multipurpose activities building, educational facility and a larger worship center. Thad Gray, chairman of both the long-range planning and building committees, was the speaker for the ground breaking. Marck Gibson is pastor.

Recovery resources available for ministers, congregations

"When the church voted to fire me, I thought, 'That's it. I'm out of the ministry,'" said Ron, an Arkansas Baptist pastor who was terminated last spring following a heated business meeting.

Three days later, after considering his situation, he talked about his ministry options with his director of missions.

"That's when I found out about Bruce," he said. "Bruce" was Bruce Swihart, director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention church leadership support department.

"After I talked with Bruce," recalled Ron, "He helped me work out where I was going (in ministry), we talked about my call and my leadership and pastoring style and he put my resume on file."

Weeks later, another church in need of a pastor contacted Swihart. Following a short questionnaire about what the church needed from a prospective pastor, Swihart told the search committee their answers were similar to those of a possible candidate, Ron. They eventually called him and he has served the church for three months.

Just as in Ron's story, there are several resources available for both ministers and congregations to help each recover from the effects of forced termination.

The front line for churches and ministers in conflict "is always its director of missions who can give counsel," Swihart said.

Many times, he added, DOMs can help resolve conflicts in churches without termination. If the result of conflict is termination, "they (DOMs) are a good source of counsel for both minister and church."

Many DOMs also choose to use Swihart's services as CLS department director. Swihart not only can help mediate conflict within local congregations, but in instances of termination, can help the church set up a search committee system.

The congregation also may ask Swihart to initiate the services of an "Intentional Interim" a resource Swihart said "was designed because people saw the time between the resignation of a pastor and calling a new pastor as unproductive time."

Swihart explained that the developers of the Intentional Interim process "have seen this as a way that congregations can choose to make their interim time a way to shape their growth and health."

He noted that the "five tasks" of an

Intentional Interim can help churches recover from a forced termination. "They typically do well with churches that have had problems or difficulties or churches who have had long-tenured pastors."

The five tasks include:

- "Leading the church to come to grips with its history," he said. "This allows them to evaluate their ministries and ministers and discard old baggage and old wounds."

- "Leading the church to examine its leadership and organizational needs," he continued, "to help a congregation be aware of new leadership and developing leadership and incorporate making decisions on how to use those resources."

- "Helping members rethink their denominational linkage," said Swihart. "The church often has learned to see the denomination through its former pastor's eyes. With the increases in theological differences and polarization, it's crucial for each congregation to consider what is their mainstream theological belief. If they have a feeling theologically of who they are, when it comes time to talk to new minister, it will be important to see how he sees the denomination."

- "Developing a new identity and vision" is the Intentional Interim's fourth task, he said. "Periodically, it is important for a church to think of redefining its sense of purpose, redirection and what distinguishes them from other churches in the community."

- "Helping to develop commitment to the new leadership," Swihart concluded. "The congregation is prepared to receive their new leader."

He noted that by using an Intentional Interim, "which a church selects themselves, they're going to have a much clearer picture of the man they want and need."

While Swihart can aid congregations and ministers recover from the effects of forced termination or aid in the prevention of termination, J.D. Stake, director of the ABCS Ministry of Crisis Support, can aid ministers and their families in dealing with termination's effects on a personal level.

"What we do is provide an intermediate counseling service for the minister, his spouse and children," explained Stake. "We want to help them work with the emotional and spiritual issues that come

from forced termination situations."

Stake said he leads ministers and their families to first "address the crisis issue: the hurt, pain and personal issues" and then to "look for a way to continue or reenter into ministry."

In addition to local help through directors of missions and ABSC-based aid, terminated ministers and churches in conflict also have Southern Baptist Convention-related resources to draw from.

Brooks Faulkner, senior manager of the Baptist Sunday School Board's personal development section in the pastor-staff leadership department, said the BSSB has "a three-step program already begun to implement prevention, intervention and restoration."

That program is LeaderCare, announced earlier this year, and is designed to provide personal development for pastors and other professional staff, he said.

"In prevention, we are designing a curriculum for pastors and staff to help avoid pitfalls," Faulkner said. "We are also developing a network to implement that and already have...245 organizations."

In intervention, he added, his section is "working through the DOM to guide people through conflict mediation and help pastors and people resolve their conflicts before termination takes place."

The third, process, restoration, "may not mean counsel and guidance back into a church," he said, "It may mean we try to guide them into some other kind of work and to have a network for job banks, some temporary and some (permanent)."

Also included in the LeaderCare program is a toll-free crisis hotline has been activated by the BSSB's LeaderCare staff to offer help to pastors and other professional church staff people. The network provider service may be reached at 1-888-789-1911 from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Central time Mondays through Fridays.

Faulkner said the LeaderCare staff "is prepared to intervene, offer suggestions for direction, counseling, encouragement, mentoring and restoration help when church staff persons face dilemmas that seem potentially catastrophic."

Another new resource for terminated pastors is the "Antioch Affection," adopted by the trustees of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in March.

The plan, proposed by trustee Bob Anderson, pastor of Parkview Baptist Church in Baton Rouge, La., involves "refuge churches," in which a minister facing termination is brought on as an associate pastor or other staff member.

Anderson said the "offended church," or congregation forcing the minister to resign, would pay the minister's salary for six months while he attends the program at Southwestern Seminary.



Retiring missionaries recount victories

Five couples with Arkansas ties among those honored by FMB

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—Few Southern Baptists awake with a pit viper wrapped around their ankle, or survive its lethal bite. Not many walk away from plane crashes. Hardly any try to sleep to the crackle of revolutionary gunfire. Rarely do they face arrest, interrogation, intimidation, burglary, beatings or worse.

Eighty-eight retiring Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board missionaries, however, experienced such calamities during 2,287 combined years of ministry. They were honored Oct. 6 during a service in Richmond, Va., at Derbyshire Baptist Church.

"What sustained you in these hardships?" asked board President Jerry Rankin. "What compelled you to remain at the task?"

From missionaries who spoke in the service, the answer was the same: God's call to share his love with a physically hurting and spiritually dying world.

For Gene and Jan Phillips, it was, in Jean's words, "God's wonderful, marvelous, heart peace" that helped plant churches during the horrible events of a 12-year civil war in the former Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe and Zambia.

For Paul and Virginia Smith, sharing Christ's friendship in the Middle East with a people said to have no friends in a nation hostile to Christianity — drilling wells, planting seeds, giving shelter provided the most "encervating, dangerous, yet rewarding years" of their career.

Arkansans honored

Five couples with Arkansas ties also were among those honored. While one couple are veterans of 38 years of service in South America, the others became missionaries later in life after serving in other ministry roles or secular careers.

Donald and Elsie Brown began missionary service in Israel in 1987. Their ministry was primarily to the international expatriate community in Central Sharon, where he was pastor of an English-language church. Brown went to the field after 42 years of pastoral ministry in Louisiana.

Born in El Dorado, Brown is a graduate of East Texas Baptist College, Marshall, and New Orleans Theological Seminary.

"Our experience in Israel was a wonderful demonstration of the grace and power of the Lord," Brown commented. "He allowed us many opportunities to be witness both to Arab and to Jewish citizens of the land."

Elsie Brown is a native of Mississippi. She is a graduate of Clark College, a division of Mississippi College in Newton. Prior to

missionary service, she was employed as a secretary at several churches, as well as at Mid-America Seminary when it was located in Little Rock.

Russell and Vicki Fox were appointed as missionary associates in 1982, and served in both Honduras and Israel. They were supervisor of Camp Gogope, Lake Yojoa, Honduras, transferring in 1993 to Israel, where they served as project directors for Baptist Village, a camp and conference center located near Tel Aviv.

Fox was born in Oklahoma and considers Searcy his hometown. He is a graduate of the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville. Prior to missionary service, he was an engineer with several Arkansas companies and served as an FMB Mission Service Corps volunteer to Guatemala.

"One particular obstacle that we had to learn how to deal with early on was our living among extreme poverty on a daily basis," Fox noted. "How do you bridge that gap? We started with a small core group of our Honduran workers and poured out our lives to them in all areas."

Vicki Fox was born in Stuttgart and considers Searcy her hometown. She received a diploma in nursing from Baptist Medical Center and worked as a registered nurse and nursing instructor while in Arkansas.

"We will be returning to the field as International Service Corps volunteers in November," she pointed out. "We will be filling in as student coordinators for six months in Costa Rica while missionary Jere Philpot is on furlough."

Charles and Audrey Morris began serving as missionaries in Kenya in 1986, where he was executive director of the Brackenhurst Baptist International Centre at Limuru.

Morris was born in Parkin and considers Memphis, Tenn., his hometown. He is a graduate of Hendrix College in Conway. Prior to missionary experience, he was involved in the lumber company and contracting business in Memphis. He also served in the U.S. Navy.

"Our only regret is that our time of service in missions overseas did not come earlier in our life," Morris noted.

Audrey Morris was born in Earle and also considers Memphis, Tenn., her hometown. Prior to missionary service, she was a self-employed accountant and real estate associate in Memphis.

John and Jean Wright started their missionary service after nearly 20 years of ministry at First Church in Little Rock, where he was pastor. In 1991, the Wrights went to South Korea where he was pastor

of the English-language Seoul International Church.

Wright considers Little Rock his hometown. He attended Southwest Baptist College (now University) in Bolivar, Mo., which later awarded him an honorary doctorate. He also attended Southwest Missouri State University in Springfield. In addition to his Little Rock pastorate, he also was pastor of two churches in Missouri.

"Our four years in Korea were the most enjoyable and beneficial years of our entire ministry," Wright said. "The blessing of having our vision expanded is one that would not have been realized had we not answered God's call to missions."

Jean Wright also considers Little Rock her hometown. She and her husband have three grown children. Her greatest blessing on the field came from establishing close relationship with a number of Korean women and other international women, she said.

A lifetime of mission service

Unlike these who began mission service later in life, Gilbert and Deanie Nichols are retiring from a lifetime of ministry in Paraguay, where they have been missionaries since 1958. They have served in a variety of roles during their 38 years on the field. Nichols has taught and served as director at the Paraguayan Baptist Theological Institute in Asuncion, served as executive secretary of the Home Mission Board of the Paraguayan Baptist Convention and pastor of First Baptist Church of Asuncion, as well as a variety of other roles.

Deanie Nichols has been a teacher in the extension center of the seminary as well as a church and home worker.

Nichols was born in Mountain View and is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist College (now University) and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Prior to missionary service, he served as pastor of a church in Austin and two churches in Indiana.

"More than 38 years of missionary service to Paraguay has taught us something of what it means to be members of God's family," Nichols pointed out. "In many different parts of Paraguay, we found other members of God's family who accepted us, loved us, served with us and tolerated our mistakes. Racial, cultural and economic barriers fell aside as we became a closely knit family."

Deanie Nichols was born in Cabot and is a graduate of Ouachita. Prior to going to the field, she taught school in Kentucky.

Proposed covenant would link Mississippi Baptists, agency trustees

JACKSON, MS (BP)—The Mississippi Baptist Convention Board approved a far-reaching proposal that proponents say will allow Mississippi to bypass the epidemic of Baptist institutions severing ties with affiliated state Baptist conventions.

A key portion of the plan, to be submitted to messengers to the annual Mississippi Baptist Convention this week, will establish a covenant relationship between the state convention and trustees governing MBC-affiliated institutions.

Under the covenant, trustees pledge to continue management of the institution as a Christian entity under God's guidance and acknowledge the institution's role in the Mississippi Baptist strategy to win Mississippi and the world to Jesus. The plan also permits trustees of MBC-affiliated institutions to jointly nominate new trustees to their respective boards as a part of the MBC nominating process already in place.

The plan calls for trustees and the MBC nominating committee to jointly produce a slate of trustees for consideration.

At an Oct. 14 special called meeting of the board in Jackson, executive director Bill Causey said state and federal laws recognize trustees of nonprofit institutions as the legal holders of deeds to the property of those institutions. He said that legal recognition means institutions of the MBC governed by boards of trustees can sever ties by action of the trustees, even though historical ownership can be proven to rest with the state convention.

Trustees of the MBC-affiliated Mississippi College in Clinton voted to sever the

school's relationship with the state convention in 1994, and only intense negotiations between officers of the college and the state convention prevented the break from becoming a reality.

Many state Baptist conventions have lost affiliated institutions under the laws, Causey said, including a hospital in South Carolina and Samford University in Alabama. Arkansas Baptists are facing a similar issue with Ouachita Baptist University.

"We can't sit and wait to see what

happens" and risk losing affiliation with Mississippi Baptist institutions, he stressed. "We have found a way to bind them to us and still follow the law."

MBC institutions affected by the proposal include Blue Mountain College, William Carey College, Mississippi Baptist Medical Center and Mississippi Baptist Children's Village.

Mississippi College will continue to be governed by a similar agreement put in place after the 1994 negotiations.

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Position available—Part-time music/choir director. Approximately 15 hours per week. Send resume and references to: First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 357, 2 S.E. Jefferson, Idabel, OK 74745, Attn: Cindy Palmer.

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

Wanted—Girls' caseworker, Arkansas Baptist Home for Children, Call Royce Aston 367-5358.

Classified ads must be submitted in writing to the ABN office no less than 10 days prior to the date of publication desired. A check or money order in the proper amount, figured at 90 cents per word, must be included. Multiple insertions of the same ad must be paid for in advance. Classified ads shall be restricted to church-related subject matter. The ABN reserves the right to reject any ad because of unsuitable subject matter. Classified ads will be inserted on a space-available basis. No endorsement by the ABN is implied.

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MISSIONARY NOTES

John and Brenda Bayer, missionaries to Mexico, are on the field (address: Apartado 20, Bulevares, Edo. de Mexico, 53140 Mexico). He considers Clinton his hometown. She is the former Brenda Wynn of Clinton. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1988.

Clifford and Cynthia Case, missionaries to Uruguay, are in the States (address: 3113 McPherson, Fort Worth, TX 76109). He considers North Little Rock his hometown. The former Cynthia Garner, she was born in Oklahoma. They were appointed in 1992.

Roy and Judith Hawkins, missionaries to Venezuela, are on the field (Mail: CCS 3014, P.O. Box 02-5323, Miami, FL 33102). He was born in Parks and lived in several towns in Arkansas and Oklahoma. She is the former Judy Palmer of Oklahoma. They were appointed in 1973.

James and Dena Veazey, missionaries to Colombia, are on the field (address: Apartado Aereo 51687, Bogota, Colombia). A native of Arkansas, he was born in Monticello and considers McGehee, his hometown. The former Dena Wilcox, she grew up in Speedway, Ind. They were appointed in 1992.

Carl and Twila Lee, missionaries to Indonesia, are on the field (address: Kedamayan Permai, Jalan Landak II, Blok I-14, Palembang 30114, Sumsel, Indonesia). He is a native of Texas. The former Twila Turner, she was born in Texarkana. They were appointed in 1967.

Kenneth and Dian Loucks, missionaries to Brazil, are in the States (address: 1331-A Steuben St., Springdale, AR 72762). He is a native of Oklahoma. She is the former Dian Yergler of Pennsylvania. They were appointed in 1981.

Gregory and Jackie Meeks, missionaries to Taiwan, are on the field (address: P.O. Box 27-24, Taichung 400, Taiwan ROC). They are natives of Arkansas. He was born in Arkadelphia and considers Hot Springs his hometown. She is the former Jackie Hunter of Paragould. They were appointed in 1981.

James and Kathy Shafto, missionaries to Burkina Faso, have completed language study in France and arrived on their field of service (address: Mission Baptiste, 01 BP 580, Ouagadougou 01, Burkina Faso). He considers Hingham, Mass., his hometown. The former Kathy Hamilton, she was born in Eudora. They were appointed in 1995.



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Area-Wide Student Conference

with

Andy Stanley

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TRAINING

Stake developing registry of Christian counseling

The Ministry of Crisis Support is developing a statewide registry of Christian counselors. The registry, when completed, will be available to local church pastors and staff and will serve as a resource for counseling referrals.

"The registry will identify Christian counselors in all areas of the state," said J.D. Stake, director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention ministry. "The registry will include the counselor's name, business address, telephone number, degrees, licensure and areas of counseling expertise, along with local church membership."

All psychiatrists, psychologists, licensed professional counselors, licensed social workers and pastoral counselors who practice Christian counseling and who are interested in being listed in the *Arkansas Baptist Christian Counselors Registry* are encouraged to call or write for an application form. There is no cost for being listed. All those listed will be sent a copy of the registry when completed.

For information about listing or for a copy of the registry, contact Stake at the Ministry of Crisis Support, Medical Towers Building, 9601 Lile Drive, Suite 660, Little Rock, Arkansas 72205; phone 501-225-1113 or fax at 501-225-1116.

Nashville Senior Adult Convention set for '97

Senior adults will "Remember the Future" during the third National Senior Adult Convention April 28-30, 1997, in Nashville, Tenn. Approximately 25,000 senior adults from across the nation are expected to gather at the Nashville Arena for spiritual enrichment and personal challenge from nationally known speakers and musicians. The arena is located near the Baptist Sunday School Board, the Ryman Auditorium and Union Station.

The program will begin with the Monday night session on April 28 and conclude at noon Wednesday. Speakers will include Joni Eareckson Tada, Paul Box, Ann Graham Lotz and Jimmy Draper. Entertainers and musicians include Ricky Skaggs, George "Goober" Lindsey, The Ware Triplets, and senior adult choirs.

Hotel reservations and travel arrangements by charter buses have been made for Arkansas senior adults who would like to attend. For information about these special arrangements for Arkansas Senior Adults, a registration form and a packet of materials on the convention, contact the ABCS discipleship and family ministry department toll-free in state at 1-800-838-ABSC, ext. 5160 or locally in Little Rock at 376-4791.

Rapha Dinner Banquet at the Arkansas Pastors' Conference



Jack Graham

Featuring Dr. Jack Graham,
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"Overcoming Stress in the Ministry"

Emcee: Dr. Paul Sanders

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Paul Sanders

Pastors, Staff and Spouses are cordially invited to this complimentary dinner during the Arkansas Pastors' Conference.

Monday, November 18, 1996 • 4:45 p.m. - 6:15 p.m.
Geyer Springs First Baptist Church

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HUNGER RELIEF

Arkansas Baptists to send North Koreans 'Christmas Present'

Brotherhood and Woman's Missionary Union leaders in Arkansas have issued a call for food to help relief efforts in famine-stricken North Korea.

The "Merry Christmas North Korea" effort will attempt to send a container of food from Memphis to North Korea in mid-December. It is a follow-up project to a similar North Korean feeding effort that saw 530 boxes of food sent to North Korea.

The challenge calls for Arkansas Baptists to send at least 200 food boxes for the

effort, which is targeted to help feed a city of 50,000 recently assigned to Southern Baptists by the North Korean government.

Arkansas Baptist State Convention Brotherhood department director Harry Black said that he and Arkansas WMU executive director Julia Ketner are asking ABCS members to prepare 200 boxes of food to fill their part of a shipping container along with Mississippi and Tennessee Baptists.

Each food box will contain dried beans, powdered milk, corn meal, flour, spaghetti

and rice. In addition, donors will be asked to contribute \$20 per box to help defray the cost of shipping. The boxes will be collected at the ABCS annual meeting Nov. 19 at Geyer Springs Church in Little Rock.

Ketner said the opportunity again provides "an open door for sharing with others in need. This is an opportunity to make a difference in the lives of thousands.

"Arkansas Baptists responded to the critical need in April by generously donating 530 boxes of food," Black noted. "But their need is greater than we ever could have imagined. With 200 more boxes, Arkansans can help feed 800 hungry Koreans for a full month."

Disastrous flooding in North Korea in 1995 destroyed thousands of homes and buildings and devastated the grain harvest.

Those wishing to prepare a box must first call 1-800-838-2272 in state or 376-4791 locally to register with either the WMU department (ext. 5137) or the Brotherhood department (ext. 5158).

"We will respond back with a diagram, instructions, labels and stickers," explained Ketner, adding that participants need to have the food delivered to Disaster Relief Feeding Unit at the state convention, along with a \$20 check or cash, on Nov. 19

Festival of Keyboards!



*A Thanksgiving Extravaganza concert presented by the
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Time lines, personnel changes for dissolving agencies updated

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Two executives of the Southern Baptist Convention Stewardship Commission, including President Ron Chandler, will take positions with the Baptist Sunday School Board as the commission prepares for its dissolution under the denomination's restructuring.

Also, a North American Mission Board transition team chairman advised leaders of the three SBC agencies which will merge to form the NAMB to inform employees "there will be a considerable amount of staff reduction" in the merger.

"One thing is obvious," Jack Johnson, president of the Radio and Television Commission and chairman of the NAMB logistics transition team, said at an Oct. 17-18 meeting, "there will be a considerable amount of staff reduction. We must begin to tell our staffs that fact. We are as anxious as anyone to get to the point where we can tell our employees their future status." The RTVC, Brotherhood Commission and Home Mission Board will merge in June 1997 to form the North American Mission Board. The SBC restructuring includes reducing the number of agencies and institutions from 19 to 12.

The three agencies, which will form the NAMB, currently have about 500 employees. No employment total for the new NAMB was released by Johnson or the transition team. A model of NAMB structure is nearing completion and officials hope

to unveil the model in November, according to David Hankins, chairman of the NAMB transition communications team and vice president for convention policy for the SBC Executive Committee.

"The restructuring process is proceeding according to the guidelines and time lines reported by the Implementation Task Force at the SBC meeting in June," Hankins said.

The Stewardship Commission's programs will be divided between the BSSB and the SBC Executive Committee. Decided during a number of meetings with the BSSB, the commission and Implementation Task Force officials, Chandler and Carl A. Hoffman, an endowment and capital giving promotion executive, will become consultants for the BSSB.

Previously announced was the employment with the SBC Executive Committee of James Powell and James Austin, Steward-

ship Commission executives in Cooperative Program promotion. Under the restructuring, Cooperative Program promotion is added to the Executive Committee while capital giving is moved to the BSSB.

Other Stewardship Commission employees have been notified of the employment ending date of June 19, 1997. Some have elected to take early retirement and some are seeking other employment opportunities. The commission has 12 Nashville, Tenn.-based employees.

"In other SBC restructuring news, Bill Summers, director of library and archives for the Historical Commission, will manage the library and archives in Nashville for the Council of Seminary Presidents. The commission will dissolve June 19, 1997, with the library and archives program given to the six SBC seminary presidents and other historical services assigned to the BSSB.



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Baptist Men's Golf Tournaments results

The results of the Baptist Men's Golf Tournament at Glenwood Country Club on Sept. 12 are as follows:

First Place, Park Hill, NLR #2, score 60
Second Place, Graves Memorial, NLR, score 61

Third Place, Cocklebur, Ward, score 62

The results of the Senior Baptist Men's Golf Tournament at DeGray State Park on Sept. 26 are as follows:

First Place, (tie) Balboa, Hot Springs; Barcelona Road, Hot Springs #1, score 63
Third Place, Central, NLR, score 64

Change in ABSC convention program

Due to the recurrent illness of Charles Fuller's wife, Pat, he will not be able to lead the Bible studies during the Arkansas Baptist State Convention annual meeting Nov. 19-20. Evangelist Junior Hill has agreed to stay after the Pastor's Conference and speak in Fuller's place.

MINISTRY OF CRISIS SUPPORT PROVIDES . . .

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The office is located at the Medical Towers Building, 9601 Lile Drive, Suite 660, Little Rock, AR 72205. Phone (501) 225-1113 FAX 225-1116
Office hours: 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday.

J.D. Stake, Director Emil Turner, Executive Director



Becoming the man God uses

II TIMOTHY 2:20-21

1996 pastor's conference geyer springs first baptist church, little rock november 18

God is looking for men...men He can use in revival and awakening. There are essential elements of character and discipline that must be continually developed to become **The Man God Uses**. During these sessions, we will look at some foundational areas that God desires to develop to make us usable men of God. This is not a conference merely to inspire our hearts or challenge intellects, but to **change our lives!**

pastor's conference schedule

- 8:45 conference begins
- 9:10 becoming a man of prayer/**gregg greenway**
- 9:50 worship & special music
- 10:00 the potter's pressure/**amil turner**
- 10:30 becoming a man of perseverance/**h.d. mccarty**
- 11:10 worship & special music
- 11:20 becoming a man of pattern/**don whitney**
- noon break for lunch
- 1:45 conference resumes
- 2:05 becoming a man of principle/**ronnie rogers**
- 2:40 special music/**marty goetz**
- 2:50 the potter's pressure/**don whitney**
- 3:05 worship & election of officers
- 3:30 becoming a man of purity/**junior hill**
- 4:10 special music/**marty goetz**
- 4:15 the potter's pressure/**tom elliff**
- 4:30 break for dinner
- 6:15 conference resumes
- 6:45 becoming a man of purpose/
junior hill
- 7:30 special music/**marty goetz**
- 7:45 the potter's pressure/**h.d. mccarty**
- 7:50 worship & special music
- 8:05 becoming a man of passion/
tom elliff

conference speaker
tom elliff
SBC president



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

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

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

Family Bible

Sadness comes

By Jim Lagrone, pastor,
First Southern Church, Bryant
Basic passage: II Kings 24-25
Focal passage: II Kings 25:1-21
Central truth: Expecting God to
bless while one is living apart from
Him will result in punishment
rather than blessing.

The final curtain was drawn at Jerusalem. Nebuchadnezzar marched against Jerusalem for the final time. Zedekiah tried to escape, but it was a futile attempt. His sons were killed before him and Zedekiah was blinded and bound for Babylon. He was cast away from God and the city was punished because of their willful sin. The Lord was angry with their apostasy. It seems at times that we humans never will understand that sin is serious with God.

■ *The sadness of Jerusalem.* One of the saddest pages of the Old Testament is where the destruction of the temple occurs. It is sad not only because of the archeology, but of the symbolism involved. The temple was the sign of the presence of Holy God with His people. Judah had refused to learn the lessons of Israel. They refused to listen to God's prophets. They continued to attempt political solutions for their spiritual problems. They always believed that God was going to spare them because of who they were. The ethical erosion had become so dominant that God's judgment was inevitable. As a result, captivity in a foreign land was their future.

■ *Will the lesson even be learned?* God has been, and will ever be, sovereign over human history. God even used here the uncontrolled violence of a wicked nation to accomplish His purposes. At times we in modern America have the same cavalier attitude toward sin as the people of Jerusalem had.

And some expect God to always be on call to bail them out of whatever situation that occurs. However, failure to learn the lessons of history will doom us to repeat them. Judgment for sin will come. God is not mocked. If he allowed the destruction of the temple, is there anything on this earth today that could not suffer the same fate?

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Life and Work

Honor and obey

By Darrell Cook, associate director,
Baptist Student Union,
Arkansas State University
Basic passage: Exodus 20:12; Mark
7:1-13; Ephesians 6:1-4
Focal passage: Ephesians 6:1-4
Central truth: Children are called to
honor and obey their parents.

Marriage relationships have an unfair advantage over parenting relationships. Marriage relationships most often begin with covenant vows promising things such as love and honor. The parenting relationship does not have such a luxury. The child cannot understand or verbalize such commitments at first. As a new first-time parent, I can assure you that Dad and Mom do not always understand all they are getting into either!

In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul offered a discourse on the fifth commandment. He told children to obey their parents, "for this is right." First and foremost, it is the rightness and goodness of this relationship as God has created it that calls for a child's obedience. The rightness is evidenced in the way that the authority of the parents protects the child.

Not only is honoring parents through obedience right, Paul pointed out that the command to honor comes with a promise — "that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth" (v. 3). These inherent blessings for the children who choose to live in a manner that brings honor to their parents seem to be the things that most people seek in life. There may be times that extending honor and obedience appear to be costly, but to have a long life in which things go well would be worth a high cost to many people.

Paul also extended parental advice to fathers. "Fathers, do not exasperate your children" (v. 4). A father is not to require obedience in a way that is unfair or unduly frustrates a child. The remedy for this is to "instead bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord" (v. 4).

"Training and instruction of the Lord" seem to emphasize the teaching and discipline roles of parenting, especially as they relate to spiritual matters. In an attempt to not "exasperate" a child, a parent may be tempted to abandon discipline, but Paul indicates that the provision of discipline and teaching is the opposite of exasperation for the child.

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Explore the Bible

Healing power

By Bob Harper, pastor,
First Church, White Hall
Basic passage: Matthew 8:1-9:35
Focal passage: Matthew 8:3, 13,
14-16, 23-26, 32; 9:6, 22, 29
Central truth: The healing power of
Jesus is available for our frailties
and meets our spiritual needs.

We all need the touch of Jesus in our lives. The woman who had been subject to bleeding for 12 years came up behind Jesus and touched the edge of His cloak and healing took place. Jesus took Peter's mother-in-law by the hand and healing occurred. The man with leprosy was touched and immediately was cured.

Jesus touched eyes, hands and, most especially, hearts. After each instance, healing took place. The centurion's faith was so strong that Jesus just said the word and the servant was healed even before he returned home. Our text demonstrates how the touch of Jesus brought healing to life after life.

In most situations the healing was for some physical ailment. Leprosy, fever, paralysis, demon possession and even a person who had died were all healed by the Master's touch. Jesus went about healing every disease and sickness. The people of the day needed physical healing, just as we do today. Enter any hospital or ask any pastor and you will quickly discover people praying for God to intervene in their physical lives. We desire the physical healing that goes beyond the medical explanation. God is still healing people today. But this was not the main thrust of Jesus' touch. Nor is physical healing the main function of God the Father today.

Jesus is concerned about our physical ailments today but that is not our greatest need. We sometimes ask Jesus for the little things like physical health, when He wants to give us bigger things like spiritual health.

The disciples in the boat are a good example of this. The storm had arrived, the waves were crashing in, and the Master was asleep. Did He not care that they were drowning? Of course He did. Jesus has power over the wind and the waves. His purpose was not man's physical healing but man's spiritual health. Our faith in Him leads us past our own physical needs to discover spiritual wholeness.

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Family Bible

There is still hope

By Jim Lagrone, pastor,
First Southern Church, Bryant
Basic passage: Lamentations
Focal passage: Lamentations 3:22-23
Central truth: Hope exists where
God is.

The author of Lamentations cried out to his people. There are many themes seen in this book, but we will look at the two main theological thoughts.

First, God holds all people, even His chosen, accountable for their sins. These passages demonstrate a clear understanding of the horrors of war. Chapter 4 reminds us of the human side of conflict and even the children suffer. Verse 6 of the same chapter states that the punishment here was greater than the one on Sodom. God allowed destruction to come because of the people's refusal to believe and listen to Him. False prophets had led the people astray. It took this time of punishment for the people of Israel to recognize the folly of trusting in gold and gems for security. They had forgotten the God who had saved and led them to their greatest glory. One's belief in God should not be taken for granted. Faith is not a license to sin.

The second theme is found in the focal passage: If a people repent and trust in God, they may have hope for the future. Hope is one of the most precious ideals. Without the hope God can instill, we are, of all people, most miserable. Hope is based upon past experience. When the people called out to God, He responded. What God has done is the past is prophetic of what He will do in the future.

But the people must repent. They must admit the error of their ways. Then they must turn from the ways that have separated them from God. He has great compassion ready to spring forth each day for a penitent people. It could even be said that the wrath of yesterday can be set aside today if we are following the ways of God. He is always faithful to His people. Even if we are under His wrath, we still must confess that God is good to those who seek Him. Love dominates His work with His people. So people in a foreign land, under domination, can still praise God for His goodness, even though they are reminded every day of the result of their sins.

So be encouraged! God has not forgotten you. Come to Him with a repentant heart and seek His face. As verse 3:25 tells us, the Lord is good to those who have their hope in Him.

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Life and Work

Not just don'ts

By Darrell Cook, associate director,
Baptist Student Union,
Arkansas State University
Basic passage: Exodus 20:13;
Leviticus 19:16-18; Luke 10:29-37
Focal passage: Exodus 20:13; Luke
10:29-37
Central truth: Obedience is more
than "don'ts."

There is a danger of spiritual stagnation or legalism when we look at the Ten Commandments and only see a list of "don'ts." Don'ts are easy to keep under control. Don'ts build a false sense of security as we are tempted to say, "I'm not doing these things that are bad, so I must be good." I doubt any of us would agree with the statement, "If you do nothing in life, you do nothing wrong."

The real point of challenge comes when we try to obey the Ten Commandments without emphasizing the don'ts. For example, "You shall not murder," (Ex. 20:13) is applied as, "You shall value life." The standard is not a life that has never taken a life, but a life that looks at other lives with the same value that God places on them and follows through with actions to support that belief.

Jesus told the story of a man who valued life when he told us about the Good Samaritan. There was a man in need by the roadside because he had been victimized by robbers. The first two travelers that came upon the man in need were holy men, men that probably prided themselves in keeping the "don'ts" of the Ten Commandments. If you asked these men if they valued life, they would most likely answer in the affirmative. The problem is that their actions did not provide any supporting evidence of that value.

The Samaritan showed clearly that he valued the life of that man in need. The fact that "he took pity on him" (Luke 10:33) despite the fact that he did not know him shows that he valued this man. He gave him immediate care and provided resources for his further recovery, bandaging his wounds and placing him in an inn.

Were the priest and Levite guilty of murder for not valuing this man's life? This may be stating the case too harshly, but each did find the man "half dead" (v. 30) and did nothing to prevent him from dying. Some sin by doing wrong; these men sinned by failing to do right. Don'ts can be easy because doing nothing is easy, but we are called to care and act at a deeper level.

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Explore the Bible

Equipped for ministry

By Bob Harper, pastor,
First Church, White Hall
Basic passage: Matthew 9:36-10:42
Focal passage: Matthew 9:37-38,
10:39
Central truth: The messengers of
Christ discover both opportunity
and opposition to the gospel.

The task — getting the message of Jesus out to a lost and dying world — was awesome. Jesus warned that some would accept it, while others would reject it. Yet the task remained. The harvest was plentiful. More workers are needed.

The scene is the same today as it was then. Our world needs Jesus more now than ever. The workers will be challenged by those they go to. Some will readily respond and join in. Others will do their best to stop the spread of the gospel. The good news is still good news and God still empowers those He sends with His good news.

Just as the disciples did, we are to begin at home and then spread out from place to place with the message. God's power will enable us to minister to the needs of those we come in contact with just as the disciples had power to "heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons." Jesus gave the disciples this special power for their special need at the time. Their task was awesome, so Jesus gave them practical advice and tremendous power to accomplish it.

This charge from Jesus continues down through the centuries. The disciples were being sent out as sheep among the wolves. Jesus warned of the possible opposition and told them how to deal with it. There would be troubles. The disciples were warned to fear God and not man. They were being taught that God will meet our every need.

Those who acknowledge Jesus will be acknowledged before the Father in heaven. Whoever disowns Jesus will be disowned before the Father. The disciples who will lose their own life for the sake of Jesus will find real life worth living. Jesus said, "Anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me" (Matt. 9:38).

The task is awesome. His power is available. The rewards are eternal. We must do our part. What a mighty God we serve!

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Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine, Inc.
P.O. Box 552
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Recovery from snake bite more than luck, Dina says

JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA (BP)—John Dina, a Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board evangelist in Quelimane, Mozambique, was released from the hospital just five days after a green mamba bit him on the leg Oct. 16. Victims of such bites usually die when the toxic venom attacks their nervous system and they stop breathing.

The doctor in Johannesburg, South Africa, who treated Dina called him "a very lucky man." Dina and those around him believe it had more to do with the power of prayer.

Hundreds of thousands of Southern Baptists prayed for Dina when his name appeared on a missionary prayer calendar Oct. 12, his 34th birthday. Thousands of others prayed for him after the attack, when urgent notices were posted on the board's toll-free prayer line and CompassionNet electronic prayer network.

"All Baptist people in Mozambique probably know by now what happened to John," said Wanné Dina, who remained in Mozambique with their three children while her husband was flown to South Africa for treatment. "It's going to help them see how great God is, which will help spread the gospel."

Six burned to death by Indonesian extremists

SITUBONDO, INDONESIA (BP)—A pastor, his family and two others were burned to death in their church Oct. 10 during extremist Muslims' latest attack on the minority Christian community on Indonesia's most populous island.

Mobs destroyed 18 churches, two Christian schools and an orphanage in four cities of East Java, according to sources close to the Christian church in Indonesia. Churches affected were of the Reformed, Pentecostal and Catholic denominations. No Baptist churches are located in any of the cities.

No group has claimed responsibility for the attacks, which appear to be well-planned and implemented. Indonesia, a string of islands in southeastern Asia, is the world's most populous Muslim nation.

Indonesian Christians are asking others around the world to pray that they will remain faithful and boldly stand for Jesus Christ, and that the government of Indonesia will be just in applying the law. They also have requested prayer that communities near the destroyed churches will be opened to the gospel.

Church-planting effort links seminary, FMB, HMB, states

FORT WORTH, TX (BP)—Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary officials recently announced a master of divinity in church planting degree program. The degree, similar to a program begun last year by Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, allows students to complete 70 hours on campus while the final 20 hours revolve around actually starting a church, either in the United States or overseas.

Southwestern already has received requests in the U.S. and around the world to give students an opportunity to immerse themselves in the language and culture and actually "do the work of an evangelist" prior to graduation.

Early in the on-campus phase, candidates undergo a four-hour interview to assess their gifts and qualifications to be a church planter. Students in the two-year field project are guided by an experienced mentor and supported emotionally and spiritually by a regional network of other church planters.

Jerry Falwell leads church to affiliate with SBC

LYNCHBURG, VA (BP/ABP)—Evangelist Jerry Falwell, a pillar of the independent Baptist movement and founder of Liberty University, has led his Lynchburg, Va., congregation to affiliate with the Southern Baptist Convention.

His affiliation follows the formation last month of the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia. The SBCV broke away from the Baptist General Association of Virginia, charging its leaders with liberalism and lack of loyalty to the national convention.

"For many years, I have watched with admiration the theological renaissance within the Southern Baptist Convention," said Falwell in a statement released Oct. 24. "...When inerrantists in Virginia formed the SBCV recently, the Thomas Road Baptist Church was quick to show its approval and to offer encouragement by beginning modest monthly financial support."

That financial support essentially gives Thomas Road a new Southern Baptist identity. Membership in the national denomination is based only on "bona fide" contributions to the convention's ministries as well as "sympathy with its purposes and work."

Recently Liberty University added three well-known Southern Baptists to its board of trustees: Ronnie Floyd, pastor of First Church in Springdale and chairman of the SBC's Executive Committee; Johnny Hunt, pastor of First Baptist Church of Woodstock, Ga. and Eugene Mims, a vice president at the Baptist Sunday School Board.