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Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

9-5-1985

September 5, 1985

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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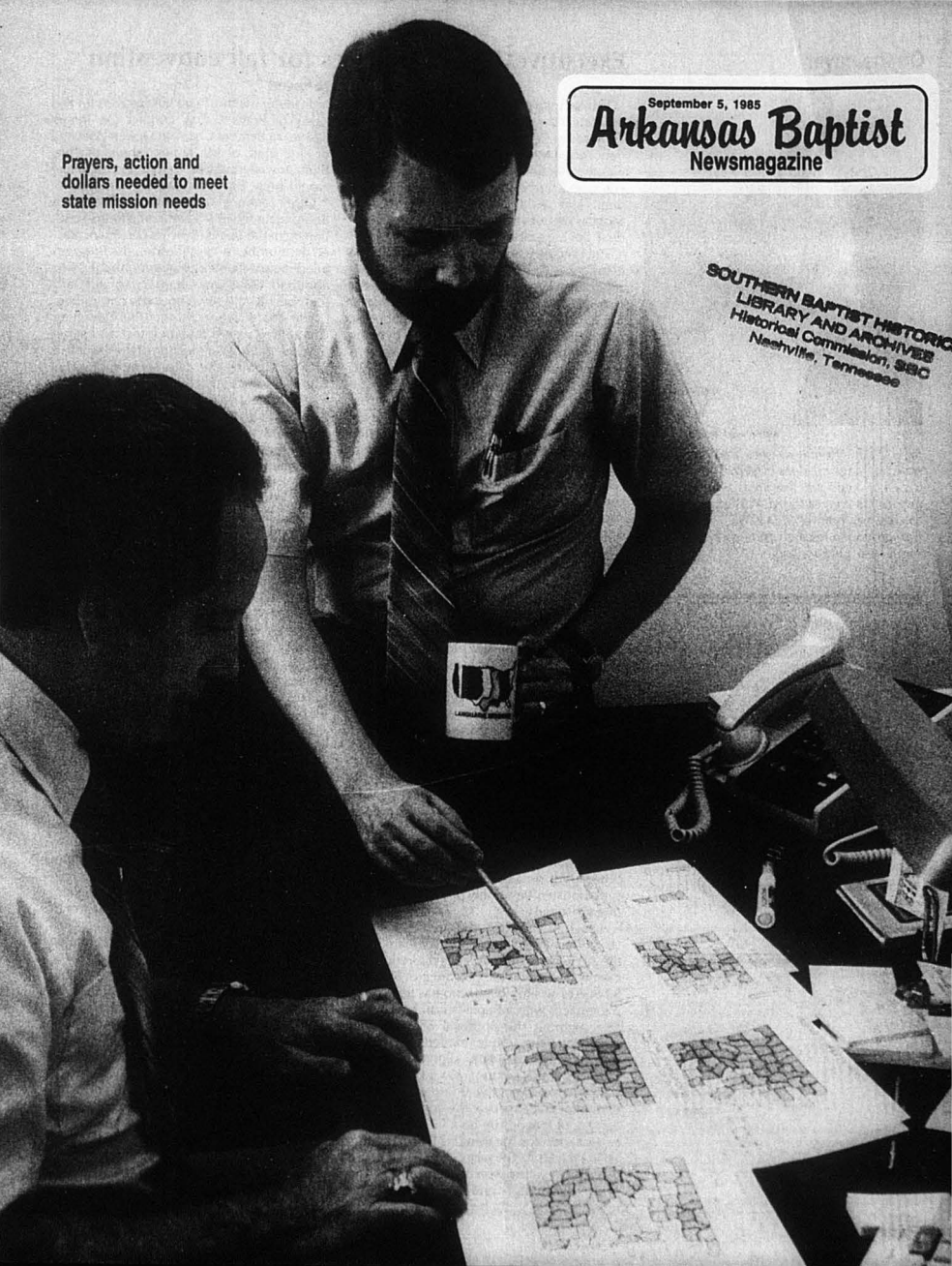
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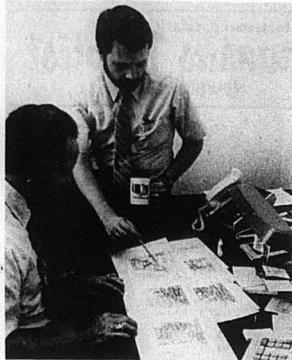
September 5, 1985

Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

Prayers, action and
dollars needed to meet
state mission needs

SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORIC
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
Historical Commission, SBC
Nashville, Tennessee





ABN photo / Betty J. Kennedy

Jack Washington (left) shows Randy Cash, state language missions director, how census data can pinpoint the areas where ethnic groups are concentrated. Washington brings to his position as CSM/PACT director a background in research and experience in using it as a ministry tool.

In this issue

7 modeling missions

The fourth installment of a series on starting new churches focuses on Fort Smith Eastside Church's move to start a new congregation in an affluent, highly developed suburban area on that city's south side.

14 informing and equipping

From missions to morals, "Your state convention at work" seeks to inform and equip Arkansas Baptists to better reach their friends, neighbors and co-workers for Christ.

Executive Board prepares for fall convention

by J. Everett Sneed

The Executive Board of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention convened at the Baptist Medical Center on August 27, with President Ferrell Morgan presiding. The first item was the election of Gerald Taylor, pastor of Life Line Church, Little Rock, as vice president. This action was necessary because Morgan was elevated to the position of president because of a vacancy.

The Executive Board will be presenting five items to the annual state convention for consideration. First, the messengers during the Nov. 19-20 annual meeting will consider a \$12.25 million budget. The proposed budget represents a 6.74 percent increase over the 1985 budget. It, also, includes a three-fourths of one percent increase for the SBC Cooperative Program.

Second, the Executive Board will be recommending to the messengers at the annual meeting that churches provide "Tuition Equalization Scholarships." The purpose would be to encourage young people to attend Ouachita or Southern by eliminating the cost gap between these schools and less expensive state schools. The recommendation, presented to the Executive Board by the Finance Committee, stated, "We especially recommend that churches establish annual scholarships to make it possible for their young people to attend OBU and SBC, and that these two institutions assist the churches in determining the appropriate ways to establish and administer such scholarships."

The recommendation was approved unanimously to be presented to the messengers. Approval by the messengers would simply be an encouragement that churches provide such assistance, since convention messengers cannot bind local churches.

Two amendments to the Annuity contract for churches were unanimously adopted by the Executive Board for consideration by the messengers. The first of these makes it possible for any church employee participating in the Annuity program to transfer his accumulations in any one fund to any of the other funds on a monthly basis. Previously, such transfers were only possible at the end of each quarter.

A second change in the Annuity contract recommended by the Executive Board is that the Annuity Board may, at its discretion, pay off any account with a balance of less than \$3,500 of an employee who has terminated his services with a Baptist church or institution, without the approval of his former employer. If the amount exceeds \$3,500, the former employer must sign the request. Previously, the amount was \$1,750.

Finally, the Executive Board recommended to the messengers of the convention that a "Day of Prayer" be held in 1986 to build two chapels for the inmates who are housed in Pine Bluff. The proposed \$350,000 project will serve the woman's unit of the state prison reformatory and the diagnostic unit.

Individuals wishing to obtain speakers for the "Day of Prayer" may contact Dr. James Sawyer of Benton, Chaplain Dewey Williams of Pine Bluff, or Mr. James Schulz of Pine Bluff. Any offerings received for the buildings would be at the local church's discretion.

Other actions taken by the Executive Board included items pertaining to the functioning of the board itself. The board increased the number of members on the Program and Finance Committee from "about 35 to about 40." This was necessary so all board members would serve on some committee.

The board also voted that the Operating Committee would remain intact and serve until the first regular meeting of the Executive Board following the state convention. This was necessary so that there would be a committee to deal with the granting of pastoral aid, building grants, and the Revolving Loan Fund, from the convention in November until the first meeting of the Executive Board in December.

The Executive Board also interpreted the administration of the Ministerial Student Scholarship Fund. The board voted that, beginning with the fall semester, \$30 be paid per semester hour. Thus, a student carrying 11 hours would receive \$330, and those carrying 12 hours or more would receive a maximum of \$350 per semester.

A final action of the board made it no longer necessary for the state convention to contact a church that had terminated its pastor, prior to giving assistance to the former pastor.

The following people were recommended by the state Nominating Committee and elected by the Executive Board to fill unexpired terms: Randel Everett, Central Association, term to expire 1985; J. R. Hull, Black River Association, term to expire 1986; Dan Webb, Ashley Association, Jim Gardner, Mississippi Association, and Mrs. Billie Sharp, District 5, all terms to expire 1987.

In his opening remarks, Executive Director Don Moore expressed his appreciation to the churches for the support they are giving to the Cooperative Program. He said, "We are currently receiving 96.6 percent of our anticipated budget. This represents approximately a 14 percent increase in budget receipts in the last two years."

Moore also said that he was pleased that churches were responding positively to Planned Growth in Giving. Finally, he urged the churches to prepare for the "Good News America, God Loves You" simultaneous revivals. He indicated preparation should include training individuals for the continuing witnessing training. He said, "We need to train about one million people as witnesses as we look forward for miracles to happen."

J. Everett Sneed is editor of the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine.

Why I believe in miracles

The editor's page

J. Everett Sneed



by Ben C. Fisher, guest writer

The crisis in our denomination may be a crisis in belief. Does God really work miracles? Does he heal the sick? Does he cause the blind to see, the lame to walk, the weeping to rejoice, and the poor to inherit the earth?

The doubting Thomases may be stronger than we suspect, but I believe God does reverse the natural order of things, to demonstrate first his love, then his power and finally, in Christ Jesus, his redemptive will.

I once had this question put to me in startling fashion in the hinterland of Australia. The Church of England chapel at Padthaway where we had gathered for a service prior to the blessing of the shearing of the lambs is 200 miles from any population center. It is located in South Australia, in a rolling green belt. The time was August, and winter; but the alfalfa was knee-high, and the tall graceful eucalyptus and acacia trees danced in the wind and from time to time sent forth clouds of exotic birds, particularly cockatoos and other members of the parrot family, while the emu—larger than the ostrich—made its graceful but slow-motion move across the hill and an occasional kangaroo made its presence known.

It was a beautiful Sunday, but the congregation in the little church included fewer than 30 persons, most of whom were women and senior citizens. There were far more people at the local pub, but a religious spirit did seem to be stirring, and the young priest announced a plan for visitation evangelism.

He was in full clerical garb and introduced himself as the new parish minister, saying that he had two unusual gifts: the gift of tongues and the gift of healing, but that since these are so subject to being misunderstood, there would be a healing service in the rectory, and not in the church proper. He then conducted a liturgical service, which concluded with a powerful sermon against Satan-worship.

After the service, when I was introduced to him as a Baptist minister, his first question caught me off guard. I have been embarrassed ever since. "Do Southern Baptists believe in faith healing?" he asked me.

My answer at that time was a weak "Why, certainly."

What I once said with some timidity and hesitancy, I can now affirm with conviction and joy.

In the first place, I used to pray for the wrong thing: a selfish prayer, centered only on the aches, fears and frustrations of those who suffer physical pain. My prayer is now not a supplication for my relief, but a petition that I may use my dilemma as a testament of faith and witness.

A non-believer may say, "You've only simplified your question," while the truth is that what I am now asking is vastly and profoundly more complicated, opening up new possibilities for God's healing peace.

God's response is a moving, sometimes mystifying miracle, which I do not fully understand, but I have made that leap into authentic life in the certain knowledge that because God is with me, I may be

Sick, yet well;

Dying, yet living;

Weak, yet strong;

Foolish, yet wise;

Troubled, yet at peace

Blind, yet seeing;

Stumbling, yet not falling

With diminishing powers, yet with undiminished hope.

Let me also testify that those burdens which God does not lift, he gives me the strength to bear; and that every man is my brother and every woman my sister, and every human being my responsibility.

So I believe in miracles and am experiencing them in my own spiritual pilgrimage.

Ben C. Fisher is one of the most widely respected educational administrators in the Southern Baptist Convention. Before his retirement five years ago he was executive director of the Education Commission. He has suffered from cancer for several years, and was seriously ill when he wrote this article on faith several weeks ago. Since retiring he has been adjunct professor of religion at Campbell University. He and Mrs. Fisher live in Raleigh, N.C.

Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

Arkansas' third largest publication,
meeting the information needs of Arkansas Baptists

VOLUME 84

NUMBER 34

J. Everett Sneed, Ph.D. Editor

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Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine Board of Directors: Lane Strother, Mountain Home, president; Mrs. J. W. L. Adams Jr., Texarkana; Charles Chesser, Carlisle; Lyndon Finney, Little Rock; Leroy French, Fort Smith; Mrs. Jimmie Garner, Trumann; Merle Milligan, Harrison; Tommy Robertson, El Dorado; and the Hon. Eteljane Roy, Little Rock.

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Copies by mail 50 cents each.

Deaths of members of Arkansas churches will be reported in brief form when information is received not later than 14 days after the date of death.

Advertising accepted in writing only. Rates on request.

Opinions expressed in signed articles are those of the writer.

Member of the Southern Baptist Press Association.

The Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine (USPS 031-280) is published weekly, except the third week in April, at July 4 and Dec. 25, by the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine, Inc., Little Rock, AR. Subscription rates are \$5.36 per year (individual), \$5.40 per year (Every Resident Family Plan), \$6.00 per year (Group Plan) and \$19.00 per year (to foreign address). Second class postage paid at Little Rock, AR. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine, P. O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203.



One layman's opinion

Daniel R. Grant

Show business and raising teenagers

Michael Jackson is the number one hero of our high school students, the *World Almanac* reported recently. Their 1984 "Heroes of Young America Poll" surveyed 4,000 teenagers in 145 cities. Eddie Murphy ranked second among the 1984 heroes and President Reagan followed in third place. The remaining seven in the top 10 included actors Kevin Bacon and Clint Eastwood, basketball star Julius Irving, film stars Tom Cruise and Mr. T., rock singer Eddie Van Halen and actress Katharine Hepburn.

This particular story in the Sunday supplement did not move in and out of my span of attention in the usual 60 seconds or less. I kept coming back to some perplexing questions about the kinds of heroes young people choose and what it means for the world we will be living in some years down the road.

What will be the effect on a generation of young people for whom eight of the 10 "heroes" are in show business? Are young people adopting the personal morality and lifestyle of these heroes, or are the heroes simply reflecting the personal morality and lifestyle of the new generation of young people? Do Christian young people really ignore the immoral words and "messages" of much of the popular video music, as they say they do, or is contemporary show business inevitable changing the morality of our own Christian young people, along with the masses?

As I recall some of the heroes of my childhood days, unless I am shamefully romanticizing the past, those heroes were less fleeting and more lasting over many generations of young people. They also tend-

ed to be the heroes of all groups, not merely young people. Some were still heroes after one or more centuries had passed. I think of Dr. David Livingstone, Helen Keller, Charles Lindbergh, Lottie Moon, Dr. Bill Wallace, Florence Nightingale, Thomas A. Edison, Madame Marie Curie and William Carey. Being "elected" a hero in those days seemed to require an unusually high standard of morality, courage and unselfishness.

If the entertainment industry is going to dictate the heroes of our teenagers during the next few decades, it seems imperative that concerned parents are going to have to find more effective ways of influencing the entertainment industry.

Daniel R. Grant is president of Ouachita Baptist University.



Woman's viewpoint

Mary Maynard Sneed

Living life responsibly

"Live life then," Paul wrote the Christians at Ephesus, "with a due sense of responsibility, not as those who do not know the meaning and purpose of life but as those who do. Make the best use of your time, despite the difficulty of these days (Eph. 5:15-16; Phillips).

By sending the Son, Jesus Christ, to bear our sins away, God has given meaning and purpose to our lives. As we recognize the meaning behind our successes and failures, set new goals, recognize our priorities and make new plans for the future, we are able to use our time in more meaningful and fulfilling ways.

Because life has its origin in the union of God and man in Christ, how we are committed to living our lives is a measure of

Christian stewardship. Our attitudes and responses to other human beings is determined by the quality of this relationship. The basic Christian priorities, then, are a purposeful commitment to the will and purpose of God; second, commitment to the "body of Christ," which is his church; and third, commitment to the work to which we, as disciples of Christ, are called.

To fully understand God's plan for our lives, individually and corporately, it is necessary to acknowledge the gifts he has committed to us. Through I Corinthians 12:4-11, we have the assurance that God has blessed each and every one of his children with gifts of his own choosing. It is imperative that we understand the nature of

our own gifts, if we are to use them effectively. Whether we have been entrusted with five talents or only two, we are directly accountable to God for our stewardship of these possessions.

As we discover some of the ways in which, with careful planning, we can invest our time more purposefully and efficiently, we shall see how, as responsible Christians, we invest our lives. It is as we press life's cup full to overflowing that we become more than we are.

Mary Maynard Sneed is a North Little Rock homemaker and an adult Sunday School teacher at Park Hill Church.

Day to edit 'Probe'

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)—Michael Stephen Day has been named editor of *Probe* magazine, a Brotherhood Commission publication for boys grades 7-12.

Day was minister of youth at Westwood Church in Cleveland, Tenn.. He is a graduate of Belmont College and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Bill Powell retires, Lucas named SBJ editor

JONESBORO, Ga. (BP)—Directors of the Baptist Faith and Message Fellowship have accepted the resignation of William A. (Bill) Powell of Buchanan, Ga., as editor of the *Southern Baptist Journal* and elected an Austin, Tex., pastor as the new editor.

Dave Lucas, pastor of First Church of Oak Hill in Austin, was elected by about 16 direc-

tors from a half-dozen states attending the board meeting at Mt. Zion Church in Jonesboro, just south of Atlanta. Names of the directors were not revealed.

Powell, who will be 60 on Sept. 15, requested early medical disability retirement, saying he is unable to continue as editor because of a terminal illness.

You'll be glad to know...

...Three things are dependable in our attempts to raise our children in a basically godless society. This should be good news to those bringing little ones along.

With the TV industry committed to giving us what they want us to have, not what is good for society; with education stripped of its role of moral and character development; with the constitution being interpreted as protecting those who



Moore

want to print and market the most provocative and vile materials imaginable; How can a parents ever expect to offset all of these non-moral and anti-moral influences?

Unless we want to die of a broken heart, then we had better find some approach to child rearing that will counter and overcome the forces out to destroy our children. Devolution of man in an antichrist society is inevitable. Forces are at work designed to rob your child of the peace that comes from knowing his origin in God. They would have him never accept a firm code, such as scripture, by which he could conduct his life. They would not want him to find security or hope in our supernatural Lord, but rather to find it in their own resources. They would have him to live his life free of any pressure that he will one day stand before God and give an account of his wasted and wretched existence.

Technology will never keep us civilized. Government will never keep us civilized. In the shadow of both our people are becoming animalized. Morals like alley cats, behavior like "junkyard dogs", disregard for the holy, dependence upon alcohol and drugs is ruining our children. No wonder many choose not to have children.

What can you do? Three things are dependable. First, the truth of God's word on personal conduct must be followed. Second, the parents personal example must be one of faithfulness and holiness. Third, the discipline of God will be faithfully administered to your born again children to help them stay straight.

...You'll be glad to know you can: (1) count on Biblical standards of morality to be best—insist on them; (2) count on a parent's godly example to work—give it; (3) count on the discipline of God to bring true Christians into line—trust him.

Don Moore is executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

Letters to the editor

We must take action

When I received my copy of the June 20 edition of the *Arkansas Baptist*, which gave a full report of the convention in Dallas, I diligently searched the pages to see what our denomination had done this year concerning the abortion issue. I was very distressed and heartsick to see that this issue, which involves the destruction of more than 1.5 million innocent unborn human lives every year, was completely ignored by the Resolution Committee, although I'm sure that an anti-abortion resolution was presented to it.

In almost all conventions over the past decade, a resolution has been passed at least putting the convention on record as opposing abortion on demand. The resolution is usually given about one inch of coverage in the convention report and that ends the matter until the next year, and in the meantime another million and a half innocent lives are snuffed out. This year, the convention didn't even do that.

In previous years, when the convention did pass anti-abortion resolutions, none of the Baptist agencies, such as the BJCPA and the CLC, followed up on it. Their publications have said almost nothing about the abortion issue.

Although educating people about this issue is vitally important, I think our denomination should consider doing much more, such as providing crisis pregnancy centers offering alternatives to abortion. With God's help, our rich, powerful denomination could, if it chose, do much to stop this tragic holocaust. Both individually and collectively, we must take action, because, in the light of Scripture, we are almost certain to be objects of God's severe judgement if this tragic travesty of justice is allowed to continue unhindered. — **Bonnie Fiser, Greenwood**

Editor's note: The SBC Resolutions Committee made a decision not to deal with any controversial issues at the 1985 convention. They felt that this was necessary because of the tense atmosphere in our convention.

Surely God is grieved

I was appalled today as I read the letter "The Lord knows" in the Aug. 8 *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*. The author was expressing a "pro-choice" opinion on abortion. I was especially grieved at the misuse

of Scripture in this letter.

The author felt that abortion was justified on the basis of Matthew 5:29-30, "And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell..." How absurd to take this Scripture so far out of context. Further, may I suggest to the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* that if it is necessary to print such articles, the Scriptures should also be printed, not just the reference. Such careless journalism could falsely influence readers to believe there are biblical grounds for abortion.

I would like to remind readers that such important issues should never be decided on the basis on one Scripture taken out of context. One must consider the whole biblical teaching. I would like to refer readers to Psalm 139, especially verses 15 and 16. "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfected; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."

I am so thankful to know my Lord knew me. He planned me and formed me according to that plan. He has numbered the hairs on my head. He says not one sparrow falls to the ground without him. Further, I am more valuable than those sparrows (Matt. 10:29-31). Our Lord has placed a high value on life. I am confident that all of those unborn babies are valuable too! Perhaps their hairs are numbered in his book referred to in Psalm 119:16. Surely the God who knows each time a sparrow falls is deeply grieved each time a baby is slaughtered! — **Dottie Newberry, Rogers**

Editor's note: Letters reflect the opinion of only the writer, including his or her interpretation of the Scripture. It is easy to see many points of view are held by our Baptist people, but this is an outgrowth of our longstanding doctrine of the individual priesthood of the believer. The reasons scriptures are not necessarily printed in "Letters to the editor" are: (1) space is limited to 350 words, and (2) our readers are able to read and interpret the passages for themselves.

Venezuela Baptist church seeks pastor

Faith Church, an English-language congregation in Maracaibo, Venezuela, is seeking a volunteer who can serve one or two years as pastor.

According to Mason Bondurant, a former pastor of the congregation, the church will provide living quarters, transportation and some expenses on the field. The extended

term volunteer, however, must be able to provide his own support.

Bondurant, a former pastor of First Church, Jacksonville, indicated interested persons should contact Bryan Brasington, Foreign Mission Board director for western South America, at P. O. Box 6767, Richmond, VA 23230; phone (804)353-0151.

by Millie Gill / ABN staff writer

people



Jonathan L. (Jon) Poteet III began serving Sept. 1 as minister to age groups at Pulaski Heights Church in Little Rock. He came there from University Church in Baltimore, Md., where he had served as associate pastor for education

and outreach since 1980. A native of Little Rock, Poteet is an honor graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Yale Divinity School. He is married to the former Lisa Bratton, also of Little Rock. They have one daughter, Jennifer Rachel, age three.

Lew T. King has resigned as minister of music and media at East Side Church in Fort Smith to join the staff of Parkway Church in Jackson, Miss., as minister of music.

Clara Jane Bradley Tyler died Aug. 21 in Morrilton at age 85. She was the widow of Faber L. Tyler. Mrs. Tyler had been a member of Ozark First Church for 52 years where she had served as a Sunday School teacher, adult choir officer, president of Baptist Women and as a charter member of Church Training. She held leadership positions in Clear Creek Association, serving as treasurer from 1967 to 1979, Baptist Women's director, as both a campsite and missions committee member and as an executive board member. She had served Arkansas Baptist State Convention as an approved Church Training conference leader, as an officer in Woman's Missionary Union and as a member of the board of directors of Family and Child Care Services. Survivors include two brothers, Howard Bradley of Morrilton and Hayden Bradley of McGehee; and one sister, Byrtie Webb of Guy.

William Lee Prince of Anderson, S. C., died Aug. 11 at age 51. Born in West Helena and reared in Paragould, he was a son of the late Irving M. and Irene Craig Prince of Arkansas. He was a graduate of Carson Newman College, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and Princeton Seminary. He had actively served his denomination on the associational, state and Southern Baptist Convention levels. Survivors include his wife, a son, Keith, and a

daughter, Suzanne, all of the home; and his stepmother, Helen Miley Prince of Brinkley.

Harold St. Gemme is serving Pulaski County Association as associate to director Glenn E. Hickey. He came to the Little Rock area for retirement following 30 years of ministry in Southern Baptist life, serving on the staff of churches in Missouri, Mississippi and Florida. He also served for nine years as associate directors of missions for the Hinds-Madison Association of Jackson, Miss. In this new part-time position, he will assist in the areas of administration, promotion and pastoral ministry.

Bill Evans of Bee Branch died Aug. 27 in Conway Hospital at age 78. He was a member of Bee Branch Church where his funeral services were held Aug. 29. He had served the church as a deacon for 56 years and as music director for more than 50 years. Survivors include his wife, Nica Evans of Bee Branch; four sons, Billy Don Evans of Rogers, Leon Evans of Little Rock, John Evans of Conway and Jimmy Evans of Janesville, Wis.; a daughter, Rita Potts of Batesville; 18 grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren.

Barry King began serving Sept. 1 as pastor of Riverside Church at Donaldson. He moved there from Prattville where he served as pastor of Buie Church.

Allica Bremer has joined the staff of Hot Springs First Church as youth and outreach director. She had served the church on a part-time basis as youth worker.

Teresa (Bit) Stephens has resigned as minister of youth at Amboy Church in Little Rock to enroll in Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

briefly

Valley Church at Searcy ordained R. V. Boone as a deacon Aug. 4 and licensed Jeffery Allan Thomas to the ministry Aug. 18. Pastor Bert Thomas moderated services.

Newport First Church mission team has returned from Southbend, Ind., where they assisted Southside Church with survey work, backyard Bible clubs, puppet shows and a revival led by Gene Crawley, pastor of the Newport church.

Clinton First Church will celebrate its 50th year of service Sept. 22 with the dedication of a new educational building. The church was organized in September 1935 with 18 charter members and since that time has moved from downtown to its present location on Highway 65 South. Charter members and former pastors and members will be special guests at the anniversary celebration which will feature Don Moore, executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, as guest speaker. Ralph Baker, minister of music, has planned special music for the day including a mass choir presentation of the "Hallelujah Chorus" as a call to worship. Pastor Frank Shell will moderate the day of activities.

Baring Cross Church in North Little Rock recognized Mary Garnet Aug. 25 for 52 years of service in the Children's Sunday School Department. Former students and co-workers attended a brunch given in her honor.

Lee Memorial Church in Pine Bluff recently voted to become First Church of White Hall, effective Oct. 1. Jack Ramsey is pastor.

Ethiopia Mission desperately needs physician

RABEL, Ethiopia (BP)—Missionary personnel working against overwhelming odds in the Ethiopian highlands desperately need a volunteer physician to coordinate Southern Baptist medical relief efforts in the remote, famine-stricken area.

The Foreign Mission Board has searched in vain since May for a physician to spend one or two years coordinating the work at the feeding and health center in Rabel and as many as four other centers projected for the Menz-Gishe and Merhabete Districts.

The physician would supervise nurses at the centers, handle difficult medical cases nurses can't handle and provide advice on public health, nutrition, famine-related diseases and general sanitation.

Interested persons are urged to write Joyce De Ridder in health care recruitment at the Foreign Mission Board, P.O. Box 6767, Richmond, VA 23230, or call her at (804) 353-0151.

Specifications suggest training in public health and tropical diseases and "lots of good practical general medicine."

Cooperation, will of God insure sponsoring church's well-being

by Mark Kelly

FORT SMITH—Eastside Church, Fort Smith, knew where they wanted to start their mission. They also knew it was going to be expensive.

The 900-member congregation had searched the countryside south of Fort Smith, looking for a location to plant a new church. By getting ahead of the city's rapid growth in that direction, they hoped to find a strategic location where Baptists might intercept Fort Smith's success.

But although they found several good sites five to seven miles south of the city limits, Eastside found something unexpected: an affluent, developing area within the city limits just aching for a Southern Baptist witness.

Eastside pastor W. Trueman Moore described the Fianna Hills section of Fort Smith as a triangular area bounded on the east by State Highway 71, on the north by Interstate 540 and on the south by the city limits. According to Moore, that general area boasts roughly 10,000 residents, but only two churches of any kind are located within its boundaries, neither Southern Baptist.

There was no question in Moore's mind: Fianna Hills represented a prime missions opportunity with no waiting for development to catch up with it.

But planting a new church in the community would be costly. Under development since 1972, Fianna Hills' 1,100 homesites are organized around an 18-hole golf course and country club. According to Bob Bradley, a representative of Fianna Hills Realty and member of Fort Smith's Grand Avenue Church, home sales average in the \$80,000 to \$90,000 price range, and some of the homes would sell for as much as \$350,000.

Acquiring property and building an appropriate worship facility in such an affluent area would be expensive. A choice five-acre site located in the heart of the development carried a \$125,000 price tag. Other parcels, however, were running \$45,000 an acre.

But the church had a strong sense of God's leadership in the matter, recalled Moore.

In 1972—the same year Fianna Hills development began—Eastside was a church struggling to keep its doors open. Moore recalled that, on his first Sunday as interim pastor in 1972, Sunday School attendance had been 27. Church members were discouraged.

But after considering their options, members chose life for their church, over death, Moore said. They sold their physical plant and relocated to a strategic spot on the east side of the city. According to Moore, Eastside's spring Sunday School attendance averaged 515 this year, and he expects the congregation's 1984-85 gifts to missions through the Cooperative Program will surpass \$100,000.

"We realized God was bringing some

outstanding leadership types into our fellowship," asserted Moore. "We also knew a church gets root-bound if it keeps taking people in without giving something back out. We realized we needed to be involved in a work beyond ourselves for the health of our own congregation."

Determined to pursue the opportunity before them, Eastside elected a Missions Committee headed by John Wikman, a former Southern Baptist missionary to India, and charged them with the task of striking a deal for the "choice" five-acre location. Although the difficult negotiations fell through once, the committee eventually was able to dicker its way into an \$18,000 an acre agreement on the property.

Encouraged by the remarkable turn of events, Eastside went to Fort Smith's Concord Association and the Missions Department of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. To their respective \$35,000 and \$25,000 contributions, a bequest to the church added another \$25,000. The land was purchased and paid off in less than a year and a half.

"We took that as evidence God was in the project and that we were not going to be hindered in our own growth by our involvement in a missions effort," affirmed Moore, himself a former SBC missionary to Bangladesh.

Modeling missions



"God will not let missions hurt a church," he continued. "I believe we have proof of that. Since October, we have received 130 new members, and we're baptizing twice as many as last year." In addition, Moore noted, Eastside itself purchased \$108,000 in property and built a half million dollar building while funds were being poured into the Fianna Hills project. Nevertheless, 1985 offerings still surpassed 1984, he said.

"I believe God has been strengthening Eastside for a time when a significant number of our people will be leaving to open the work in Fianna Hills," Moore explained.

Sherri Brown named assistant features editor

ATLANTA (BP)—Sherri Anthony Brown, editorial assistant in the SBC Home Mission Board's evangelism section, has been promoted to assistant features editor in the board's editorial department.

Brown, a 1981 journalism graduate of Baylor University, Waco, Texas, will

"We have about 60 members in that area.

"I know a lot of our money and people will go to Fianna Hills," he added. "But I also believe it will be one of the leading churches in Fort Smith in a few years, and God will have vindicated it was his will to do this!"

After the purchase of the land, an attractive sign was raised on the property, announcing to the community the intention to establish a permanent Southern Baptist ministry in the area. With the assistance of Glenn Hickey, assigned as a new work consultant by the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, an approach to the community was planned. The first step in that plan placed two summer workers in the neighborhoods, conducting a door-to-door survey and holding backyard Bible clubs.

With the survey completed, a letter was sent to every household, inviting residents to a complimentary dinner at the Fianna Hills Country Club. There the plans for a new church were explained. The responses of interest from that meeting were combined with the Eastside members already in the community and channeled toward starting monthly home Bible fellowships.

The church authorized an architect to draw up plans for a worship facility and elected a Building Committee. Ground-breaking for the \$250,000 project is scheduled for this month, with completion projected in March 1986.

Eastside is working toward an October 1985 launch date for regular services in Fianna Hills. They hope to win school board approval of their request to use a neighborhood school for their meetings until the church building is completed.

But even in the face of the substantial price tag attached to the looming construction, Eastside and their pastor remain undaunted. After all, "God will not let missions hurt a church."

Two other projects similar to Fianna Hills also are underway as part of the Missions Models emphasis. Working with consultant Troy Prince, First Church, Rogers, has started a mission on Highway 102 at Bentonville. Second Church, West Helena, has begun a process to establish a new mission in a West Helena subdivision.

Mark Kelly is a staff writer for the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine.

specialize in developing features for Baptist Press, state Baptist papers and secular news media. It is a new position, approved this year as part of an effort to expand the role of news and information services at the board, according to Jim Newton, the board's editor of news and information services.

Meeting state missions needs

Pray that Arkansas Baptists will respond to the opportunities of ministry in resort areas. Youth and adults, as well as children, need to be reached. Pray that churches and associations will respond to this opportunity.



Pray for interfaith witness. The growth of other faith groups, such as Mormons, is evidenced by the opening of a new "Ward Building" at Morrilton. Every association needs Interfaith Witness Associates trained to help Baptists understand a variety of faith groups.



Pray for chaplains to be institutionalized, like W.W. Dishongh, who works part-time to minister to those in the Pulaski County jail.



Pray for John Lewis, chaplain for the Youth Services Center at Alexander, as he ministers to troubled youth. Arkansas Baptists employ five full-time chaplains to help persons who are institutionalized.



Pray that more Arkansas churches will catch the vision of meeting needs in Indiana, as did Barcelona Road Church at Hot Springs Village.



Pray for work among the Hispanics in the state, especially Tri-County Association as they seek a replacement worker.

The Korean Mission of Park Hill Church in North Little Rock now needs a pastor. Pray for that congregation and others at places like DeQueen, Grannis and Gosnell.

Pray for more funds to be given through the Dixie Jackson Offering so more new churches can build their first unit. The State Missions Department helps with building aid grants and maintains a revolving loan fund.



Pray for churches in changing/declining communities to rediscover their mission in light of the changing situation. Pray also for churches and associations to discover and initiate at least one new ministry that shows the love of Christ in action.



Pray for God's leadership as churches initiate ministries to persons in the 100,000 multi-family units in large apartment complexes or mobile homes.



Pray for students and teachers who give sacrificially of their time in classes at Boyce Bible School and the Seminary Studies Program to improve the level of theological education for those who lead our churches.



Pray that missions will be started in the 40 places in the state already identified as needing churches.

demands going and sowing. . .

Season of Prayer for state missions: Dixie Jackson Offering goal \$395,000

So we can go... give

In the life of an individual or a church there is never a time when prayer is not needed or appropriate. But there are also times when it is appropriate to put feet to our prayers. Such is the case now with missions needs and opportunities in Arkansas. There are more needy, hurting, confused and lost people in our state than ever in its history.

The staff of the State Missions Department is a ready source to assist churches and associations in addressing this challenge. We are available to conduct missions awareness conferences, missions needs surveys or community "probes"; to train church and associational missions committees; help leaders confront their changing communities; assist in purchasing missions sites; and help in organizing new missions and churches.

To do these things requires not only prayer and activity, but also money. The Missions Department budget is dependent on the Dixie Jackson Offering for 37 percent of its operating budget this year. The offering goal for 1985 is \$395,000. Helping us reach that goal will assure full funding for all department projects, as well as assistance to churches and associations.

Will you and your church help us reach the goal this year so we may meet the missions needs of Arkansas? I trust the Lord will place this burden on your heart.

C. H. Sawyer

New staffer hopes to help

by Betty J. Kennedy

Jack Washington can quote a lot of statistics about Arkansas. He will tell you that 81,000 adults in the state are functionally illiterate, and that the state's 2.3 million population is expected to increase by 19 percent from 1980-1990. If you want more facts, he will tell you that 39,000 Arkansans speak a language other than English at home.

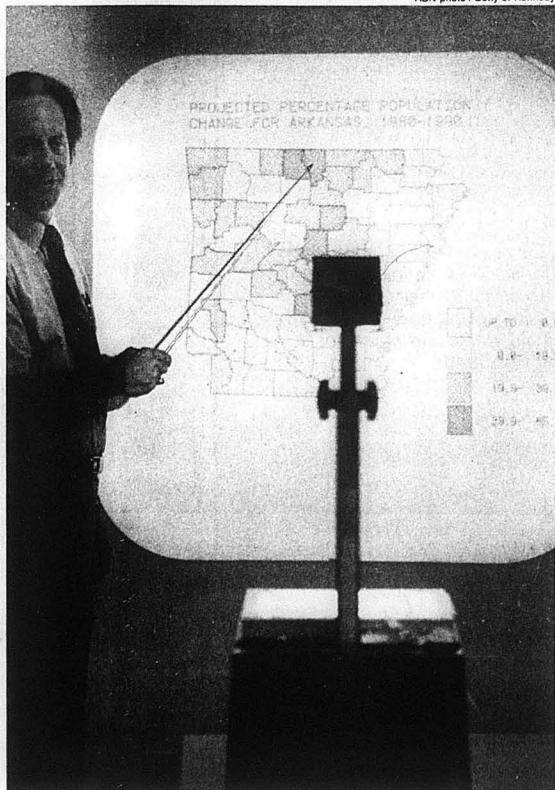
Arkansas' new director for Christian Social Ministries and PACT is at home with statistics. He has been a researcher for the SBC Home Mission Board. But, before that, he ministered where the statistics make their impact: the local church and association, who

know what and where the needs are because they have information on people.

He traces the Lord's leading through varied experiences so that he learned the skills that suited him to the position in the State Mission Department where he now serves.

The connection was made when Dean Preuett, who served in a similar position for Central Arkansas, contacted Washington last year. Preuett was doing a PACT consultation (for Project: Assistance to Churches in Transitional Communities) for Pulaski Heights Church in Little Rock and needed statistics on a certain census tract in the city.

ABN photo / Betty J. Kennedy



Jack Washington puts the needs before a group in graphic form.

Your state convention at work

Missions

The ethnic congregation

Often the transcultural outreach of a church will lead to the need for an ethnic congregation meeting separately from the sponsoring church. It may or may not meet in a separate building.



Cash

The program of the ethnic congregation should include Bible study, worship, mission emphasis, and training. It is extremely important that the sponsoring church not take a paternalistic approach, but allow the ethnic leaders to assume responsibilities and to experience growth and maturity.

Relationships with the sponsoring church should be carefully defined, including finances, receiving members, ordinances, the calling of a pastor. Bible study materials and physical equipment.

The following guidelines might help: (1) The particular needs of the ethnic people for an experience of salvation and opportunity for worship should be foremost. (2) The ethnic congregation should be seen as a New Testament fellowship of believers even though it may be using a different language and style of worship. (3) No program should be begun which is beyond the ability of the ethnic congregation to maintain. (4) Financial assistance from outside the congregation should be considered temporary. (5) The responsibility of calling a pastor should be by the ethnic congregation in cooperation with the sponsoring church. — **Randy Cash, language missions director**

Church Training

Moore to be speaker

Don Moore, our state Executive Director, will speak during the opening session of the annual Church Training Convention on Tuesday, Oct. 22. His message will set the stage for the day-long leadership training event for pastors, staff members and Church Training leadership from churches and associations across our state.



Moore

In addition to conferences for age-group leaders, there will be separate conferences for general officers from smaller churches (200 and under) and for those from larger churches (200 and above). These conferences are

planned specifically for pastors, staff members, Church Training Directors and other general officers. Luell Smith, consultant from the Sunday School Board, will lead those from smaller churches; Williams Caldwell, professor from Southwestern Seminary, will lead those from larger churches. Church secretaries and media-library workers will also have conferences in their areas of work.

The Church Training Convention will be held at Immanuel Church in Little Rock with sessions beginning at 10 a.m., 2 p.m., and 7 p.m. Church and associational leaders will receive the best possible training to help them begin the new year in their churches. — **Robert Holley, director**

Evangelism

God's support system

The church is essential to spiritual growth just as the home is to a baby's growth. Each new Christian is just a baby in Christ. He needs a tremendous support system to sustain and strengthen him.



Shell

It was in November 1984 that God blessed my family with our eighth grandchild. We had been blessed by six strong grandsons and one healthy granddaughter. Little Amber was to be a new experience. She only weighed three pounds at birth and lost down to two pounds, 10 ounces. We had the privilege of regularly visiting her in the intensive care nursery at the Baptist Medical Center. During that time she had many wires and tubes connected to her. It really was a pathetic sight. We would hurt as we watched this frail, tiny, weak little being struggle for life. We were very much aware that the wires, tubes and monitors were her support system. They were absolutely necessary.

A new Christian is very weak spiritually. He desperately needs a support system. The best support system that was ever ordained of God is the local Baptist church that loves and care for new Christians. These mature Christians have shared in God's vertical love. They will now reach out and touch the new Christian and help him grow in love. — **Clarence Shell, director**

Family and Child Care

Relationship and ministry

I have worked with Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services for 14 months now and our reputation with people in this state still amazes me. I would like to share with you some of the comments that I have heard:

An Arkansas Social Services worker commented: "It's so good to know that there's a place like yours where I can refer children and know they will receive quality care."

After visiting the Arkansas Baptist Home for Children, another said, "I always knew the Children's Home was there and I've even referred children there in the past, but I never realized what a wonderful place it was until I visited there." Now we are her first choice when referring children, and she pledged financial support, also!

A worker with the Department for the Blind and Visually Impaired stated about our group home, "Your houseparent is so good with those boys; there's a lot of love there. You have a very special home."

My favorite comments come from the families. The following came from parents of children we have worked with and one of whom is in our care: "Just having visited with you and having my daughter visit with you has helped our relationship so much. After talking with you, I knew things would be better and that you would help."

What a privilege it is to be a part of the ministry that Arkansas Baptists are providing to families in need, a ministry that is so needed and appreciated. — **Ed Pilote, caseworker, Jonesboro area office**

Christian Life Council

The lying chapter

In a sermon heard recently, the 15th chapter of Luke, for obvious reasons, was called the lost chapter of the Bible. That was an attention getter! More recently a chapter has been read which might be called the Bible's Lying Chapter. How about that!



Parker

The 19th chapter of Proverbs begins by telling of the foolishness of being perverse in speech. One who habitually lies is also a type of perverser! In verse nine it states that a false witness will not go unpunished and that he who tells lies will perish. Verse twenty-two concludes, "It is better to be a poor man than a liar." Near the end of the chapter there's the reminder that "a rascally witness makes a mockery of justice and the mouth of the wicked spreads iniquity."

The next time one is tempted, for money's sake among other reasons, to be, or tell half truths, the lying chapter should be reviewed. The next time there's a temptation to lie to a family member, friend, acquaintance, prospective customer or anyone else, read the Bible's lying chapter. — **Bob Parker, director**

Thank You!



ARKANSAS

... for your gifts through the Home Mission Board's Annie Armstrong Easter Offering. Thanks for opening your hearts and joining hands with Southern Baptists across the United States. You had a hand in establishing new churches, proclaiming the Good News to a lost and needy nation, setting up food and clothing distribution centers, ministering to homeless refugees and reaching out to people in hospitals, nursing homes, detention centers and prisons—touching people where they are.

With your offerings we are reaching farther . . . stretching into new frontiers. We tip our hats to you, Arkansas. Thanks!

The Home Mission Board thanks all Baptist churches in the state, especially those who gave the **highest per capita offerings** in the state in 1984:

First Baptist Church, Sparkman	\$34.32
First Baptist Church, El Dorado	\$20.70
Pines Baptist Church, Quitman	\$14.60
Bingen First Baptist Church, Nashville	\$10.94
Immanuel Baptist Church, El Dorado	\$10.28
Shiloh Baptist Church, Arkadelphia	\$9.88
Batavia Baptist Church, Harrison	\$8.77
First Baptist Church, Nashville	\$8.40
Hebron Baptist Church, Little Rock	\$8.05
Havana Baptist Church, Havana	\$7.94

(These figures were obtained from the state convention office and from the Church Uniform Letters.)

The Home Mission Board thanks these Baptist churches who gave the **highest dollar amounts** in the state in 1984:

First Baptist Church, El Dorado	\$19,564
Park Hill Baptist Church, N. Little Rock	\$17,567
Immanuel Baptist Church, Little Rock	\$14,972
First Baptist Church, Fort Smith	\$10,355
First Baptist Church, Little Rock	\$10,137
Grand Avenue Baptist Church, Fort Smith	\$9,958
Geyer Springs First Baptist Church, Little Rock	\$9,762
Immanuel Baptist Church, El Dorado	\$9,481
Baring Cross Baptist Church, North Little Rock	\$8,058
First Baptist Church, Sparkman	\$6,795

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Tournament results told

Johnny Jackson, pastor of Forest Highlands Church, Little Rock, and Gerald Taylor, pastor of Little Rock Lifeline Church, won the first and second flights, respectively, in the annual church staff golf tournament at Rebsamen Park Golf Course Aug. 19.

Mike Taylor, pastor of Concord Church, Van Buren, and Carl Overton, director of missions for Central Association, were runners-up in the first and second flights.

Hiroshima pastor dies

FUKUOKA, Japan (BP)—Buntaro Kimura, 79, who was pastor of Hiroshima Church when the atomic bomb destroyed Hiroshima, died Aug. 8.

A president of the Japan Baptist Convention, Kimura helped lead Japanese Baptists to grow from 16 churches with 500 members to a current total of 276 churches and missions with 28,000 members. The convention has missionaries in Indonesia and Brazil.

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*100th anniversary celebration
to be held October 6, 1985,*

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International

Christ, our guide to maturity

by William H. Elder III, Pulaski Heights Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: Philippians 3-4

Focal passage: Philippians 3:13 to 4:1,4-9

Central truth: Christ challenges us and provides guidance and resources as we strive toward Christian maturity.

The focus of this lesson is Christian maturity (3:15-16). The passage clearly teaches we are to seek to grow up into Christ, which means we are not only to model our lives after his, but we are to find ways to open our lives to his Spirit. Then his power becomes the source for our maturation.

In Chapter 4, verses 6-7, there is an interesting linkage between maturity and anxiety. Growing in faith is tied to our ability to dispel anxiety. We tell our children they must learn how to deal with their problems. We know if they are not successful in dealing with their fears, problems and anxieties, they can easily become immobilized and fail to embrace the full life that God has for them. And Paul makes the case here that in order to grow up into Christ all of us, children and adults, must discover creative and appropriate ways to dispose of our worries. But how?

First, we have the mandate, "Be careful for nothing" (v. 6a). The Greek literally reads "Be anxious about nothing." So, we begin to handle our anxieties when we realize anxiety is counter-productive to faith. We need to know that they are negative influence on us, and we must seek to be free of them.

Secondly, we have the wonderful promise we are not on our own in dealing with anxiety. We are told in 4:7 that the peace of God is the antidote for anxiety.

One final question remains. When we have anxiety we would like to be rid of, and when we know God's power is available, how can we bring God's power into contact with our anxiety? The answer is provided: "In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known to God" (4:6).

If we look our anxieties in the face and then lift them up to God in a spirit of celebration and release, his peace takes the place of our worries. We can know his power, and affirmation, and love for us are able to handle whatever comes. He knows how to create beautiful things in the midst of chaos. He knows how to bring victory out of defeat. Just look at the cross and the empty tomb, and then relax and celebrate life, free of the chains and weights of anxiety.

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Life and Work

The privilege of sharing

by Max W. Deaton, Otter Creek First Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: 2 Corinthians 8:1-12

Focal passage: 2 Corinthians 8:3-12

Central truth: God's first desire is to have the person.

I had the privilege of being reared in a Christian home where the principle of stewardship was taught. The impression was made early in life: "God wants you and when he has you, all else will follow."

The Apostle Paul, writing to the Corinthians, expressed this in verse 3, "they gave of their own accord."

If ever Southern Baptists fulfill Bold Mission Thrust goals, it will be because we "gave of our own accord." It is one thing for a group to vote a commitment but yet another to do the work. Southern Baptist churches are full of individuals who vote but fail to do! God doesn't care about the chanting of "yea." He desires the individual heart, mind, soul and labor (v. 5).

The Christians at Jerusalem were suffering persecution. Some lost their employment, businesses and families when they became Christians. It should take only reasonable intelligence to conclude that those who ministered should be ministered to. Hence we have the emergency love offering from the churches in Galatia, Achaia and Macedonia (I Cor. 16:1-3).

The haunting question, "Are we our brother's keeper?" must be answered with a resounding yes! But are we the keeper of the professional beggar or one of our own who has had a turn of bad luck and needs help? Where do we draw the line? One answer is found in God's words in II Thessalonians 3:10.

The "ministry of stewardship" must never be overlooked. When the sharing of oneself and of one's goods aids another, this fulfills the words of Jesus in Matthew 25:31-46. Yet another reason for sharing is that someone might share with my brother as I share with your brother and they both be redeemed.

But the greatest reason for sharing is found in John 3:16, "For God so loved." Would not it be a warm, welcome change if all believers were motivated by love? Close your eyes and meditate and let your mind stretch, as you think what could be done if agape love was the motivating factor. What if each of us gave ourselves first to the Lord and unto one another? Then each would know the joy of being like Christ (v. 9).

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Bible Book

Jeremiah's faithfulness

by Vester Wolber, Ouachita Baptist University

Basic passage: Jeremiah 37:1-39:18

Focal passage: Jeremiah 38

Central truth: The true minister of the gospel stands by his message even when that message endangers his life.

1. One can count on God to stand by the person who stands by God's Word. The most powerful revolutionary message ever sounded on earth is the gospel of Christ, and our Lord makes use of it as his primary instrument in bringing about needed changes in the social and political order.

God did not hesitate to keep Jeremiah in Jerusalem while the city and its Temple were being systematically dismantled, and he did not call his servant out of the melee when opposition arose within his ranks.

The safest place in all the world for any person is in the center of God's purpose, and the most sensible activity is to do what he commands. Successful living calls for both faith and courage; when faith is lacking, courage becomes haphazard; and when courage is missing, faith is made upen.

2. God usually raises up allies to rescue and preserve his endangered servants. In the case of Jeremiah, the Lord God planted concern in the heart of an Ethiopian servant in the king's house, who then set about to rescue the prophet.

It cannot be said, however, that God always rescues his people, nor can it be said that those who get hurt or killed are outside the will of God. Stephen was faithfully proclaiming the Christian message when they stoned him to death. Paul was right on course when Nero beheaded him, as was John the Baptist when Herod cut him down. So long as we have our Bibles to tell us about Jesus' crucifixion, there can be no absolute assurance God will not let us get hurt.

Christ's last recorded message is to comfort his people with the assurance he is coming. Our Lord is ever coming to his people, coming to bring peace, comfort and assurance. When life closes in upon us so we are feeling the pinch and stress, it's quite good to know our Lord is on his way; and the moment we make way for faith and courage, he arrives with all we need.

But the ultimate assurance in the passage is that Christ is coming for a second time to earth, coming on schedule—not ours—to dismantle all systems of evil and set in motion the eternal kingdom.

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Secular attention ups SBC hunger funds

by Leisa A. Hammett

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)—Recent secular media attention to famine in Africa has prompted Southern Baptist giving for world and domestic hunger, according to a Southern Baptist leader on hunger in America.

Nathan Porter, Southern Baptist Home Mission Board national consultant on domestic hunger, reported Baptists gave nearly \$500,000 to domestic hunger during the first six months of 1985. Last year gifts for hunger in the U.S. were approximately \$600,000, he noted.

Porter predicted if Southern Baptists continue the giving patterns established the first half of 1985, funds for domestic hunger may total one million.

Porter also attributes giving increases for domestic causes to emphases given church pastors and state Baptist conventions. Porter said several local churches and state conventions have increased the percentage of Hunger gifts allocated to domestic hunger.

Until recently, explained Paul Adkins, Home Mission Board associate mission ministries director, 100 percent of Southern Baptist gifts to "world hunger" were given to the SBC Foreign Mission Board which distributed the funds overseas since, until recent clarification, the term "world hunger" had been interpreted as applying to overseas and not the U.S.

Some state conventions are changing this, Adkins said, by distributing 80 percent of the designated hunger receipts to world hunger and 20 percent to domestic hunger.

Media exposure, said Adkins, has also highlighted additional "pockets" of need on the home front including various islands and sociologically identifiable groups such as the elderly.

Porter, said the "overwhelming media-generated interest in Africa has had a very positive connotation on hunger relief in the United States." Since January, a number of Hollywood and Christian celebrities, teamed with secular news media, have focused on the problem.

"It's extremely encouraging to have a strictly secular area in the entertainment field become genuinely concerned and do something about it," Porter said, referring to "USA for Africa;" a collection of secular musicians who teamed their talent to produce an album for which proceeds are designated to feed the starving. Ten percent of the album proceeds are allocated for hunger in America.

"I don't want to say that I regret (Southern Baptists) were not the leaders, but we ought to take notice. It's taken secular media to help us. But that doesn't mean (Southern Baptists) have not been doing anything," he added.

Media focus on the (African) problem has resulted in "an attitudinal change" among

Southern Baptists, said Porter.

According to a June 3 Newsweek magazine article on hunger, two million Africans have already died as a result of hunger. F. Bradford Morse, African relief coordinator for the UN, said if the problem persists an entire generation of Ethiopians, where the problem is greatest, may be lost.

Morse continued that three-fourths of the deaths resulting from hunger are African children under five. More Africans may die from this famine than in World War I, which would total ten million deaths—seven million of them children.

Until recently Porter said there has been a tendency to "refuse" knowledge of the wide spread hunger problem in America.

"(Now) Africa's hunger and human suffering have become a reality and it hasn't been as easy for us to deny it exists here," said Porter.

Last year, 35.2 million people in America (15 percent of U.S. population) were below poverty level, said Porter. The U.S. Bureau of Statistics defines poverty level at \$10,178 for a family of four. Porter observed that U.S. poverty figures are the highest since 1954.

Even though more monies indicate increased concern and awareness for the problem in America, Porter maintained Southern Baptists are far from burdened about human suffering in their country.

"It's my conviction," said Porter, "that relieving hunger and human suffering is not a priority of Southern Baptists. In confronting so much human need, we're getting to know the scriptures and that the gospel (of Jesus Christ) can't be limited to words. We have to touch human lives and minister to the whole person."

He added that a contemporary Christian theology he described as "success cultism" leans toward a "negative" approach to poor people.

"Sometimes it's very difficult," explained Porter, "for a person who loves the Bible to love poor people because he's gotten his culture mixed up in the Bible." When "success cultism" becomes fused with the Bible, Porter added, the poor are looked down on.

A prevalent attitude among Christians today, said Porter, is that all a person has to do to be materially successful is believe in Jesus Christ. "I believe that attitude is changing," Porter interjected, "we are accepting poor people and identifying with them."

"It's easy to give dollars to Africa," said Porter, "but, it takes a converted human being, who really knows Christ, to take someone into their home or champion the cause of welfare people and poor kids in this country."

Leisa Hammett is director of communications for the Historical Commission, SBC.

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