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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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ARKANSAS BAPTIST



Volume 92, Number 12

June 17, 1993

ESTHER 4
11 All the king's servants, and
the people of the king's provinces,
do know, that whosoever
whether man or woman shall
come unto the king into the inner
court, who is not called, there is
one law of his to put him to
death, except such to whom the
king shall hold out the golden
scepter, that he may live: but I
have not been called to come in
unto the king these thirty days.

12 And they told to Mordecai
Esther's words.

13 Then Mordecai commanded
to answer Esther, Think not
with thyself that thou shalt escape
in the king's house, more than all
the Jews.

14 For if thou altogether holdest
thy peace at this time, then shall
there enlargement and deliverance
arise to the Jews from another
place; but thou and thy father's
house shall be destroyed, and
who knoweth whether thou art
come to this kingdom for such
a time as this?

15 & Thus said she to him,
I will do as thou hast said, for
I have seen that I have found
favor in thy sight, and that thou
hast showed me this kindness, that
thou hast not forgotten my
prayer.

16 And she said, I will do as
thou hast said, for I have seen
that I have found favor in thy
sight, and that thou hast showed
me this kindness, that thou hast
not forgotten my prayer.

17 And she said, I will do as
thou hast said, for I have seen
that I have found favor in thy
sight, and that thou hast showed
me this kindness, that thou hast
not forgotten my prayer.

18 And she said, I will do as
thou hast said, for I have seen
that I have found favor in thy
sight, and that thou hast showed
me this kindness, that thou hast
not forgotten my prayer.

19 And she said, I will do as
thou hast said, for I have seen
that I have found favor in thy
sight, and that thou hast showed
me this kindness, that thou hast
not forgotten my prayer.

20 And she said, I will do as
thou hast said, for I have seen
that I have found favor in thy
sight, and that thou hast showed
me this kindness, that thou hast
not forgotten my prayer.

21 And she said, I will do as
thou hast said, for I have seen
that I have found favor in thy
sight, and that thou hast showed
me this kindness, that thou hast
not forgotten my prayer.

Health-care cost is still top worry
COVER STORY
A 'rumbling
in their
stomachs'

Dear Representative,
In accordance with the Bible's
command, I prayed for you today.
Because of my Christian convictions,
I am writing to let you know of my
concern

**"For such
a time
as this."
(Esther 4:14)**

**Observe Christian Citizenship Sunday
July 4, 1993**

BOLD MISSION THRUST

Simultaneous ministry campaign planned across SBC for 1994

By David Winfrey
SBC Home Mission Board

ATLANTA (BP)—Southern Baptists can begin praying and preparing now for the convention's first simultaneous ministry outreach in 1994, say organizers from the Home Mission Board, Brotherhood Commission and Woman's Missionary Union.

Like simultaneous revivals, churches are asked to sponsor a Christian ministry between June 19 and July 31, 1994, to share Christ with their community, said Gerry Hutchinson, associate director for the HMB church and community ministries department.

"All we want them to do is some ministry outreach in Jesus' name during the six-week simultaneous period, and it can be as simple or elaborate as the church chooses," said Hutchinson.

Titled Hope for Hurting Humanity, the event is part of 1994's Bold Mission Thrust emphasis on ministry.

Projects range from sponsoring a Backyard Bible Club for area children or teaching adult literacy courses to hosting a health fair or starting a food closet.

Churches could stage a one-time event, a series of ministries, or kick-off a project that will continue after the six-week period is over, Hutchinson said. "All we're saying to the church is, 'Find a hurt and heal it. Find a need and fill it in Jesus' name.'"

Planning guides, offering suggestions for starting ministries and assessing community needs, have already been mailed to churches in anticipation of the event, said Mike Day, associate to the president of the Brotherhood Commission.

Personal, spiritual preparation should precede church planning, said Trudy Johnson, a WMU missions involvement specialist.

"Individual church members need to give attention to their own personal spiritual growth that's going to lead them to the point of being prepared to reach out and minister to other people," said Johnson, a former home missionary in Detroit.

In addition to reaching others, the projects will inspire some churches to continue ministry involvement after the event, she said. "I think we have to help our churches have a vision for the difference they can

make in the world, beginning at their own doorstep."

The 1994 event will be the first time Southern Baptist churches are involved in simultaneous ministry projects, noted Hutchinson. "We have done simultaneous revivals with some regularity, but this is the first time ever to attempt a simultaneous ministry/witness effort."

Churches should determine this year whether they will participate, pray about their involvement and begin deciding what needs they want to meet, he said.



Cover Story



Christian Citizenship 5

Christian Citizenship Sunday is set for July 4, offering Southern Baptists a reminder of the importance of personal involvement in addressing key issues on the local, state and national levels. This week's editorial challenges Arkansas Baptists to "let your voice be heard" concerning pivotal legislation pending before the U.S. Congress.

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ARKANSAS BAPTIST

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Seven Arkansas churches among CP leaders

Seven Arkansas Baptist congregations are among the top 100 Southern Baptist churches in total Cooperative Program giving for 1992, according to a Southern Baptist Stewardship Commission study.

Immanuel Church in Little Rock was the top CP contributor among Arkansas Baptist churches, ranking 13th nationally for the third consecutive year. Immanuel Church channeled 19.9 percent of its 1992 receipts through the Cooperative Program for a total of \$411,485.

"For many years, Immanuel has led the state and been one of the top in the national convention in Cooperative Program giving," said Immanuel pastor Rex Horne.

Noting that the Cooperative Program "is part of who Immanuel is," Horne added, "We are proud of our historic commitment to the Cooperative Program and hope to maintain an exemplary level of involvement."

Horne said the congregation's appreciation of state, home and foreign missions has been nurtured over the years by a strong Woman's Missionary Union, Girls in Action and Royal Ambassador organizations. He said the church's sponsorship of two missionary homes for furloughing missionaries also has contributed to the congregation's missions awareness and involvement.

Crossett First Church, which ranked 88th nationally, gave 30 percent of its church receipts through the Cooperative Program last year, the highest percentage among all top 100 churches. The church's total CP contribution for the year was \$210,269.

Crossett pastor David Newberry noted that the congregation "has had a longstanding tradition of giving to the Cooperative Program and special mission offerings." He also credited WMU, GAs and RAs as key factors in helping the church maintain "a good strong history of being missions-minded."

Newberry pointed out, however, that "it's sad our church, which runs about 520 in Sunday School, is 88th in the convention," while many larger churches give much smaller percentages and total gifts through the Cooperative Program.

On the positive side, Newberry added, Crossett First "has historically been a missions giving church and I hope it always will be."

Other Arkansas Baptist churches among the top CP supporters for the year include: 22. Geyer Springs First Church, Little Rock; 31. Park Hill Church, North Little Rock; 62. Central Church, Jonesboro; 84. Grand Avenue Church, Fort Smith; and 96.



Arkansas churches among SBC's top 100 CP givers

Congregation	1992 CP gifts	CP%
13. Immanuel, Little Rock	\$411,485	19.9%
22. Geyer Springs First, Little Rock	341,145	17.4
31. Park Hill, North Little Rock	294,048	15.8
62. Central, Jonesboro	236,895	14.4
84. Grand Avenue, Fort Smith	213,419	15.1
88. Crossett First	210,269	30.0
96. Springdale First	200,000	6.8

Springdale First Church. (See accompanying graph for additional statistics.)

Among all congregations in the Southern Baptist Convention, First Baptist Church of Orlando, Fla., is the top CP giving church for the second straight year. The Orlando church gave 13.9 percent of its budget through the CP for a total of \$931,224.

Other top five contributors include: 2. First Baptist Church, Amarillo, Texas, \$664,227 (18.7 percent); 3. First Baptist Church, Midland, Texas, \$597,472 (16.8 percent); 4. Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, Tenn., \$576,102 (5.5 percent); and 5. First Baptist Church, Jackson, Miss., \$513,306 (9.3 percent).

James Powell, Stewardship Commission executive vice president in charge of CP promotion, said one area of concern is the 9.19 percent average among all Southern Baptist churches for CP giving. The percentage dropped for the sixth consecutive year, from 10.52 percent in 1987 to the current 9.19 percent. The 1991 average was 9.53 percent.

According to Powell, "Some of the factors contributing to this decline" in CP percentage are:

- "There is less brand loyalty throughout the nation today, including loyalty to the Cooperative Program plan of missions giving."
- "A state convention or SBC crisis or

controversy tends to confuse churches and affects their giving patterns, especially to missions."

- "There is more competition for the church's mission dollars today both inside and outside our denomination."

- "Many churches are opting to participate more in their own hands-on mission projects at home and overseas."

- "Churches have greater local budget demands and are keeping more of their money at home."

- "The national economy is struggling, the jobs rate continues to be high, workers are taking home less money or salaries with less buying power and members are giving less dollars to their churches."

To turn CP giving upward, Powell said there will have to be:

- "A new boost in the national economy."

- "A resurgence of sacrificial giving by individuals to their churches."

- "Making CP giving a priority in the church budget, a recommitment of all Southern Baptist pastors to the Cooperative Program as Southern Baptists' primary plan of mission support."

- "A stronger personalizing of CP giving for all church members and continued involvement of church members in CP ministries at home and overseas."

- "Increased opportunity for all Southern Baptists in denominational service."

YOU'LL BE GLAD TO KNOW



By DON MOORE
ABCS Executive Director

What is more valuable than gold? What is sweeter than honey? According to Psalm 19:10, the Word of God is the answer to both questions. For such a claim to be made, you would expect the one making the statement to have had extensive experience with God and His Word. David the Psalmist had such experience. He testified that God's Word would convert the soul, make wise the simple, rejoice the heart, enlighten the eyes and endure forever (Ps. 19:7-9). In verse 11, he said that "...in keeping of them there is great reward." David knew these things to be true both by revelation and by experience.

Personally, no exercise of effort is of deeper or more lasting value than that given to the absorption of Scripture, unless it would be prayer. Actually, they will accompany each other. No choice has to be made between the two.

Ideas, opinions and counsel from any other source have little to offer compared to God's Word.

Beyond the individual's response to God's Word, we need to ask, "What bearing does it have upon the church and its ministry to believe God's Word is more valuable than gold and sweeter than honey?"

If the church really believes it, then everything else will be secondary to the teaching, preaching and practice of God's Word. Unquestioned priority will be given to the integrity of the pulpit and the instruction of the teachers. Time, money and effort will be given to see that God's Word is communicated faithfully and effectively. Great efforts in training, planning and prayer will not be burdens to be endured but privileges to be enjoyed. This sounds like a lot of work. It is. But if it brings God's blessing and anchors God's people to His everlasting truth, it will be worth it.

I make no claim to David's trials, but I do agree with his assessment of the worth of God's Word. I want to encourage our pastors and churches to rededicate themselves to the strong teaching, preaching and living of God's Word.

WILLIAM H. SUTTON

The President's Corner

Deep emotions of reconciliation



Since childhood the story of Joseph has been one of my favorites. Over the years I have pictured Joseph as he sat on the throne of authority in the world's most powerful nation. He has been fixed in my mind as cool and confident. He would have had that kind of confidence and serenity that comes from having been severely tested and graded superior.

Until recently it had escaped my attention how completely Joseph lost that unshakable composure on three occasions in spite of his best efforts to control it. All three occasions were related to matters of the family. After years of separation caused by jealousy and conflict, the prospects of genuine family reconciliation overwhelmed him emotionally. "Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all his attendants and he cried out, 'Have everyone leave my presence!' So there was no one with Joseph when he made himself known to his brothers. And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard him, and the Pharaoh's household heard about it" (Gen. 45:1-2).

Many of us take pride in saying that we live in the real world where coolness and practicality reign supreme. We learn to insulate ourselves against the highs and lows of people who truly care. Seldom do we remember that we serve a God who is able to give us such breathtaking victories that we could scarcely witness them without showing great emotions.

It is my prayer that God will give us such a victory of reconciliation in the family of Southern Baptists. Separation from lifelong brothers and sisters of the same faith, the same spirit, the same blood and the same Lord is too grievous to contemplate. Uncontrolled rejoicing for avoiding it is better.

May God give us cool perception, good judgment and steadfast stability. But in the family, Lord, may we have that deep and abiding love that drives us to foolishness over the recovery of a brother.

Buddy Sutton, a Little Rock attorney and active member of Immanuel Church in Little Rock, is president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

Personal perspectives

"All we're saying to the church is, 'Find a hurt and heal it. Find a need and fill it Jesus' name.'"

—Gerry Hutchinson, HMB spokesman
"Hope for Hurting Humanity" simultaneous ministry emphasis

"Separation from lifelong brothers and sisters of the same faith, the same spirit, the same blood and the same Lord is too grievous to contemplate."

—Buddy Sutton, Arkansas Baptist State Convention president

"Arkansas Baptists...were catalysts and spiritual encouragers for the Guatemalan Baptists. We were involved in something God was doing there."

—Glendon Grober, Guatemala/Arkansas Partnership coordinator

"Every morning as I wake up and every night as I go to bed, I ask the Lord to give me the strength to keep my spiritual fervor alive so that I can lead people to Him...and make a difference."

—Shannon Boy, Miss Arkansas 1992-93

Let your voice be heard

Freedom is a cherished word in both American society and Southern Baptist life. Yet it also is a principle which often is taken for granted. Most individuals assume that the freedom we have enjoyed in the past and present will also be available in the future.

But there are no ultimate guarantees that our traditional understanding of freedom will always be preserved. Two pieces of legislation currently before the U.S. Congress are cases in point. Both prominently invoke the word freedom, while addressing diverse issues.

One is the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) which addresses the free exercise of religion. The other is the Freedom of Choice Act (FOCA) which would give women a statutory right to privacy in abortion decisions.

RFRA has been described by the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission as "a crucial remedy to a 1990 Supreme Court opinion which severely hindered freedom of religion." According to Brent Walker, associate general counsel for the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, RFRA is "maybe the most critical piece of free exercise legislation in our lifetime."

Both the CLC and the BJCPA are part of a diverse coalition of nearly 60 national organizations working for passage of RFRA. The act passed the House last month and is expected to be addressed in the Senate in the near future.

The legislation is designed to restore the standards that government formerly was required to meet before it could re-



STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR

By TRENNIS HENDERSON

strict the free exercise of religion. Those standards, which said government had to have a compelling reason—such as health or safety—before it could interfere with individuals' religious practices, were virtually abandoned by the U.S. Supreme Court in its 1990 Employment Division v. Smith ruling.

The court's current guidelines state that as long as a law is neutral and does not target a specific religious practice, government must only show that the law is rationally related to some legitimate government objective in order to take precedence over free exercise of religion. Since that 1990 ruling, more than 50 cases have relied on that decision to rule against free exercise.

Free exercise of religion is vital to the overall principle of religious liberty. According to Southern Baptist theologian Herschel Hobbs, "Baptists have always been in the forefront of the struggle for religious liberty, the mother of all true

freedom." As the U.S. Senate addresses this pivotal issue, Baptists once again have the opportunity to voice their historic commitment to the free exercise of religion.

Another crucial piece of legislation, the Freedom of Choice Act, has been described by Jim Smith, CLC director of government relations, as "the most radical pro-abortion legislation that Congress has ever considered." While supporters of FOCA claim it simply writes into law the Supreme Court's landmark *Roe v. Wade* ruling, opponents insist it goes much further by eliminating virtually all state regulations and restrictions of abortion.

The proposed legislation would bar states from restricting abortions "before fetal viability" or at any time "to protect the life or health of the woman." Amendments rejected in the House Judiciary Committee included provisions for informed consent and a waiting period and requirements that only licensed physicians could perform abortions and that third trimester abortions could be performed only to save the life of the mother.

Arkansas Baptists' commitment to religious liberty and opposition to abortion on demand is well documented. Now is the time to express those views to the U.S. Congress. Senators may be addressed in care of the U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510 concerning RFRA (S. 578) and FOCA (S. 25). Representatives may be addressed in care of the U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515 concerning the House version of FOCA (H.R. 25).

Partial to missions

I am partial to foreign missions. One reason that I prefer foreign missions is that when you add the total local expense, then divide that total expense by the number of baptisms, you probably will find that each baptism costs thousands of dollars. You can probably employ one or more national evangelists or church planters in a poor country for a year, for the cost of one baptism. This can be done through Cooperative Services International, which is a part of the Foreign Mission Board.

I would not suggest that anyone give less for local church expenses or to missions. But for those who want to give "over and above" what they are giving now, there are several good things that the Baptists are doing. One very good thing is Baptist disaster relief funds.

If you want to see God's kingdom grow, reach out and plant churches. One reason



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

that I want to help establish a church where people have never heard about Jesus is this: After I am dead and gone, that church will probably still be proclaiming the gospel.

Our churches here at home seem to have lost interest in evangelism and become more like fraternal organizations.

Ben Fried
Mena, AR

The doctrine of election

I have recently read the article on election by Herschel Hobbs in the May 6 issue of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*.

While this may be Hobbs' view and the view of many, if not most in the SBC today, it is not the historic Baptist view of election nor is it the biblical view.

In just a few short paragraphs Hobbs attempts to gut the doctrine of election and replace it with a cheap, man-centered, Arminian substitute.

Almost all of the SBC leadership, until the early part of this century, embraced the "Five Points of Calvinism (TULIP)." This is well documented in the book *By His Grace and For His Glory* by Tom Nettles and also *Southern Baptists and the Doctrine of Election* by Robert B. Selph, Dagg, Mell, Boyce, Manley, et al. embraced and defended these doctrines. The SBC was built on that foundation. Could it be that the problems we are experiencing in the SBC today are the result of abandoning these great doctrines?

Steven Hambrick
Des Arc, AR

New Start Project aids 142 congregations

By Millie Gill
Arkansas Baptist

Pastors and staff members from 142 Arkansas Baptist churches were visited May 17-20 in an intensive effort to assist churches to begin a Discipleship Training ministry. The personal visits were made by the staff of the Discipleship Training department of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, three consultants from the Baptist Sunday School Board and 14 other Arkansians who were enlisted and trained for the Discipleship Training New Start Project.

Bob Holley, director of the ABSC Discipleship Training department described the effort as possibly the first state convention project resulting in personal visits in so many churches in one week. The effort led to 93 church leaders indicating their intention to begin Discipleship Training.

"Thirty-nine pastors indicated their churches were already offering Discipleship Training," Holley noted. "This verifies what we have long suspected—that many churches not reporting Discipleship Training do in fact provide some types of training throughout the year. Many of these are short-term training approaches such as MasterLife, new member training or LIFE courses.

"In addition, we learned the importance of consultants and the importance of personal consultations," Holley continued. "We could relate specifically to the needs and concerns of the people we visited and the churches they serve."

Dennis Coop, minister of education at Park Hill Church, North Little Rock, and a consultant, strongly endorsed the consultation approach. "Individual consultations hold great promise for leading our

churches to more effectively do the work of the church and to more effectively use the materials produced by our denomination for ministry," Coop said. "The Discipleship Training New Start Project proved beyond doubt the value of this approach."

Randy Hogan, pastor of First Church in Waldron, who had been looking for a key to begin growth both numerically and spiritually within the church found it when visited. "I am so excited about what I was shown and how effective it could be used to begin this growth," Hogan stated.

"We plan to supplement our dated materials with LIFE courses and study courses which will aid us in discipling and training people, as well as strengthening our homes. As we take these steps I believe our church will get off the plateau mark and begin to grow in every way," Hogan concluded.

Enthusiastic response

Consultant Elvis Smith, pastor of Cocklebur Church, found pastors were eager to find out about the resources available to them. "The 12 pastors I visited in four days and 800 miles were very receptive to either beginning new work or strengthening their current program," he said. "In fact, I believe seven to eight of these will begin new Discipleship Training programs within the next six months."

"I am interested in implementing equipping center modules in our Sunday evening program as quickly as possible," declared Reg Fowler, pastor of Elaine Church. "I also plan to look at dated materials as well as MasterLife and Experiencing God."

John Veazey, pastor of Good Stewardship Church plans to launch a full Discipleship Training program in 1994. This

Southern Baptist black congregation, located in North Little Rock, is gearing up to restructure its educational program. "Even though currently we are using some Discipleship Training materials in our Wednesday evening workshop our plans are to enhance what we are doing with a full program in 1994," Veazey noted.

Consultant Curtis Honts, pastor of Ridgecrest Church in Benton, found the consultations provided opportunities to the smaller churches which sometimes feel left out of statewide emphases. "Not only were we able to create an awareness of the vast array of materials available to churches, but we were able to minister to them in a special way through our personal visits," Honts said.

"Without question, I believe the one-on-one consultation is the most productive way to reach our pastors and definitely the direction of the future in impacting our churches," emphasized consultant Randy Maxwell, pastor of South Highland Church in Little Rock.

"Several of the men I visited were very open to the concept that Discipleship Training is not restricted to Sunday night at the church building," continued Maxwell. "Their creativity and sensitivity to their church field will help them develop a ministry to best meet their needs."

"Our effort at starting new Discipleship Training work did not end with this project," Holley emphasized. "We will conduct pastor-director workshops in 11 areas beginning Oct. 1 to provide additional assistance to these and other churches in preparation for the next year. Churches involved in the project will receive continued follow-up calls and letters of encouragement from their visiting consultant."

Christian sexuality workshop slated for June 28-29

"Who is teaching our children about sex?" is a concern voiced in many Southern Baptist churches. The Arkansas Baptist State Convention Discipleship Training department is sponsoring a Christian Sexuality Education Workshop so that parents and church leaders will be equipped to answer that question. The workshop will be held June 28-29 at Parkway Place Church in Little Rock.

The workshop will feature the new "Christian Sex Education" series published by the Baptist Sunday School Board. The series provides parents and church leaders age appropriate material to implement Christian sex education in the home and church.

Leaders for the conference will be John Howell and Betty Hassler. Howell, professor of Christian ethics at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo., will present the biblical and theological bases for healthy Christian sexuality. Hassler, discipleship and family life education consultant for Union Baptist Association in Houston, Texas, will lead the training sessions. Hassler wrote the interactive learning activities for Covenant Marriage and other LIFE courses, and designed the national launch workshop of the Christian Sex Education series.

"One of the concerns this material deals with is that we need to equip children and youth to be healthy Christian sexual per-

sons," explained Gerald Jackson, associate in the ABSC Discipleship Training department. He said when young people can be instructed properly in the home and church, they can understand that sex is a gift from God to be used to fulfill a Christian marriage.

"The target audience for the workshop is twofold," Jackson said. "First, the workshop is to equip church leaders to train parents. Secondly, it is also appropriate for parents."

For more information or to register, contact Jackson at the ABSC Discipleship Training department, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203; phone 376-4791, ext. 5160.

Partnership produces significant results

By **Trennis Henderson**
 Editor, Arkansas Baptist

"Evangelism of the lost people of Guatemala and the multiplication of self-reproducing Baptist churches capable of providing Christian growth opportunities" is the overarching purpose statement for Southern Baptist missionaries serving in Guatemala.

Arkansas Baptists have played a pivotal role in that effort in recent years through the Guatemala/Arkansas Partnership, a joint ministry of Guatemalan Baptists and missionaries, the Arkansas Baptist State Convention and the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

The partnership, originally scheduled for 1990-92, was extended through May of this year due to delays in some of the ministry projects. Partnership coordinator Glendon Grober, director of the ABSC Brotherhood department, said that while the partnership officially concluded May 31, a few previously scheduled trips will take place this summer.

During the three and a half year effort, a total of 1,595 Arkansas Baptist volunteers from 560 churches and 41 associations traveled to the Central American nation to participate in church growth efforts, construction projects, evangelistic crusades, health care projects and other ministry activities.

According to missionary Don Doyle, who served as the partnership coordinator for Southern Baptist missionaries in

Guatemala, the baptism rate of the Convention of Baptist Churches of Guatemala more than tripled during the partnership. He added that volunteers participated in 38 construction projects, most of which were facilities for new congregations.

Other projects ranged from distributing more than 100,000 copies of the Gospel of John to teaching craft and cooking classes.

"Evangelism has been the ultimate goal of everything done through the Guatemala/Arkansas Partnership," Doyle emphasized. "Human needs ministries have been done not just for the purpose of meeting needs, but also to create evangelistic opportunities."

Affirming "the overall effect of the partnership on the work in Guatemala," Doyle added, "The churches have been inspired to extend their vision beyond the walls of their local congregation. The convention has a new vision for outreach and the mission had been blessed with the opportunity to participate in what may be the fastest church growth opportunity in Latin America."

Grober agreed that "the most significant thing that happened" during the partnership "is what happened in the hearts and minds of the national Guatemalan Baptist leadership."

Noting that "they really caught a vision of what God can do in Guatemala," he said the Guatemalan Baptist leaders "became involved in it and their people became involved in it."



Arkansas Baptist involvement:

- 1,595 Arkansas Baptist volunteers
- 560 Arkansas Baptist churches
- 41 Arkansas Baptist associations

Impact on Guatemala:

- 40 churches and missions started
- Baptisms increased 300 percent
- 96 evangelistic crusades held
- 53 health care projects fulfilled
- National Baptist camp established

Pointing out that "Arkansas Baptists could not have done it alone," Grober said, "We were catalysts and spiritual encouragers for the Guatemalan Baptists. We were involved in something God was doing there."

"Guatemala became a tremendous opportunity for partnership while we were there," he remarked. Referencing the political coup that took place in Guatemala on June 1, the day after the partnership officially ended, Grober acknowledged that Guatemala "may never be that open again."

He added, however, that he believes Baptist work will continue to move forward there, noting that "we've built some real strong bases."

Reflecting on the overall partnership, Grober concluded, "I'm not sure I would have done anything differently if I had it to do over again. We prayed about the goals and they were God's goals, not ours."

Doyle said he believes participation in the partnership "has served to inspire the churches of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention to become more involved in missions at every level."



Arkansas State Police Sgt. Van Dyer recently visited the Arkansas Woman's Missionary Union office to collect bears that state police will give to children they encounter in crisis situations. Stephen Gartrell, a Mission Friend from Baring Cross Church in North Little Rock, assisted Sandy Wisdom Martin, state Mission Friends/Girls in Action director, in presenting the 1,012 bears sent by Mission Friends, Royal Ambassadors and GAs from 62 Arkansas churches.

Doctrines affirm related ministry priorities

By Herschel H. Hobbs

Special to the Arkansas Baptist



The doctrines of evangelism and missions, education and stewardship belong together more than ham and eggs. No one of these can properly fulfill its mission apart from the others. Missions and evangelism

must have missionaries and evangelists. They cannot be properly trained without a system of education. It is through proper stewardship that the called are sent and supported (Rom. 10:13-15).

Evangelism and Missions

"Evangelism and Missions" might well read "evangelism/missions." For they are much the same, the only difference is one of geography. Missionaries are "sent ones" to bear the good news.

Writing to the Christians in Rome, Paul said, "I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians" (Rom. 1:14). "Barbarians" were people who did not speak Greek. So with this dual figure Paul designated the entire human race. He was not in debt to them for what they had done for him. For the most part they had given him a rough time. His sense of debtorship lay in the fact that he had been saved by hearing and responding to the gospel. And he was under obligation to share it with the entire human race. His sense of debtorship should be ours.

Missions/evangelism is not only the hope of the world; it is also the lifeblood of our churches. The church in Jerusalem refused to become involved in Gentile missions. Its influence gradually faded. The center of the world outreach shifted to the church in Antioch which sent out Barnabas and Saul (Paul). It caught the vision of world missions. God is not obligated to bless any other kind.

In 1814 the Baptists of the United States divided almost equally between missionary/evangelistic and anti-missionary/evangelistic groups. The latter now consists of comparatively few churches. The former has become the largest Christian group in the nation. Most active among these is the Southern Baptist Convention. It is the largest non-Catholic Christian group in the nation.

Our church polity demands that either we evangelize or die. Unlike some de-

nominations, we neither practice infant baptism nor rely upon catechism classes to add to our membership. We rely solely upon winning the lost and baptizing them into our church fellowship. This is not the highest of motives, but it is a very practical one.

According to statistics, much of Southern Baptist growth comes through new, small churches. By comparison our large churches seem small in that regard. Recently I read about the number of baptisms of a large church in 1992. The figure seemed respectable enough until percentage figures were given. The ratio was 31.1 to 1. It required 31.1 members working for a year to lead one lost soul to Christ. The fact more likely is that it took one person to do it, while 30.1 did nothing about evangelism. If we had the same score on many other of our doctrines as we had on evangelism, we would be rightly called a bunch of heretics. Percentage-wise the foreign missions record has us beat by miles!

Education

In Southern Baptist life we need to distinguish between religious education and Christian education. The former is a program of education within the local church. The latter denotes a program of education through educational institutions of higher learning outside the local church.

Southern Baptists are committed to the cause of Christian education. Except in the newest "pioneer" areas, most state conventions have one or more colleges and/or universities. The Southern Baptist Convention itself owns and operates six theological seminaries. Christian education is a vital part of its foreign missions work. The Education Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention is dedicated to improving and promoting ever higher standards in the field.

There are certain guiding principles in Christian education. No state convention should have more schools than it can support. The schools should offer an education equal to that offered by other institutions of learning—with the Christian plus. They should offer education designed to prepare both vocational and laypersons for leadership in Baptist churches and in the denomination. There should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility.

Stewardship

In the Bible a steward was someone, usually a slave, who was responsible for something which belonged to another (Gen. 15:2; 43:19; 44:4; Matt. 20:8). As a

slave he owned nothing but was responsible for everything. Paul expressed it thus: "What hast thou that thou didst not receive?" (1 Cor. 4:7). This includes all that we are, have and experience.

It is evident that, while stewardship involves more than material possessions, it certainly does involve them. In fact God never really gets you until He gets yours. Paul explains the generosity of the Macedonia Christians thus: They "first gave their own selves to the Lord" (1 Cor. 8:5).

The biblical minimum in stewardship is the tithe. In addition the Old Testament adds "and offerings." Furthermore, the Old Testament taught three tithes (Lev. 27:30-33; Num. 29:39; Deut. 12:5-6). The first tithe supported the Levites and the tabernacle. The second tithe provided food to be eaten before the Lord. The third tithe, given every three years, was for charity. So one-tenth is not the goal but the starting point. As the kickoff begins a football game, so does the tithe begin biblical stewardship in monetary giving. Until you give the tithe you are not in the game of stewardship. Someone said that one-tenth tests your obedience. Nineteen-tenths proves your love. It is not how much money you have before you give. It is how much you have left after you have given that counts. Legalism asks, "How much must I give?" Love asks, "How much may I give?"

Some question whether the law of the tithe is binding upon Christians, since we are not under the Mosaic law but under grace. However, the tithe antedated the Mosaic law by several centuries (Gen. 14:18-20; 28:22). Some argue that Jesus never taught the tithe. True, He never said, "Thou shalt tithe." But in Matthew 23:23 He commended it. Any why hammer on something Jews were already doing to the point of being ridiculous? An old rabbi boasted that his donkey refused to eat grain that had not been tithed. Where Jesus dealt with specific laws He never lowered but raised their requirements. We may assume that had He taught the tithe He would have done the same.

Some point out that Paul made no mention of the tithe in 1 Corinthians 16:2 to II Corinthians 8-9. He was not dealing with normal church financing. He was taking an over-and-above offering as relief money for suffering saints in Jerusalem.

God has given us the ideal plan for financing His work. But beyond tithes and offerings we are to use that which we spend on ourselves in such fashion as to glorify God. And that is biblical stewardship indeed.

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Commitment to Christ

Miss Arkansas enthusiastically shares Christian testimony

By Trennis Henderson

Editor, Arkansas Baptist

Shannon Boy, the reigning Miss Arkansas, insists she is not the typical "pageant girl."

Growing up as a self-described tomboy, she was an all-conference high school basketball player, an all-state flutist and a straight-A student. She didn't enter her first pageant until she was a sophomore in college.

After she crowns a new Miss Arkansas later this month in Hot Springs, her next project is to spend a month in China doing taekwondo demonstrations on behalf of the American Taekwondo Association. Her long-term career goal is to serve in the U.S. Congress.

Among the unique aspects Shannon has brought to her role as Miss Arkansas is her personal Christian commitment. "I have dedicated my year to the youth of Arkansas, being a positive Christian role model," she explained. "It has given me the opportunity to impact all those I come into contact with to the glory of God."

Shannon's Christian pilgrimage began as a youngster at First Church, Alma, where she made a profession of faith in Jesus Christ during the summer between her fifth and sixth grade school years. During high school "there was a fire lit under me and I sensed God was calling me to serve," she added. "I really became alive for Christ."

During her college years at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville, she became an active member of Baptist Student Union and of First Church, Fayetteville. Among her BSU activities was serving as a freshmen ministry team leader to help disciple incoming students.

'Fervent in spirit'

Relying on the challenge in Romans 12:11 to be "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord," Shannon emphasized that Christians "live an exciting life we should be proud of and should share with others."

Comparing the Christian life to a soft drink poured into a glass, Miss Arkansas added, "We go to church on Sundays and we get all fired up about God in our lives but as the days go by, the fizz dies down. If we are constantly clinging to the Word of God, we can constantly keep that spiritual fervor....The fizz will always remain constant."

Shannon set her sights on becoming Miss Arkansas only after she realized that it



"We each have our own mission field. We're either leading people to God or away from God."

— Shannon Boy
Miss Arkansas 1992-93

would provide the opportunity to make a positive impact on the lives of young people.

Although she failed to win several of her earlier pageants, including third and fourth place finishes in previous Miss Arkansas pageants, "I knew what my ultimate goal was so I stayed committed," she pointed out.

Her experiences provide her the opportunity to tell young people that "failure is nothing but a detour to success. You don't always come out No. 1. Success is in doing your personal best, being proud of who you are on the inside."

Speaking to more than 150,000 students in 250 schools across the state during the past year, Shannon shares a four-point presentation which emphasizes: Be motivated, be positive, believe in yourself and don't use drugs.

Concerning her commitment to provide "a positive Christian example," Shannon said that it accomplished through her responses to questions posed by students.

"A very typical question is, 'Have you ever taken a drink?'" she noted. Her response is, "Because of my Christian background, I have chosen not to do so."

She responds to questions about premarital sex with the explanation, "As a Christian, I have higher values than that."

How do pageant officials and school administrators respond to her straightforward Christian witness? "I'm very careful about how I bring it in," she said. "I make sure it's something the students brought up. They are very accepting of that."

In addition to her school programs, Shannon has had the opportunity to speak in several churches throughout the state. During those occasions, "I try to really excite people about being Christians," she said. Typical questions that she poses include: "Where is God in your life today?" and "Are you excited about Jesus Christ in your life?"

'Dream big in life'

"You're never too young or too old to dream big in life," she declared, adding that Christians should "set goals, be excited and have God as your No. 1 goal in life."

As her time as Miss Arkansas draws to a close, Shannon said the greatest highlights and memories center on the children and youth she has met during the past year. She currently receives up to 2,000 letters a week from friends and fans and even gives out her home phone number to young people who need an extra word of encouragement or understanding.

"These are kids whose names and faces I will never forget. I will always keep them in my heart," she reflected—like the handicapped youngster who gave her a hug and a kiss and confided, "I love you and I want to be like you."

Why does Miss Arkansas risk getting so personally involved? For Shannon, the answer is clear.

"We each have a responsibility and an obligation as Christians to serve the people who are all around us," she said. "We each have our own mission field. We're either leading people to God or away from God."

"If it were not for the grace of God, I would not be in this position," Miss Arkansas candidly reflected. "Every morning as I wake up and every night as I go to bed, I ask the Lord to give me the strength to keep my spiritual fervor alive so that I can lead people to Him...and make a difference."

Church Growth Plan helps encourage sustained growth

By Colleen Backus

Arkansas Baptist



"Traditionally, increases in Sunday school enrollment or attendance, baptisms or worship attendance have been the bases of measuring church growth," said L.B. Jordan, director of

the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Church Leadership Support department. "The Southern Baptist Church Growth Plan takes a position that healthy growth is balanced and takes in far more than those areas."

Jordan explained that there are several identifiable church growth areas including baptisms, resident church membership, worship attendance, program enrollment (Sunday School, Discipleship Training, Woman's Missionary Union and Brotherhood), leadership development, expanded organization, total receipts and mission support.

The Church Growth Plan works toward "growth that is going to stay," Jordan explained. "We need to work in a way that people who come in the front door will not go out the back door. What has happened in recent years is that our back door has been as open as the front."

Implementing the growth plan in Arkansas is being done in three phases, Jordan explained. First, churches were enlisted to be part of a pilot program in Arkansas. Orientation sessions were held to lead pastors through the manual. Implementation is up to the pastor.

Second, associational growth conferences are being planned for late 1993 and 1994, utilizing the Southern Baptist Church Growth Plan. One such meeting that Jordan is excited about is in Mississippi County Association. The association will hold a lay renewal weekend, and the church growth emphases will be held at the end. This pilot project is being jointly sponsored by the Home Mission Board, Arkansas church growth leadership, the association and the Baptist Sunday School Board.

The third phase will have a trained consultant assigned to any church not already using the plan. This part of the plan has been piloted by Jordan, who currently is the consultant for four churches, and is about to take on another four. This part of the plan will be kicked off in 1994.

"The thing that thrills me about the growth plan is that once the pastor, staff and lay leaders learn how to use the planning materials and evaluation instruments, they can use the same materials over again, and can become experts at planning healthy balanced growth," Jordan said.

Kevin Stewart, pastor of Horseshoe Bend Church, is excited about his church's implementation of the program. "It has made the people aware of the mission of our church," he commented. "We have more people involved in outreach — we have tripled the number of people now willing to participate in visitation."

Stewart said attendance has increased about 10 percent in all areas, and that the plan has been a very personal help for him.

"I never viewed myself as an administrator," Stewart explained. "The plan is a good one for young ministers because it takes growth ideas from their very conception through implementation in step-by-step fashion."

The challenge, Stewart commented, is for a church to continue to implement the plan. "You have to remember it is more than forming a goal — there are job tasks that need to be done."

Jess Taylor, pastor of Old Austin Church, is so enthusiastic about the plan that he has been trained to teach the plan, and has led associational conferences.

"Basically, our church was a non-planning church — a reacting church — and the plan was very positive for us," he related. "It gave us a real direction through our entire church family."

And the results have also shown positive growth: Sunday School enrollment has increased from 170 to 218 and Discipleship Training is up 20 percent. The church also started two mission activities, Mission Friends and Brotherhood, that had not been in place before.

"We are trying to incorporate each area of the church into the growth process," Taylor explained. The Woman's Missionary Union and the newly-formed Brotherhood are very involved in the process, which Taylor considers a very positive aspect of the plan.

"Any church not using the plan should look at it," Taylor noted, "I think it is super important."

"The beauty of the program is the a pastor can look at the book and plug his church in," he added.

For more information about the Church Growth Plan, contact L.B. Jordan at P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203; phone 376-4791, ext. 5148.

Workshop affirms 'authentic worship'

One of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention priorities for 1993 is: "Authentic worship that magnifies and honors God." In pursuit of that goal the ABCS Church Music and Church Leadership Support departments have combined to bring an Authentic Worship Workshop to Arkansas.

The workshop will be held Aug. 19 from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Park Hill Church in North Little Rock. The workshop is designed to provide fresh, insightful ideas about worship, as well as share imaginative, creative ways to blend traditional and contemporary music into worship.

Worship planning is just now coming to the forefront of Southern Baptist life, according to L.B. Jordan, director of the ABCS Church Leadership Support department. "Because of our more traditional background, we have been very slow to utilize any other form of preaching other than the monologue," he said. "We also have been extremely slow to use audiovisual presentations or innovative music."

"But where the pastor or minister of music bring too much in too fast, it creates conflict," Jordan added. "Part of the purpose of the workshop is to show how traditional and innovative methods can be blended for a meaningful worship experience."

Glen Ennes, associate in the ABCS Church Music department, agreed. "Our goal is to make the worship experience richer and more meaningful," he said. "We are targeting pastors, minister of music and any other leaders who deal with worship."

Workshop leaders include Allen Walworth, who is pastor of First Church, Huntsville, Ga., and was worship leader at Church Music Week at Ridgecrest last year. Also leading the worship workshop will be Terry York, who is in the field service section of the Baptist Sunday School Board's Church Music Ministries department. York served as hymnal project coordinator for the 1991 Baptist Hymnal.

For more information about the workshop, contact the ABCS Church Music department, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203; phone 376-4791, ext. 5121.

Friendship International holds food fair

By Millie Gill
Arkansas Baptist

"The love shared between the American people and our internationals is what Friendship International is all about," shared Deena Chacko as the organization held its annual food fair in the fellowship hall of First Church, Little Rock.

Friendship International is an organization, launched in 1976 and sponsored by nine Baptist churches and Pulaski Association, which meets weekly September through May to assist people from foreign countries who are living in the central Arkansas area.

Marti Lively, a member of First Church of Little Rock, and Chacko serve as co-directors. The weekly meetings feature 10 classes of beginning and advanced English as a second language, Bible study, citizenship classes and arts and crafts sessions. These are taught by volunteers from both Baptist churches and other denominations.

Chacko, a nurse in the intensive care unit of University Hospital who came to Little Rock from India, has been a member

of Friendship International for 10 years. She credited the organization for its efforts not only in preparing internationals to speak English but also for bringing together people from all countries.

"Through this organization, we become friends to others and can respond to their needs in small ways," she said. "It might just be a phone call that assists another international in locating a doctor for their sick children, but we have come to know there is always someone available to meet whatever need we have."

Strong Christian Heritage

"I am so thankful an evangelist came to our native India, sharing the true God with our ancestors in A.D. 52 and we have had the Christian faith in our families for that many years. Our Christian heritage has taught us we must reach out to all people with love," Chacko added.

According to Lively, "Though we are not directly evangelistic our primary purpose is to meet the needs of the internationals and show them the love of Christ through this. As a result of our efforts

we have had several churches begin international Sunday School classes and Bible studies and we know of two professions of faith in Christ that have been made this year."

"Agape love of Christ is shared weekly by workers with our international friends," noted Sherric Bosworth, a member of First Church of Cabot. She has brought either a van or bus from Cabot for 14 years, bringing an average of 25 internationals to Little Rock. In addition, the mother of six serves as a nursery worker each Thursday for the meetings.

"Jesus Loves the Little Children" has always been my favorite song," Bosworth said. "This is so evident when you have the privilege of working each week with at least 30 beautiful international children."

The food fair is given annually by the internationals in appreciation for the ministry of the American workers. In addition to tables of aromatic, spicy foods, the event included a program featuring music, a recitation and the presentation of certificates to those completing work in their English classes.

Eleven Arkansans earn Southwestern degrees



LYOYD DUCK
Doctor of Ministry
Fayetteville



PHILLIP EUBANKS
Master of Arts
in Counseling
Little Rock



BRADLEY FRANKLIN
Master of Arts
in Counseling
Little Rock



JIMMY HOLLAND
Master of Divinity
in Biblical Languages
Quitman



WADE HOOD
Master of Divinity
in Biblical Languages
Batesville



TIMOTHY KING
Master of Divinity
Little Rock



RANDY MILLER
Master of Divinity
in Biblical Languages
Lowell



ANGELA NASH
Master of Arts in
Religious Education
Rogers



STEPHEN ROGERS
Master of Divinity
Waldron



KARI UTLEY
Master of Divinity
Alexander



RICHARD WATSON
Master of Divinity
in Biblical Languages
Monticello

Arkansas All Over

MILLIE GILL

Staff changes

Gary McCormick will begin serving June 21 as pastor of First Church in McCrory. He will come there from Gulfport, Miss., where he has been serving as pastor of Bayou View Church. McCormick and his wife, Gwen, have two daughters, Amy and Amber.

Matt Pryor has joined the staff of First Church in Judsonia as summer youth intern. He is a student at Ouachita Baptist University and a former member of First Church in Searcy.

Jack Bedford has accepted the call to serve as pastor of Pleasant Hill Church in Rogers. Bedford, who has been pastor of several churches in Washington-Madison Association, previously was minister to singles at University Church in Fayetteville. In addition, he has been associational vice moderator.

Gene Hodges has resigned as pastor of Liberty Church of Lincoln to pursue a pastoral degree at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Andrew Hall of Fayetteville has been called to serve as interim pastor of Liberty Church of Lincoln. Hall, who was pastor of First Church of Fayetteville from 1953 until 1970, has served on the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board and was chairman of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission.

Dean Whitener is serving as pastor of Immanuel Church in Newport. Whitener previously was at Acorn Church, Mena, from 1989-91. In addition, he has been pastor of congregations in Oregon and California.

J. Marty Brown joined the staff of University Church in Fayetteville June 13 as pastor of ministries. A graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Brown resigned June 6 as pastor of Gethsemane Church in North Little Rock. He also has been pastor of Texas churches and First Church of Maumelle.

Jimmy Millikin, chairman of the department of New Testament at Mid-America Seminary in Memphis, is serving as interim pastor of Walnut Street Church in

Jonesboro. Millikin recently resigned as president of Williams Baptist College, following two years of service.

Greg Hammond resigned June 6 as minister of youth and activities at First Church of Camden. He and his wife, Sharon, and their children, Micah, Luke and Rachel, have moved to Florence, Ala., where he will join the staff of Woodmont Church.

Paul Northcutt is serving as full-time pastor of Galilee Church, El Dorado. He previously served as interim pastor.

David Ward has resigned as pastor of Chidester Church to continue his studies at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Matt Dunnivant is serving as pastor of Chidester Church. He is a student at Ouachita Baptist University.

Bill Ramsey will serve as summer youth minister for Midway Church. A native of Bryant, he was licensed to the gospel ministry March 20 by Temple Church in Little Rock. Ramsey is a junior at Ouachita Baptist University.

Osceola First moves into new sanctuary

The congregation of First Church in Osceola met in its new fan-shaped sanctuary for the first time May 16. The sanctuary, with a seating capacity of 450, is a part of a 25,000-square-foot church facility that was built at a new location at 2900 West Keiser Street and Country Club Road in Osceola.

Other features of this new plant, erected at a cost of more than \$1.5 million, include stained glass windows and an Aeolian Skinner pipe organ, moved there from the church's former sanctuary.

Members of the building committee which have served for the past four years through planning and construction are chairman Harry Wooten, Troy Floyd Sr., Freddie Hendrix Jr., Ed Allred, Melba Shoemaker, Betty Gwaltney, Mike Gibson, Chris Tompkins, Ed Harshman and Wish Fletcher.

Organized in 1805, the church's new facility is its third permanent building in its 153-year history. The former facility was built in 1915.

Pastor Mark Taylor has planned a Summer Celebration for the new facility that



Members of Osceola First Church gathered May 16 for the first worship service in their new sanctuary which is part of a \$1.5 million building project.

features Tuesday evening rather than Wednesday evening services. "This will permit the people of our community to worship in our new facility," Taylor explained.

Summer speakers and musicians include Robert Pitman, Steve Wilkes, Mikael Carrier, Don Dunnivant and Jimmy

Millikin, all of Memphis; Bob Wilson of Mayfield, Ky.; Jeff Noblit of Muscle Shoals, Ala.; Joe Grider of Osceola; Rex Holt and John Dresbach of Jonesboro; Ray Crews of Carthage, Mo.; Earle Humble and Ron Sanders of Walnut Ridge; Ron Plymel of McComb, Miss.; and Wes George of Dyess.

Greg Meharg joined the staff of Mountain Springs Church May 30 as minister of youth and activities. A resident of Judsonia, he attended Williams Baptist College. Meharg and his wife, Shannon, have a son, Darren.

David Bond joined the staff of Dover Church June 6 as minister of music and youth. A native of Ashdown, he is a senior at Ouachita Baptist University. His wife, Renee, is a 1993 graduate of Ouachita Baptist University.

Obituary

Joseph Wayne "Jody" Moore of Walnut Ridge was killed Saturday evening, June 5, when his car was struck by a train one mile north of Walnut Ridge. The 16-year-old youth was the son of Kenneth and Janice Moore. His father is pastor of First Church of Walnut Ridge.

Moore had just completed his sophomore year at Walnut Ridge High School where he was a member of the band, mixed chorus, swing ensemble, boys' quartet, handbell choir and drama team. He was a part-time employee at Hays Supermarket.

Other survivors include a brother, Chris Moore, and a sister, Kellie Moore, both of Walnut Ridge; his paternal grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. E.W. Moore of West Point, Miss.; and his maternal grandmother, Marie Martin of Houston, Miss.

People

Jessica Sallis, pianist at Oak Cliff Church in Fort Smith and a senior at Fort Smith's Southside High School, recently took top honors in the sixth annual solo piano competition at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. Sallis is the daughter of Tom and Bobbie Sallis of Fort Smith.

A. Scott Patton, a native of Benton, was among nine individuals who received graduate awards during recent commencement exercises at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. A master of divinity graduate, he was presented with two awards: the Baker Book House Award in Theology which is based upon the recommendation of the theology faculty department and high academic achievement and the Baptist Book Store Preaching Award which is presented annually to a member of the graduating class who has excelled in the study and practice of preaching. Patton is the son of Don Patton of Lonsdale and Joan Collins of Benton.



Second Church of Clarksville burned a \$60,000 note May 16 in recognition of payment on a new auditorium with a seating capacity of 300. Former pastor Marvin James was the speaker for the morning worship service that was followed by a potluck luncheon. Participating in the note burning were (left to right) Raymond Holt; James; Sharon Colley; Ron Ashley; Jimmie Stalcup, church treasurer; Virgil Knight, building committee chairman; Perry Johnson; Vester Felkins, chairman of deacons; pastor Joe Craft; Hylda Blackard; and Oran Soard Jr.

R. Dale Wicker Jr. recently observed his fifth anniversary of service as pastor of First Church in Conway. He and his wife, Betty Anne, were presented with an expense paid vacation.

Curtis Shatley completed 10 years of service June 6 as minister of music for Walnut Street Church in Jonesboro. He and his wife, Dianna, were honored with a Sunday evening reception.

Rich Browning has completed 15 years of service as business manager for First Church in Little Rock. He and his wife, Patty, were honored with a reception on Sunday evening, June 6.

Church news

Lake City First Church will host a Sunday School/church growth rally Sept. 10, beginning at 6 p.m. Guests speakers will be Steve Bennett, pastor, and Bill Sharp, minister of education, from Colonial Hills Church of South Haven, Miss. The Mississippi church baptized more than 200 people in 1992 as a result of growth through Sunday School. Mike McDaniel is pastor of the Lake City church.

Immanuel Church of Rogers has called five interns who will assist with summer ministries. Marque Engle, daughter of David and Beverly Engle and a senior at John Brown University, will assist in organizing children's activities. Trent Ogle, a

longtime member of the church and a senior at Ouachita Baptist University, will work with the television ministry. Doug Blevins, a junior at the University of Arkansas, will assist with orchestra and choir ministries. Chris White, a senior at Southwest Baptist University, is returning for his second year to work with the youth. Michael Mohler, a junior at Southwest Baptist University, will assist with summer youth activities.

Central Church of Jonesboro, in a May 26 business conference, voted to begin August construction for a building that will be used in the church's Walker Court ministry. The building, estimated to cost approximately \$95,000, will be built by volunteers on property donated by a local bank. This ministry, which began as a vision of church members Summers Little and Dale McCoy, has involved 20 members of the Adult III Sunday School class leading Sunday morning services for the past three years. The classes have had an average attendance of 50 and have resulted in six professions of faith. Nine other decisions were made at the church's recent presentation of the Passion Play. Numerous members have made commitments to become involved through literacy and instructional classes, providing transportation, serving as communicators through writing and telephone efforts, serving as counselors for those who are involved with drugs and alcohol and serving as sports activities coaches.

Imboden First celebrates centennial

"As we celebrate our centennial we also are planning for the future of a community in transition," declared Larry Barnes, pastor of First Church of Imboden. "Our challenge for the future is ministering to those in retirement years rather than to young families.

"We currently have a monthly ministry for senior adults coordinated by Betty Lawrence, but are initiating plans that call for nurturing our retirees and their families," Barnes reflected as the church celebrated 100 years of ministry June 6.

Pauline McKamey, centennial chairman and a member for 42 years, affirmed the need for members to be busy reaching out and ministering to those within the area. "Our future depends upon our enlightening the people in our area of our desire to minister to them and creating an awareness of our special programs for all ages," she said. McKamey credited women of the church for their participation in mission activities and for supporting the Woman's Missionary Union work of Black River Association.

"A church is never stronger than its mission support and in looking at your past missions contributions I discovered anew what an outstanding church you are and have been," said, Norman Lewis, director of missions for Black River Association.

Lewis, who had done an 11-year study on the church's missions giving, reported \$41,427 had been given for associational



Members of Imboden First Church present a gift honoring the church's centennial.

work and \$80,492 to the Cooperative Program. "You have been a vital part of associational, state, home and foreign missions in this 11-year period, contributing a total of \$197,495 to mission causes," Lewis emphasized.

Ruth Dent, a member for 69 years, Eula Bowles, age 93 and a member for 65 years, and J.E. Winchester, 95, all reflected on the "good ol' days," but praised the church for its continuous building improvement programs, property purchases, expanded educational programs and committed workers.

Imboden Church, which organized in 1893 with six charter members, was first affiliated with Spring River Association, becoming a part of Black River Association when it was organized in 1914.

Destruction of buildings by both a tornado and fire have not deterred the congregation from its continuous ministry efforts. Growing from a membership of

six to 395, the debt-free congregation now worships in a brick facility on Highway 63. Ministry highlights have included ordaining members Clarence Mitchell, Allen Speer, Burl Stalnaker and Rickie Hawkins to the gospel ministry.

Tracy Martin, a former member, delivered the anniversary message, challenging members to continue working together in cooperation to reach others for Christ. "This church has been and will be in the coming years a beacon for Jesus as you all get involved in sharing His good news as the founders of this church did," he said.

Other program features included special music by the adult choir directed by Bob Lewis and a ladies trio composed of Juanda McConnell, Mary Lea McLeod and Sue Smith. Musicians were Jo McGinnis Hovind and Carolyn McLeod McGinnis. Former pastors speaking were Joe Loghry, James Newnam, J.E. Swafford and J.C. Smith.

Disaster relief workers prepare for future needs

The annual training event for Arkansas Baptists' disaster relief personnel was held June 5 in Little Rock with approximately 40 new workers present, according to Glendon Grober, director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention's disaster relief work and state Brotherhood director.

Ronnie O'Neal serves as associate director of the program which includes the mobile disaster functions of mass feeding, communications, child care, cleanup, spiritual guidance and financial guidance.

The June 5 event provided participants with information, including the twofold objectives of disaster relief: to provide material, physical, financial and spiritual help in the name of Jesus to people suffering from disaster; and to provide adequate strategies, methods, techniques and plans for meeting disaster needs in cooperation

with local Baptist congregations.

Training also included a special catastrophic session in which Boyd Margason, the state's disaster worker with longest tenure, dealt with earthquake procedures.

"We are preparing district/association small units that will be used as guerrilla warfare units and dropped into areas by helicopter when earthquakes occur," explained Grober. "It possibly will take three years for us to have all units equipped.

"However, by the end of 1993 a new 18-wheeler will replace our old bus as a feeding unit and will become our No. 1 unit, feeding 50,000 to 100,000 daily. In addition, we will have a second unit ready that has been donated by First Church of Springdale," Grober continued.

"First Church of Heber Springs is leading an effort to secure the \$30,000 to

\$40,000 needed to equip these two units," Grober added. "The Lord has always provided our needs for this program and He will continue to do so."

State disaster units in 1992 worked in Gurdon and assisted with Hurricane Andrew cleanup efforts in both Florida and Louisiana. "Our work is one in which we pray nothing happens and so far this year our prayers have been answered," Grober noted.

"Disaster relief responses have provided Arkansas Baptists one of the finest opportunities for being known as a truly caring group of Christians," noted ABCS executive director Don Moore. "While relief would be a worthy objective of the disaster ministry, it is made more significant in that it is coming from Christians, and therefore has an evangelistic impact."

FMB presidential nominee addresses concerns

RICHMOND, VA (BP/ABP)—Utter one word among Southern Baptists and then stand back and await the reaction.

That word can be expressed in different ways: tongues, glossolalia, charismatic, Spirit-filled.

Attach that word to a Southern Baptist leader and the discussion becomes more intense.

Some have attached it to Jerry Rankin, scheduled to be voted on this week to become the 10th president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. That resulted in the most intense grilling Rankin has ever received on any subject when he faced the Foreign Mission Board's 15-member trustee search committee.

Some colleagues say Rankin, a missionary administrator from Singapore, condoned or even practiced some of the so-called "charismatic gifts" — speaking in tongues, interpreting tongues, miraculous healings and other practices believed to demonstrate the Holy Spirit's power and presence.

Rankin says he is not a charismatic and those who try to label him one misunderstand his beliefs or the nature of spiritual gifts.

But he acknowledges "praying in the Spirit" during private devotions and on one occasion interpreting a message spoken in tongues during a public worship service. And charismatic influences on his mission field, which some say Rankin condoned, are blamed for splitting churches in some countries.

Controversy raises questions

The controversy over Rankin's beliefs produced a showdown two years ago among FMB administrators.

Rankin, area director for the FMB's 480 missionaries in Southern Asia and the Pacific, was questioned about his beliefs and practices in 1991 by his vice president, Bill Wakefield.

Wakefield, vice president for Asia and the Pacific, considered firing Rankin, according to several FMB administrators. The person who apparently intervened and saved Rankin's job is the man he is being hired to replace as president, Keith Parks.

Parks confirmed Rankin's tenure was in serious jeopardy. "But I felt he should have a chance to work through it rather than be fired," Parks recalled. "I still feel it was the right decision."

Instead of firing Rankin, a 23-year missions veteran, Wakefield issued a directive to missionaries in Asia in October 1991 stating the FMB would not allow missionaries to promote charismatic practices

"Whether I have the gift of tongues or not, I don't think I do. I don't in any sense consider myself charismatic."

— Jerry Rankin
FMB presidential nominee



publicly. Although the FMB would not concern itself with the private spiritual practices of missionaries, Wakefield wrote, missionaries should avoid "identifying with the charismatic movement in general and the public practice of speaking in tongues in particular."

Wakefield denies trying to fire Rankin. "If I had thought he should be fired, I know I had it within my power to do it," he said. "But we certainly had discussions about (spiritual gifts) and other matters I felt needed to be looked at."

Rankin also downplayed the episode. "Bill never was explicit (about firing) or implied that to me. Of course, Keith (Parks) may know something I don't."

Rankin and Wakefield agree their discussions focused on whether or not Rankin's emphasis on spiritual gifts was out of balance or interfering with his ability to supervise FMB work in the area.

Wakefield said he laid down guidelines for Rankin to follow in order to avoid "the perception" that he was encouraging charismatic practices. "Jerry found those to be too strict at the time," Wakefield recalled. "If anything had happened, it would have been Jerry looking at quitting."

Parks suggested the restrictions be revised, Wakefield said, and they were. Since then Rankin has operated "within the bounds that can be managed appropriately," Wakefield said.

Wakefield, considered the most conservative of the FMB vice presidents, issued a strong endorsement of Rankin after his nomination was announced. However, he said he told the search committee about the confrontation over charismatic practices and other administrative dealings with Rankin.

Both Rankin and search committee chairman Joel Gregory have confronted the issue openly.

Gregory said a thorough investigation, which ranged from the United States to the mission field, "totally satisfied" the

committee that Rankin "does not practice, teach or advocate glossolalia and has held true to Baptist doctrine."

"It's unfortunate that Baptists don't have any other terms to use for someone who believes in and practices spiritual gifts than charismatic," Rankin said. "A charismatic advocates baptism of the Holy Spirit following salvation, accompanied by speaking in tongues, and believes that's normal for everyone and is a sign of having the Holy Spirit. I don't believe that. I don't believe it's scriptural. I've never believed it." Why do some think so?

'Seeking a Spirit-filled life'

"Perceptions and criticism go back to my experiences in seeking a Spirit-filled life and my openness to gifts of the Spirit based on my biblical understandings and observations on the mission field," Rankin explained.

Rankin was preaching in a service at Queenstown Baptist Church in Singapore in 1991 when a man in the congregation began to speak in tongues.

"I felt there was an awesome sense of the Lord's presence," Rankin recalled. "I'd never experienced something like that. What he was saying was very articulate to me in English. I felt uneasy. I wasn't going to respond. But then the pastor said, 'If this is a word from the Lord, there will be an interpretation.' There wasn't anything to do but be obedient to the Lord."

Rankin said he does not believe he has the spiritual gift of interpreting tongues on the basis of that one-time event. Neither does he believe he has the gift of tongues.

"In sensing the Lord's presence in my devotions, there have been times when I would acknowledge what I would describe as praying in the Spirit," he said. "But the Lord has never led me to give public utterance. So whether I have the gift of tongues or not, I don't think I do. I don't in any sense consider myself charismatic."

Annuity Board Sunday 1993

Celebrating Preparation

Although relief for poverty stricken elderly preachers, their widows and orphans was Dr. Lunsford's immediate concern, he was very conscious that preparation for retirement is much better than relief. He wrote:

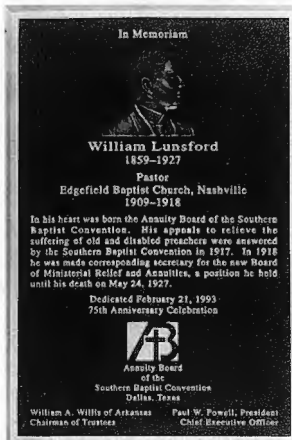
"Because we have to bear this relief burden, which in a sense has been passed on to us, does not constitute a reason why we should not realize our duty or obligation to our active ministers to provide for their future. . . . It is an economic and social right and equity that we make provision for the future, for the ministers who are now the active ones, so that when their work is completed they will not be passed on to the next generation as helpless objects of charity."

Celebrating Preparation

In 1916, when William Lunsford proposed a Southern Baptist Convention relief program for destitute retired ministers, his goal was provision of the bare necessities of life.

There was no Social Security in those days, no Southern Baptist pension plan, and little personal insurance. Meager salaries paid to ministers made savings hard at best and impossible for most. It was not a good time to raise money. The United States was in the midst of a world war; but Lunsford would not be deterred:

"Our nation takes care of its soldiers and sailors who are disabled; our great industries pension worn-out



employees; why cannot our denomination provide for its veterans and worn-out workers?"

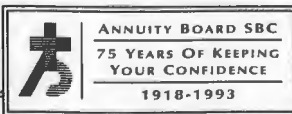
Today, almost 35,000 ministers and other church employees are active members of the Church Annuity Plan, and 34,000 agency and institutional employees are members of the Convention Annuity Plan. The Annuity Board holds assets exceeding \$4 billion for the purpose of providing retirement benefits.

Yet, about two-thirds of all local church employees are not enrolled in the Church Annuity Plan. Of the 35,000

who are active, thousands will receive inadequate benefits unless churches catch a clearer vision of the need for preparation through adequate contributions. We recommend that every minister contribute five percent of income to the retirement plan, and that churches match the contribution two dollars for one. For most who contribute at least \$105 per month, the state convention will match total contributions one dollar for three, up to \$35 per month. Of the state convention contribution, the first \$17.50 pays for a special protection section providing a survivor benefit up to \$67,500 and a supplemental disability benefit of up to \$300 per month. The next \$17.50 goes directly to the member's retirement income account for tax-deferred earnings compounding to the day of retirement.

Our prayer on this 75th Anniversary Annuity Board Sunday is that every church will, in the words of the Apostle Paul, ". . . be generous also in this service of love" (2 Cor. 8:7 TEV).

Paul W. Powell,
President



Lottie Moon giving below previous year

RICHMOND, VA (BP)—Giving to Southern Baptists' Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions fell to \$80,980,881 in 1992, a decrease of about \$378,000 from 1991.

The total, tallied when the books closed May 31, reflects the second time in three years the offering has dropped from the year before.

The total is about \$3 million less than the Foreign Mission Board expected when it planned its 1993 budget last October, but it didn't equal the \$1.5 million decrease the board projected earlier.

Interim FMB president Donald R. Kammerdener said he was "gratified" the downturn was no sharper than it was, given economic factors and "the degree of turmoil that has marked our denomination over the last year."

Depending upon how the Foreign Mission Board allocates funds, effects of the shortfall on existing missions work could be limited. Most affected will probably be capital needs such as new construction, equipment and mission vehicles. Trustees budgeted about \$7.6 million in capital for 1993, \$1.2 million of which is budgeted to come from Lottie Moon receipts.

Missionary recovering after being attacked

VALENCIA, VENEZUELA (BP)—Southern Baptist missionary Roy Hawkins has lost partial vision in his right eye after being attacked at a Baptist camp near Valencia, Venezuela.

Hawkins is recovering in Tulsa, Okla., from a cornea transplant received after medical evacuation to the United States. He and a group of missionaries and Venezuelan Baptists were attacked recently while repairing a fence at Camp Carabobo, Venezuelan Baptists' national camp outside Valencia.

The assailants apparently were squatters trying to claim about 78 acres adjacent to the camp. The National Baptist Convention of Venezuela owns that land and the 75-acre camp, purchased with help from the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

The Baptists were surprised when they heard rocks and bottles crashing into a pickup truck parked near their work site. The attackers had been hiding in tall grass. "We didn't see them until they were right on us," said camp director Hugh Redmon.

Hawkins' injuries included a detached retina, partial paralysis in his face and temporary hearing loss in his right ear. He underwent surgery in Venezuela, then flew to the United States for further treatment.

Gaza nursing school turned over to UN

GAZA (BP)—Southern Baptists have leased their nursing school in Gaza to the United Nations, a turning point in a ministry that has endured more than 40 years in one of the world's most troubled areas.

In a renewable agreement signed May 27, facilities belonging to the Baptist School of Allied Health Sciences in Gaza City were leased rent-free to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency. The U.N. agency is expected to begin its own program of nurse training in November.

The Gaza Strip has been the scene of almost daily violence in recent years as Palestinians have resisted Israeli occupation. The school was given up by Southern Baptist representatives because the Foreign Mission Board has been unable to secure the trained professionals needed to fully staff the school, reported Gaza representative Nancie Wingo.

The Southern Baptist workers stressed giving up the nursing school doesn't mean a retreat from ministry in Gaza. Plans call for ministry in health and education to continue, Wingo said as seven Southern Baptist workers assigned to Gaza will continue working there.

"Over and over we are hearing, 'What a loss, what a pity!'" Wingo said. "But we accept the closure as God's leading and ask Southern Baptists to pray that UNRWA can start a bachelor of science nursing school, a school long wanted and needed here." The Baptist workers who served at the school feel pride and gratitude for what it accomplished through the years, she added.

Support cut to Arab Baptist Seminary

LARNACA, CYPRUS (BP)—In a major policy change, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board will phase out support for the Arab Baptist Theological Seminary in Lebanon and instead set up a decentralized education program throughout the Middle East.

The change will leave the seminary in Beirut in the hands of Middle Eastern Baptists under a new 11-member board of trustees made up of Baptists from Lebanon, Jordan and Syria. The present board has half Foreign Mission Board personnel and half Middle Eastern Baptists.

Middle Eastern Baptists support the plan, but some are concerned about raising \$100,000 a year to operate the school as board support phases out over the next three years. This year the seminary will get \$6,000 from World Vision, an interdenominational missions group. Leaders say they must get support from many sources to keep the school open.

Southern Baptist administrators have worked for more than a year on setting up a new Decentralized Theological Education (DTE) system patterned after similar programs originated by Baptist missionaries in the Caribbean and the Philippines.

Missionary Weldon Viertel, who helped set up these two programs, has moved to Cyprus to establish the Middle East program. Viertel said the school could begin using DTE materials and approaches to greatly reduce its operational costs.

CSI cancels two trips to Kazakhstan

RICHMOND, VA (BP)—Southern Baptists have canceled two volunteer trips to Kazakhstan and might have to cancel two others because government officials have slowed the release of entry visas to a trickle.

In addition to the visa slowdown, host families for the volunteers are growing scarcer as the former Soviet republic continues to slide deeper into the economic turmoil that emerged when the region began shifting from communism to capitalism.

Southern Baptists staged the first widespread cultural exchange trip to Kazakhstan in 1991, before the breakup of the Soviet Union. About 300 Kazakhs, including cabinet members and government officials, visited the United States last spring in the return exchange.

But as a newly emerging world power, Kazakhstan is struggling now to hold steady amid strong nationalistic and religious forces. Most people there consider themselves Muslims.

Bulgarian evangelicals establish alliance

SOFIA, BULGARIA (BP)—Evangelicals in Bulgaria are joining forces to protect themselves from a media hate campaign they claim has been stirred up by the Orthodox Church and leftover communists who are labeling them as sects.

Forming a recent alliance, they adopted a constitution and drafted a proposed law for religious liberty. As their first president they elected Teodor Angelov, president of the Baptist Union of Bulgaria. Angelov and other leaders offered their draft law in meetings with the nation's religious affairs chief and with an adviser on religion to President Zhelyu Zhelev.

The group's organizational meeting in Sofia, the capital, included about 100 representatives of Baptist, Methodist, Church of God, Pentecostal and Congregational churches.

Baptist mission personnel needs reach critical level in Middle East

By Mike Creswell
SBC Foreign Mission Board

NICOSIA, CYPRUS (BP)—Are Southern Baptists afraid of the Middle East?

That's the question some are asking as missionary personnel needs in the area become critical. Of 58 individual positions requested in 1992, only three were filled, said Dale Thorne, the Foreign Mission Board's director for the Middle East and North Africa.

"I fear that we're retreating in a day when the opportunities for outreach are greater than ever before," Thorne declared.

Besides 55 unmet requests, two couples and two single missionaries have resigned and one couple transferred to Eastern Europe in 1992, adding to the list. In 1993 three couples and one single missionary already have announced resignations and one more couple will transfer to another area.

As of May, no new personnel have been appointed for the area in 1993, Thorne said. "One single missionary and one couple are scheduled for appointment in August and October and one couple will

transfer in. So for two years running we've experienced a net loss in personnel," he said.

"The shortage of personnel severely restricts our ability to seize the new openings appearing in yet-unentered countries of the area, as well as in countries where we already have personnel. The planting of new congregations among unreached people groups depends on our placing personnel with marketable skills in limited-access countries," Thorne said.

Yemen is one country in which a lack of the right workers jeopardizes Southern Baptist presence. Southern Baptists, through the operation of a hospital, maintain a Christian presence in this solidly Muslim country.

"The continued existence of the hospital in Yemen will depend largely on our ability to appoint a sufficient number of doctors and nurses to staff the hospital," Thorne said.

As examples of personnel requests in the area, Thorne listed six of the top 15 requests:

- Field evangelist and teacher of English as a second language in Egypt.
- A congregation planter among Russians in Tel Aviv, Israel.
- Physicians in obstetrics/gynecology and surgery specialties in Yemen.
- Teacher/administrator for an elementary school in Jordan.
- Trade evangelists and church planters for severely restricted access nations.
- Assistant hospital administrator in Yemen.

Thorne said all of the more than 50 people requested would be working in "World A" countries among unreached people groups who are among the most closed to the gospel in the world. Missiologists consider such closed countries and unreached people groups as "final frontier" in missions.

Thorne said he and other administrators will work with a newly organized task force set up at the board's office to determine how to educate and enlist more workers for the area.

Prayer support also is a major key to enlisting personnel for effective ministry in the region, Thorne said. "We're doing all we can to encourage and inform prayer partners for our ministries."

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Elder, Hobbs call conference of state leaders

NASHVILLE, TN (ABP/BP) — Lloyd Elder and Herschel Hobbs have called a conference of state convention leaders on the eve of this week's Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting for what they say is a last-ditch effort to save the SBC from splitting or dwindling away.

In a telephone conference call with Baptist news media June 3, the two men indicated they believe constitutional amendments will be proposed this week to put control of the denomination in the hands of "grassroots" Baptists.

These motions likely will arise out of response to a 16-page research report on SBC trends Elder released in May. Elder, former president of the Baptist Sunday School Board, contends in a cover letter to the report that the SBC must be energized by a "modern-day missionary movement" to survive.

Hobbs, pastor emeritus of First Baptist Church in Oklahoma City and a former SBC president, issued a public plea in February for reconciliation in the SBC. He called for shared governance between conservatives, who control the 15 million-member SBC, and disenfranchised moderates, who have formed their own missions-sending organization in response.

Hobbs and Elder met together in Oklahoma City May 31, they said, and decided they were pursuing the same agenda. So they mailed invitations June 2 to all state convention presidents, state convention board chairmen and state convention executive directors to a dialogue session this past Monday in Houston.

Elder's research highlights "critical" statistical trends in SBC membership and contributions that will force the SBC to lay off missionaries and close down agencies and institutions, possibly by the year 2000, unless cooperation is restored. (See June 3

issue of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*, page 10.)

As a result of Elder's extensive research on SBC trends, he and Hobbs are suggesting amending the SBC constitution and bylaws to create shared governance between state convention leaders and nationally elected SBC leaders.

Their proposals would involve state conventions in the nomination of half the people to serve on SBC boards, commissions and committees; have the SBC's president and first vice president be elected for two years and alternate between laypeople and ordained ministers; and have the convention be held every two years and include simultaneous regional conventions through television hookups.

Hobbs said when he received Elder's proposal in the mail, "I said to myself, 'This is it...the first really well-thought-out thing I have seen'" toward resolving the SBC controversy.

Final attempt for peace

Hobbs, who is 86 years old and esteemed as an elder statesman by many Baptists, said this is his final attempt to be a peacemaker in the SBC.

"I want it at least to be in the record that I tried," he explained. "I see no end to this, except if it keeps on like it is we're either going to drain ourselves dry of power or we're going to have a division. I'm convinced we cannot get a quick fix. We tried that and it has failed."

If the Elder-Hobbs proposals fail, the SBC and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship ought to part company, Hobbs said.

"I hope there's not going to be a division," he said, "but if it's going to come, the sooner the better."

Hobbs said he has not taken sides in the controversy in the past and will die a

Southern Baptist. However, he said SBC Executive Committee president Morris Chapman and other conservative leaders have made one-sided appointments in violation of the SBC Peace Committee report which called for balanced representation in SBC appointments.

In the most recent round of appointments, supporters of the Fellowship were excluded from any leadership positions. Hobbs said Chapman defended those appointments, saying the SBC presidents have responded to God's leadership in making their appointments.

"That's papacy, one man saying 'I think I know what's best for Southern Baptists,'" Hobbs said.

Chapman said he was shocked that Hobbs would liken the actions of SBC presidents to those of a pope. "I simply meant that every SBC president does his best to do, under the leadership of God's Spirit, what he believes to be best for the convention."

Chapman said in a written statement June 3 that "Elder is attempting to introduce a polity into this convention which is a total departure from time-honored, historic Southern Baptist practice.

"For state conventions to have authority to select any officials for the Southern Baptist Convention or its agencies implies that the SBC should have authority to select some officials for state conventions," Chapman noted. "Either application of that concept, commonly called connectionalism, has been strongly rejected from the beginning of the Southern Baptist Convention."

Fellowship coordinator Cecil Sherman said he sees some merit in the Elder-Hobbs proposal but is skeptical the SBC's current leaders would surrender the power necessary to make it work.

ATTENTION PASTORS

The Executive Board will provide each pastor a set of three tapes recorded during the 1992 Baptist Men's Prayer Retreat at First Baptist Church of Little Rock. Henry Blackaby's messages proved to be very meaningful and inspiring, and the Executive Committee and the Operating Committee of the Executive Board voted to send the tapes to all Arkansas Pastors that request them, at no charge. If you would like these tapes, please send your request to:

ARKANSAS BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION
ATTN: BLACKABY TAPES
P.O. BOX 552
LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72203

Men urged to unite to win world for Christ

By Lonnie Wilkey
Tennessee Baptist & Reflector

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—The world will not be saved without a united, multinational effort, the president of the nation's largest African American Baptist denomination told an international gathering in Nashville.

"If this world is going to be saved, it is going to be saved by men of all races, classes and creeds. We've got to learn to love one another," said Theodore Jemison.

Jemison, a Baton Rouge, La., pastor and president of the National Baptist Convention U.S.A., Inc., keyed the opening session of the Sixth World Conference for Baptist Men May 27-30.

About 600 people from 17 countries attended the conference sponsored by Baptist World Alliance's Men's Department. It ran concurrently with Baptist Men's University, a training conference of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission.

Two intense days of conferences, interspersed with evening plenary sessions, were capped off with a neighborhood evangelistic rally at Nashville's Pearl-Cohn High School featuring Southern Baptist layman and country entertainer Jerry Clower and Jack Stanton, a Southern Baptist evangelist from Bolivar, Mo.

Clower told the crowd that "Christianity works." He underscored the point by describing God's provision to his family

during his Great Depression childhood in rural Mississippi.

Clower emphasized to the international crowd that his achievements in country entertainment, while enjoyable, have not been the most important things in his life. "The greatest thing that ever happened to me was when I became a Christian, and the greatest thing in my life is to tell others that Jesus is the answer," he said.

Stanton also shared how his life had been changed by accepting Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior.

Growing up in a single-parent home in East St. Louis, Ill., Stanton is now director of the institute of evangelism at Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Mo.

"I believe that if you'd come to my home, and sit at our table, and hear my wife and me talk, you'd sense a joy and a love and a trust. Our home's happy. That doesn't mean we don't owe money, that we don't hurt, that we don't cry.

"But in the midst of the problems, God is real, and joy is there, and peace is ours," Stanton said.

J. Rea Grant, executive director of the Baptist Union of Ireland, observed that the task of reaching men for Christ is basic, difficult, strategic and urgent.

He noted churches must do a better job of reaching men for Christ. He said that in almost all Baptist congregations worldwide women outnumber the men. "Doesn't that prove the fact we need to reach men?" he asked.

Brotherhood Commission president James Williams, in the closing message, challenged Baptist men to "hunger and thirst for the Word of God" and to develop "roots deep in Christ."

Williams said Christians must be well-grounded in God's Word to avoid being "tossed about."

"The reason why so many within the evangelical church these days are easily seduced by false teaching is this: They are undermournished in the truth of God," he said.

Williams challenged conference participants to go out and use their gifts to "help our brothers and sisters 'grow up' in Christ."

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Open front door, close back door

By Sarah Zimmerman

SBC Home Mission Board

NEWARK, NJ (BP)—Opening the front door and closing the back door are essential elements of church growth, claims Win Arn, founder and president of Church Growth, Inc., in Monrovia, Calif.

Opening the front door means using an array of methods to attract people to church, Arn told 300 people attending a Southern Baptist Home Mission Board school of evangelism and church growth. Closing the back door involves keeping new members from dropping out of church life.

The best recruiting tool is new Christians telling friends and family members about Christ, Arn said. A survey of 20,000 church members found more than 70 percent come to church because a friend or relative invited them.

Biblical examples Arn cited of evangelism through relationships include Peter telling his brother Andrew about the Messiah, Jesus telling Zaccheus to share his new faith with his family and the response of Lydia and her household.

Churches should design outreach strategies around the principle that "God uses networks of people for the great growth of the church," Arn said. Leaders can help church members identify unreached people by asking members to list their friends who do not attend church.

When people become Christians, help them immediately share Christ with their

non-Christian friends, Arn urged. "New converts know more non-Christians than church members," he said. "The longer you're in the church, the fewer friends you have in the world."

Assimilating newcomers is the responsibility of the church, not the new member, Arn said. He noted he has yet to meet a person who joined a church with the intention of dropping out.

To help new members become part of the congregation, churches can:

■ Give them a task appropriate for their spiritual gift.

■ Make sure they are in a small group where they will be missed if they are absent, such as choir or Sunday School.

■ Create opportunities to build friendships. This must go beyond the coffee hour before Sunday School or after worship, he said.

■ Start new groups with new roles and tasks.

During the first few months of church membership, people ask themselves if the new friends they are making are better than their old friends, if they fit in, if the church meets their needs and if their contribution is needed. The answer to those questions, Arn said, determines whether the person becomes a regular attendee or a drop-out.

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Convention Uniform

Joy in dependency

By Roland Chappell, pastor, First Church, Dell

Basic passage: Philippians 4

Focal passage: Philippians 4:6-13

Central truth: Joy is experienced in being dependent upon God and His people.

We live in a world that demands personal rights, self reliance and independence. We are like a three-year-old child who refuses help tying his shoes saying, "Me can do it myself." We even come to the place that in our very lifestyle we tell God, "I can handle it." Paul had learned by long experience that he could not "handle it." We cannot get along in this world without God and each other. In every aspect of life we are interdependent. This is especially true in our spiritual life. Every person needs someone sometime.

Every believer is dependent upon prayer. Paul tells his readers to pray instead of worrying. We express our love, praise and thanksgiving to God in prayer. In a life that depends upon prayer we find the peace of God that exceeds understanding of the world. A life dependent upon prayer is a life of joy.

Paul had no shame in his dependence on the churches for the support of his work. He rejoiced in the offering sent to him from his beloved church at Philippi. Here is a man who has faced every type of circumstance the mind can imagine. He faced trials and problems, success and plenty. He had found that joy did not come from his circumstances, but from his relationships. He was dependent upon God and his fellow laborers, and found joy in the shared labor and victory.

As God's people, we are not only dependent upon God, but we also depend upon the prayer, encouragement and support of each other. We can face any circumstance as long as we have a dependent relationship with God and His people for support.

Paul was keenly aware of his dependence on Christ. He had the assurance that he could do anything, go anywhere and serve anytime in the strength that Christ provided. There is no greater source of joy than in learning to be dependent upon Jesus. However difficult our lot in life, joy remains real in our being dependent upon God. The greatest independence we can ever enjoy comes from complete dependence on Jesus and His people.

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Life and Work

Missions turning point

By James Preston, pastor, First Church, Stamps

Basic passage: Acts 13:1-52

Focal passage: Acts 13:47, 48

Central truth: We have been given a mission by God to bring the message of salvation to all the world.

What is keeping us from commitment to missions? We've been given license in Acts 10 to take the witness to anyone willing to hear. We've learned the lesson of being a credible witness in chapter 11, and we know from chapter 12 that God will work through us to accomplish His purpose. Now, in chapter 13 we learn that we have been given a mission by God to bring the message of salvation to all the world.

Chapter 13 records a turning point for the church toward global missions as it sent Paul and Barnabas as missionaries. Verses 46-48 record a turning point for Paul who expressed a personal commitment to take the gospel to the Gentiles.

Paul's commitment to the Gentiles wasn't precedent setting. The precedent was already set in chapters 8 through 11.

The significance of Paul's statement was that he applied Isaiah 49:6 to his own life. This verse is considered one of the servant passages in Isaiah, which referred to Israel's role as God's witness to all the nations. Jesus fulfilled this passage as the 'servant-Messiah.' Now the church is God's witness to the nations of God having come in Christ.

Unlike the English language, the Greek language has more than one form of the second personal pronoun. "You" and "you'll" would be a good southern transliteration. In the Greek New Testament, the pronoun "you" is singular in verse 47. Paul's personal application of this Scripture marked a turning point in his response to missions.

What will be the turning point for you to personally respond to missions? Do you give to and pray for missions? Perhaps God is asking more of you. God's Word requires a personal response.

Recently I read about a missionary who made one last plea for others to respond to missions, a terminal illness having cut short her own service. She said, "I can't go. Will you go for me?" How will you respond when God says: "Will you go for me?"

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Bible Book

Redemption for all

By J.T. Harvill, pastor, Fairview Church, Camden

Basic passage: Isaiah 60:1-66:24

Focal passage: Isaiah 60:1-3; 61:1-3; 65:17-19; 65:23-25; 66:22-24

Central truth: Christ redeems all who trust Him.

It was good news to the Israelites in exile that a "Redeemer would come to deliver them" (Isa. 59:20). It is good news in Romans 11:26-27 when Paul tells us that this prophecy had a higher fulfillment in Jesus Christ, coming not only to fulfill His covenant with Israel, but to redeem all mankind from sin who would trust Him.

In Isaiah 60:1-3, the people are instructed to "arise and shine, for a light is come." This Redeemer (light) is revealed in 61:1-3. He would preach good tidings (the gospel) to the meek, bind up the brokenhearted, proclaim liberty to the captives, free those bound in prison, proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of vengeance of God and comfort all that mourn. The prophecy had its fulfillment in the return of the exiles, but its highest fulfillment was in the work of Jesus, the Messiah.

In Luke 4:18-21, Jesus read these words and said in verses 21, "Today hath this scripture been fulfilled in your ears." Jesus ordered His followers in Matthew 5:14 to be the light of the world and to be shining lights like a city on a hill or a light upon a lampstand. He cautioned us not to put our lamps under a bushel, but so let our light shine before men that they will see our good works, and glorify our Father in heaven.

In Isaiah 65:17-25, God tells of the new home of the redeemed. He says He is creating new heavens and a new earth. God describes this as a place where former things shall not be remembered. Instead, there will be glad rejoicing forever. There will be no more sorrow and crying. Life will be long (everlasting). A place of prosperity; where never again will His people be plundered by enemies. It will be a place of peace where the wolf and the lamb will feed together. Only Jesus, the suffering Servant, could bring about such a change in the lives of sinful men. This conversion experience which results in such changed lives comes by repentance and faith in Jesus. Joy awaits those who put their trust in Jesus, but eternal punishment for those who reject Him.

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Convention Uniform

Celebrating the mystery

By Glen Schmucker, pastor, First Church, Siloam Springs
Basic passage: Colossians 1

Focal passage: Colossians 1:24-29

Central truth: God has made Himself available to man.

Everyone loves a mystery that tingles the imagination and tests the intellect. There is nothing more enthralling than a plot that needs unraveling. So, when Paul defines the person and work of Christ as being "the mystery which has been hidden" in Colossians 1:26, it is tempting to respond to the gospel as an intellectual problem needing to be explained.

Such a response, however, betrays our failure to understand the Sovereign Lord and His way of relating to us. Our hope is not found in reaching out to Him by climbing the ladder of intellect into His throne room and unraveling all the great mysteries of heaven. Hope, as seen in Colossians 1:27, is found in response to the One in whom God has revealed Himself to us.

God, the Sovereign Lord of the universe, has become involved at great personal expense in effecting our salvation. This "mystery" has been revealed in Christ and we have been given the opportunity of experiencing the power of the Sovereign in a personal way. This mystery, therefore, is not a problem to be solved as much as a reality to be celebrated. Paul celebrates this mystery, the Sovereign Lord personally experienced, in two specific ways. He acknowledges the mystery as giving central definition to all Christian preaching and also acknowledges it as the central power for Christian living.

The person and work of Christ is the heart of the Christian message. The completeness for which man was originally created comes not through wrenching himself into something better through any method of self-improvement but through a personal knowledge of this One the Christian message proclaims (Col. 1:27-28). Personal fulfillment apart from personal knowledge of Christ is a cruel fantasy.

The glorified and hope-filled work of God in Christ is also central to the experience of Christian ministry and suffering (Col. 1:24, 29). Christ, the mystery of God, is present in the life of believers giving meaning to their existence and enabling them to complete the suffering of Christ as ministry demands it.

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Life and Work

Trials and temptations

By Ron Ford, pastor, Central Church, North Little Rock

Basic passage: James 1:1-15

Focal passage: James 1:2-12

Central truth: We need to be prepared for the trials and tests of life.

James is the most practical book in the New Testament. It focuses on living the Christian life. James, the author, was one of several brothers of Christ and was probably the oldest since he heads the list in Matthew 13:55.

The first 15 verses deal with trials and temptations. A trial is a test faced by a Christian. A temptation is an enticement to evil. The kind of world we live in produces many trials. Our own evil desires entice us to evil. Look at what James says about trials.

Trials are common to all. James does not say "if" you have trials, but "when" you have trials. None of us can escape trials. They come to all and they come in many forms.

Trials can make us or break us. Depending on our faith stance, trials can be placed on the debit or credit side of the ledger of life. Through faith in Christ, we can develop Christlike qualities so that we become mature, complete and not lacking in anything. Someone has observed that a Christian is like a teabag; she is not worth much until she's been in hot water.

Trials can point us to God as the source of wisdom. In order to understand what our trials mean, we should turn to God in prayer. God does not find fault with our requests to understand our trials. We should ask God without doubting.

Trials can result in blessing. When we have borne up under our trials God congratulates us (v. 12). Happy is the man who stands up under trial because he will receive the crown of life. The crown of life is literally life itself. Real life is found through the maturity that comes from facing the trials of life with faith.

Temptations are enticements to evil. God is not the source of temptations. Temptations arise from our own sinful nature, our "own evil desire." Evil desire produces a cycle of desire, sin and death. Because our own evil desire is the source of temptation, we must take full responsibility for our actions. We are responsible when we sin. And we each are responsible to do something about our sin. That something -- or someone -- is Jesus.

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Bible Book

Baptists should shout

By Ronnie Mayes, pastor, First Church, Beebe

Basic passage: 1 Peter 1:1-12

Focal passage: 1 Peter 1:3-9

Central truth: Since Jesus Christ has provided such a great and wonderful salvation, true believers can rejoice in all things.

Seven benefits of salvation can be seen. Peter begins by stating the first benefit as a living hope (v. 3). This hope is the result of these three things: conversion, the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the return of Jesus (v. 7). Today, hope has an element of doubt. Something may or may not happen. In Peter's day, the term meant a confident expectation. Our hope, our confident expectation, rests in the mercy of God who caused us to be born again.

The second benefit of salvation is "a home in heaven (v. 4). What a joy to have a home that is imperishable, that is undefiled, that will not fade away, and that is reserved in heaven with Jesus!

The next benefit of our salvation is help in the present. The believer is being protected by the power of God (v. 5). The word "protect" carries the idea of being "garrisoned about" or continuously guarded until we safely arrive in heaven.

Another benefit of our salvation is the joy in the midst of trials (v. 6). The word translated "rejoice" has the meaning of exult. Peter knew that Christians everywhere would have all kinds of problems. Yet, he encourages them to exult. Our troubles may be many-colored, but so is the grace of God.

The fifth benefit of our salvation is the testing of our faith (v. 7). Faith, when it is tested, produces praise, glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus.

Still another benefit of salvation is love (v. 8). The faith that accepts salvation becomes the love that adores the Savior. Even though the believer has never seen Jesus, we love him with agape love, the highest type of love.

The last benefit of our salvation is salvation as the goal of faith. Salvation is spoken of in three aspects in the New Testament. We are saved instantly from the penalty of sin. This is the beginning of salvation. We are saved from the power of sin. This is a lifelong process. We are saved from the presence of sin, which will take place when the Christian enters heaven and that is a good reason to shout.

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NEWS DIGEST

High court declines to hear Pledge of Allegiance case

WASHINGTON (ABP)—The U.S. Supreme Court declined June 1 to review a lower-court ruling that Illinois may require public school teachers to lead the Pledge of Allegiance as long as students are not forced to participate.

The 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that a 1979 Illinois statute authorizing public elementary schools to have students recite the pledge daily did not violate the religion clauses of the First Amendment. The pledge has included the words "under God" since 1954.

Robert Sherman filed suit in 1988 on behalf of his son, Richard, who was then a first grader in Wheeling Township, Ill. Sherman, president of an atheist group called the Society of Separationists Inc., contended that the Illinois law violated the free-exercise clause because it required public school students to participate in the pledge.

With no penalty in the law, such as expulsion from school, the appeals court said students were free to remain silent but not to prevent others from reciting the pledge.

Churches may use schools, Supreme Court rules

WASHINGTON (BP)—In a unanimous decision, the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that public schools may not refuse churches use of their buildings when use by other groups is allowed.

The court agreed that a New York school district violated the free speech rights of an evangelical church when it prohibited Lamb's Chapel from renting space at a high school to show a film series on the family. The court's opinion also found the church's use of the facilities would not be an unconstitutional establishment of religion.

Because the school district had allowed use of its facilities after school hours for social and civic purposes, its decision to reject the church's request was based on the viewpoint in the film series, Justice Byron White said in the court's opinion, adding that the schools district's decision must not be made "solely because the film dealt with the subject from a religious standpoint."

Arkansan giving \$1 million for Annuity Board endowment

DALLAS (AB)—The Harvey and Bernice Jones Charitable Trust of Springdale, Ark., has announced a \$1 million gift to the Southern Baptist Annuity Board. The gift, to be paid over two years, will be applied to endowment for the Annuity Board's Adopt an Annuitant program.

The Joneses amassed their wealth in a trucking business, and the charitable trust they established has benefited a number of Baptist causes including the Arkansas Baptist Children's Home and Family Services, and Siloam Springs Baptist Assembly. Mrs. Jones, now widowed, is a member of Elmdale Baptist Church of Springdale.

Through its Adopt an Annuitant program, the Annuity Board sends an extra monthly payment to more than 1,100 annuitants whose retirement benefits are inadequate.

Baylor regents vote to open Truett Seminary in fall 1994

DALLAS (BP)—Pledging to create an ethnically inclusive school with a strong mentoring program, Baylor University board of regents voted unanimously to open the George W. Truett Theological Seminary in Waco, Texas, with the fall 1994 semester.

"We're not competing with any of the existing seminaries," said Herbert H. Reynolds, president of Baylor University. "We are very interested in seeing what we can do in a distinctive kind of way."

Robert Sloan, dean of Truett Seminary, emphasized the new school's niche as a practical training ground for ministry that will rely heavily upon local church ministers as mentors and guides.

Another vice president resigns from Southern Seminary

LOUISVILLE, KY (ABP/BP)—Elisabeth Lambert has become the second of four vice presidents at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary to resign her post as the Louisville school undergoes a leadership change.

Lambert, vice president for student services since 1985, will leave her job July 31, the day President Roy Honeycutt retires. She is the fifth top administrator to announce plans to step down since the March 26 election of Al Mohler as Honeycutt's successor.

Lambert's husband, Frank, is a professor at Purdue University in Lafayette, Ind. They have commuted between the two locations for several years. Lambert plans to relocate full time to Lafayette, where she will seek employment in a social service agency.

David R. Wilkinson, who resigned earlier as Southern's vice president for seminary relations, has been named communications coordinator/interim staff administrator of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, a coalition of Southern Baptist moderates.