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**February 23, 1995**

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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# ARKANSAS BAPTIST

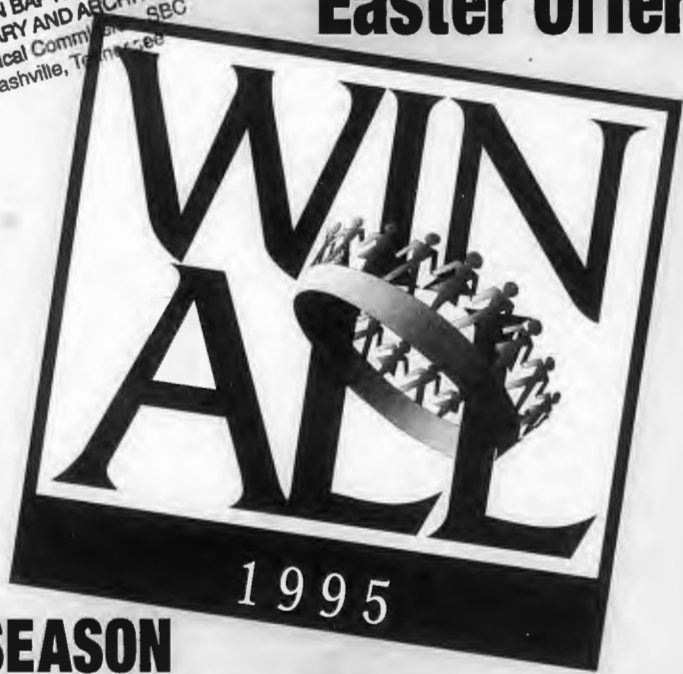


Volume 94, Number 4

February 23, 1995

## 1995 Annie Armstrong Easter Offering

SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL  
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Nashville, Tennessee



**A SEASON  
OF HOME MISSIONS**

# Overseas baptisms reach 300,000 mark for first time

By Erich Bridges

Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—Baptisms related to Southern Baptist foreign mission work worldwide totaled 302,132 in 1994 — the first time annual baptisms have ever topped 300,000.

That total marks a tripling of baptisms since 1980. Baptisms topped 200,000 for the first time in 1987.

Foreign Mission Board President Jerry Rankin put the milestone into evangelistic perspective:

"It probably represents well over 1 million professions of faith," he said. "Only a portion (of new converts) follow through immediately in baptism. We don't report professions of faith or try to compile them, but it indicates the level of evangelism being done and the level of response."

The 1994 baptism total is the fourth record year in a row, and shows a 15 percent increase over 1993's count.

It also represents actual growth compared to the previous year, without substantial additions from countries newly added to the count, according to FMB evangelism and church growth consultant Jim Slack, who compiled the 1994 statistical report.

Yet perhaps most significant of all, a still-small but steadily growing number of conversions and baptisms are occurring in

places and peoples once considered entirely off-limits to the Christian gospel.

The Cooperative Services International arm of the Foreign Mission Board, which quietly ministers among the peoples of "World A" — the unevangelized world locked from "traditional" missions behind political, religious and cultural barriers — reported 3,809 baptisms.

That total may seem tiny, but it's a 500 percent jump over the 1993 total. And it includes the first known baptisms recorded among several groups.

Other significant growth reports emerged from mission fields still open to missionaries — but beset by war, suffering or hostile opposition to Christians from opposing religions.

"It highlights the whole focus of being on mission with God," said Rankin. "In God's providence and power these things are happening."

The traditional "big seven" countries where Baptists are strong—Brazil, Nigeria, Kenya, South Korea, the Philippines, India, Mexico—appear once again in the top 25 list of countries for baptisms. Brazil tops the list with 69,373 with Nigeria second with 38,340.

Some new faces also appear: Ukraine finished sixth with 9,798 baptisms, with Russia right behind at 9,759.

A "partner country" — where mission realities dictate that the country can't be named in print — reported 6,199 baptisms, nearly breaking into the top 10.



## Cover Story



## Season of Home Missions

### 'Win All' 3

"Win All" is the 1995 Season of Home Missions theme. That simple theme is a stark reminder that the Bold Mission Thrust is not complete. Some statistics estimate that 70 percent of Americans don't have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

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# ARKANSAS BAPTIST

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# It takes all kinds

*Variety of missionaries means varied ministries around state*

By Colleen Backus

Assistant Editor, Arkansas Baptist

In order to "Win All," the theme for this year's Season of Home Missions, it will take all kinds of people using all kinds of methods, according to Darrell Robinson, Home Mission Board vice president for evangelism. A variety of people involved in home missions are helping make "Win All" a reality in Arkansas.

One of those people is Mike Fowler, a home missionary church planter based in Russellville. Fowler's exposure to missions started early — he was born in California while his father was involved with volunteer missions there. Fowler became involved in missions as a part-time Baptist Student Union director at Phillips County Community College in West Helena. "I got a real taste for missions and really pushed summer missions," Fowler said. "I had committed to missions during seminary."

Fowler, a military veteran, is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Mid-America Seminary. While serving as part-time BSU director and pastor of a local church, Fowler was asked by the area associational missions committee to start a new church in West Helena. He served as pastor there until 1992, when he was appointed as a church planter/strategist by the Home Mission Board.

"As I look at it, my main function is to start and develop new churches and missions," Fowler explained. "I work with associations and churches across the state to identify needs and start churches."

"If I know of an area population that is growing, I visit the director of missions and ask about any needs he knows of," he noted. "Once places are identified, I work with the association to conduct a feasibility study." Then, if the demographics prove the need for a new congregation, Fowler helps get the new work started.

## 'Whatever it takes'

"What makes it rewarding is being able to go to a new work and see it reach people," Fowler shared. "Whatever it takes to reach people is what I'd be willing to do."

Troy Prince, pastor of Caraway Road Baptist Mission in Jonesboro, has a similar perspective. Prince, a former pastor of South Side Baptist Church in Baton Rouge, also is a former executive director of the Alaska Baptist Convention. What does someone with such impressive credentials think of being a mission pastor? "It's one of the most rewarding things I've ever gotten

involved with," Prince said.

Working with Jonesboro First Church, Prince found a need for another new congregation in the southeast part of town. In October 1994, Prince started a work in the Fox Meadow Elementary School. The new Caraway Road Baptist Mission has 24 members and 40 enrolled in Sunday School.

## Reaching people

"I've been associated in one way or another with home missions for a long time," Prince pointed out. "The overarching purpose of reaching people is really being met through home missions."

Another way to reach people is to speak their language. Billy Amonsin, pastor of the Laotian Church associated with First Church in Fort Smith, does just that. A former Buddhist monk, Amonsin found what he had been looking for in Jesus. Born in 1942 in Thailand, Amonsin and his family moved to Laos after World War II. After rejecting his Buddhist training, Amonsin married and went to work for a U.S. aid organization in Laos.

In 1981, Amonsin and his family became refugees before arriving in the United States in 1987. Sponsored by a Christian church, Amonsin accepted Jesus Christ as Savior.

Amonsin serves his congregation by truly ministering—he takes members everywhere and translates for them. "I take them to the police station, the hospital, I go to school with them if there is trouble with the children, I help them with citizenship and naturalization — I try to meet their physical needs," he explained.

In another language, Robert Rodriguez is the pastor of the Hispanic work jointly sponsored by Geyer Springs First Church in Little Rock, Pulaski County Association, the Home Mission Board and the state missions department. A native of Texas, Rodriguez is a graduate of Baylor University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Working for the past 32 years as a church starter for the Home Mission Board, Rodriguez spent much of that time leading a Baptist academy. Then, eight years ago, he came to Little Rock to cultivate an Hispanic ministry. For the first several years, the work was slow, Rodriguez explained, but the work has doubled in the past year.

"Previously, there were many diverse cultures for South and Central America represented in our congregation," he noted. "In the last year, the complexion of the ministry has changed with the coming of Mexicans to the area. They are moving here to get away from the drugs and violence of Los Angeles."

Rodriguez, like Amonsin, spends much of his time seeking to meet physical needs. "I get them in contact with people who know about jobs and try to help them find housing where they can avoid the violence they are running away from," he explained. "That's tough because they can hardly afford to get out of that environment."

"Their greatest asset is their love to participate in Bible study. They really retain Bible teaching — they believe it and accept it," he pointed out. "But they have trouble taking the final step of commitment because often they are nominal Catholics."

In cooperation with the state missions department, Rodriguez is arranging seminary training for Hispanic pastors through the "Experiencing God" materials.

Andrea Ramage, the only US-2 home missionary in the state, ministers through

**"Whatever it takes to reach people is what I'd be willing to do."**

— Mike Fowler  
Church planter

organizational skills. Ramage, serving in the Arkansas Baptist State Convention mission department, is assistant regional coordinator of the Mississippi River

Ministry and assistant coordinator of the Arkansas/Iowa partnership. US-2 missionaries are college graduates under the age of 26 who give two years of volunteer service in the U.S.

Among Ramage's responsibilities is promotional work for both projects. She enlists and recruits volunteers, finds projects and publishes needs requests and disseminates the information to interested parties. While her work is primarily "behind the scenes, I can help other people go and do that work," she affirmed.

Born and raised in Kentucky, Ramage became aware of mission through involvement in GAs and Achteens. Initially, Ramage resisted God's call to missions. "I always felt God calling, but I thought He was wrong," she laughed. "I couldn't do it for real." But at a missions fair during graduate school, she surrendered to God's will and applied for the US-2 program. "I knew that it was right, because God opened doors and changed things in my life."

## YOU'LL BE GLAD TO KNOW



By DON MOORE  
ABS-C Executive Director

I continue to rejoice that we saw an increase in baptisms in 1994. We also saw an increase in mission giving for which I am grateful. Both are a good news/bad news reports. The bad news is that we are still not up to our previous record of baptisms. And the increase in mission giving is clouded by the fact that the churches gave a smaller percent of their undesignated income this year than last year. Nevertheless, God is to be praised for the efforts and we are to be challenged by the need to grow in these areas.

The large number of churches that continue to decline or hold their own disturbs me. "What happens when a nongrowing church begins to grow and sustains that growth?" is a good question to ask.

I have seen an answer to that question. A new spirit of optimism and expectancy takes over. A new focus on the responsibility and joy of reaching people begins to prevail. An excitement about serving the Lord grips Sunday School workers. A new consciousness of the needs of people are felt. New efforts and approaches to reaching the lost are readily accepted and supported by the church. A new freedom and celebration in worship is experienced.

Most people do not think their church can grow because of lack of leadership, lack of prospects, lack of funds or a poor location. All of the above can happen without having these. I am persuaded that every church can grow. I challenge our churches that are showing no growth to prayerfully consider the things mentioned. Ask God! Believe God! Obey God! You will glorify God in going into the "highways and hedges" and bringing people to the provisions of the Lord in greater numbers.

A pastor recently said, "I am not too happy about our church's growth. We are being flooded by people fleeing from the fussing and strife of other churches." There is probably nothing that stifles a church's growth like squabbles, petty grievances and people determined to control everything that happens in the church. This would be a good place to start a program of improvement in church growth.

RONNIE ROGERS

## President's Corner

### The belt no longer fits!

The belt no longer fits! Arkansas is often referred to as the "Bible Belt." This may have been true at one time, and I'm sure it was; but today it is not only untrue but harmful.

Today we live a post-Christian era in America and Arkansas. Our judicial, education, social and political structures are no longer significantly influenced by biblical principles.

Pragmatism (whatever work is good or right) and humanism (man is the measure of all things; hence, there are no absolutes) rule the day. The dismal results of these philosophies can be seen in the:

Judiciary's inability to adjudicate efficiently and consistently. "Nearly three out of every four convicted criminals are not incarcerated."

Education's increased funding with concomitant decreased S.A.T. scores (980-905) from 1960 to 1990.

Society's deification of personal rights, degradation of personal responsibility and the displacement of self control, by self expression.

Politicians' inclusion of moral rhetoric and clichés in speeches while simultaneously voting and passing laws contrary to any sense of moral decency.



These structural inefficacies lucidly demonstrate the secularization of the American and Arkansas mind. However, the most telling information concerning the passé of the Bible Belt label comes from the Home Mission Board.

Their most recent study concluded that there are one million unchurched (people with no church affiliation) in Arkansas. With an approximate population of 2,286,419 persons, that means approximately 50 percent of Arkansans are lost. One out of every two people we meet are lost — this does not include those who are affiliated with a church and yet they are lost. Our workplaces, families and neighborhoods have a statistical breakdown of one half being lost and headed for a burning Hell. That doesn't sound like the Bible Belt.

As long as we think in terms of Arkansas being a Bible Belt state, I predict Arkansas will continue to become more ungodly. We need to think in terms of a mission field rather than Bible Belt. When we leave our church buildings, we have entered a pagan land — a mission field, not a Bible Belt.

Ronnie Rogers, pastor of Lakeside Church in Hot Springs, is president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

## Personal perspectives

"Most of us know enough about revival to know you can't organize one."

— Paul Cedar, president, Evangelical Free Churches

"I always felt God calling, but I thought He was wrong.... I couldn't do it for real."

— Andrea Ramage, US-2 missionary to Arkansas

"Children learn to trust by watching others relating to them in a trustworthy way. That element of trust is crucial to having faith in God."

— Diana Garland, keynote speaker, "A Heart for Children" Workshop

# 'We have found the Messiah'

"Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world," John the Baptist said of Jesus in John 1:29.

What was the impact of John's straightforward witness? Among other things, John's testimony influenced his own followers to transfer their loyalty to Christ. Rather than jealously guarding his own ambitions and accolades, John humbly pointed beyond himself to Jesus.

The prophets of God had been silent for hundreds of years before John came on the scene. He quickly gained widespread popularity prior to Jesus' baptism and public ministry. It surely would have been easy for John to grow accustomed to the attention of being center stage. Human nature makes it difficult to accept second place, especially after being in first place for a while.

But John the Baptist was committed to sharing the message of Jesus Christ regardless of the personal cost. As he declared in John 3:30, "He must increase, but I must decrease."

Even after John was imprisoned and beheaded by Herod, his witness continued to make an impact. Following John's affirmation of Jesus' Lordship, Scripture notes that two of his disciples followed Jesus.

"One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Jesus, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother," John 1:40 reports. "He found first his own brother Simon, and

## STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



By TRENNIS HENDERSON

said to him, 'We have found the Messiah,' which translated means Christ. He brought him to Jesus."

As Southern Baptists focus their attention on simultaneous witnessing efforts and harvest revivals during the "Here's Hope. Share Jesus Now" emphasis, no greater tribute could be paid to any Christian than to say, "He brought him to Jesus."

For Andrew, bringing people to Jesus was a natural part of life. Andrew's ministry efforts are highlighted three times in the gospel of John. In each instance, he was personally involved in bringing someone to Jesus.

Remember that Andrew wasn't part of the small inner circle of Jesus' closet confidants. He was more a behind-the-scenes worker than an up-front leader.

Even in the occasional verses where he was mentioned, Andrew often was introduced as Simon Peter's brother to more readily identify him.

Yet in his quiet, consistent, low-key way, Andrew brought people to Jesus. Andrew began his witnessing efforts in one of the most difficult fields — his own family. It often seems easier to witness to total strangers than to family members. Yet Andrew made a point to share the good news with his brother — and it made all the difference in Simon Peter's earthly life and eternal destiny.

In addition to introducing his own brother to Christ, Andrew brought the lad with five loaves and two fish to Jesus in John 6. A few chapters later, in John 12, Andrew helped Philip introduce a group of Greek Gentiles to Jesus.

While few Christians today will ever gain the prominence of a John the Baptist, we all have the opportunity to share a personal word of witness as Andrew so faithfully did.

What is the basic responsibility of a witness? To tell what you have personally seen and experienced. "We have found the Messiah," Andrew enthusiastically told his brother.

Amid all the priorities and passions of life, none is greater than personally pointing people to Christ. What a powerful privilege to proudly proclaim, "Behold the Lamb of God."

## 'Win All' requires commitment

By Dellanna O'Brien

Executive Director, Woman's Missionary Union

In just a short time Southern Baptists will be participating in the Week of Prayer for Home Missions and encouraged to give to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering. This in-gathering of money and outpouring of prayer on behalf of the lost of our nation is unique among all denominations.

As was true in Annie Armstrong's day, much of the focus this year will be on the need to broaden our evangelistic vision. She led the women in the latter part of the 19th century to reach out to the native Americans and African Americans. Today our population, and therefore the needs, are far more diverse, with churches now worshipping in over 100 languages.

Winning all for Christ is an overwhelming thought. Impossible, you might say. However, as followers of the Almighty, it is our calling, our responsibility, our challenge.

Diversity in every arena of life calls for



new and innovative approaches which involve us all. Our theme for this year's Season of Home Missions is appropriately, "Win All," and is based on I Corinthians 9:22, "I have become all things to all men so that by all means possible I might save some."

It is exciting to know that Southern Baptists are spreading the Word to people who would otherwise never hear that God loves them — to prisoners, gang members, victims of abuse and others.

Home missionaries are also reaching the lost for Christ. Some of them give up family ties and close friendships to move to areas where God's love is not known.

Their sacrifices are not in vain, though, as they are sowing seeds and reaping harvests.

Our nation desperately needs to experience God's touch. How He longs to bring healing! So what is lacking? He calls us to:

■ **Pray.** Never before has the power of prayer been so affirmed. "Ask and it shall be given unto you." What He has done in other areas of the world in response to prayer He longs to do in the U.S.

■ **Go.** Whether as short- or long-term volunteer or as a career missionary through the Home Mission Board, we can all be "on mission" in our homeland.

■ **Give.** This year's Annie Armstrong Easter Offering goal of \$50 million is a reminder to Southern Baptists of God's blessings for 150 years as a denomination. Although the offering goal is challenging, it is also reachable.

The needs are urgent, the time is now. May we do what has never been done before in order to WIN ALL for Christ.

# Number of mission volunteers rises in 1994

The number of volunteers performing missions work in the United States and abroad increased in 1994, according to Foreign Mission Board and Home Mission Board reports. Southern Baptists will observe Volunteers in Missions Sunday Feb. 26.

HMB statistics recorded an almost 10 percent increase in the number of people (68,915) who volunteered for home missions work in 1994, up from 62,755 in 1993.

Statistics from the FMB showed a 27 percent increase in foreign missions volunteers, from 10,050 volunteers in 1993 to 12,756 volunteers in 1994.

Leaders say the figures dispute conventional wisdom that volunteerism is declining.

"Something that we've been hearing lately is that the age of volunteerism is over," said Mike Riggins, associate director for the HMB Mission Service Corps department.

"Yet with God's people we're finding that not to be the case," he said. "Really, I think we've just seen the tip of the iceberg as God moves among his people to get involved in missions and in ministry."

Arkansas Baptists found many avenues of service in home missions, especially through their missions partnership with the Iowa Baptist Fellowship.

"More than 200 people went to Iowa last year as part of the (Iowa) partnership," said Andrea Ramage, a US-2 home missionary assigned to the Arkansas Baptist State Convention missions department.

staff for Royal Ambassador and Girls in Action camps and also had some that did revival services.

"We completed 35-40 projects in 1994," she added. "Some did partnership projects through their associations and others were strictly church groups."

Ramage noted that the number of projects reflected an increase from 1993 participation. "In 1992 and 1993 there were some projects, but the partnership really took off in 1994. People saw that they could make a difference in Iowa."

One of the churches that made a difference was Highway Church in North Little Rock. Alan English, a youth leader at Highway Church, led a group of 21 youth from the church last summer to conduct a Davenport ministry.

"This is the third year we have done a mission trip," he explained. "The last two years we have gone to Davenport, where the youth conducted a Vacation Bible School every evening. By day we canvassed neighborhoods and held a carnival."

The Highway Church youth went conducted the mission effort because "that church wasn't going to have anyone conduct VBS," he said. "And our youth were wanting do something. We had taken them on fun trips before, but they wanted to do something more beneficial."

## VOLUNTEERS



## IN MISSIONS DAY

FEBRUARY 26

Ramage said Arkansas volunteers "conducted Vacation Bible Schools, did neighborhood canvassing to determine places for new church work, worked as

## European partnership grows as volunteer needs met

The missions partnership between Arkansas and European Baptists continues to grow, according to state-wide coordinator Doyné Plummer. "But there are many needs still unmet."

He said 1995 projects will include construction, revivals, an annual men's prayer and spiritual retreat, a pastors/wives conference, Vacation Bible Schools, and a ladies' prayer retreat.

"Last year we completed 34 projects similar to these with about 100 people," he said. Plummer said he expects a total of 300 volunteers to complete 50 projects by the end of the year.

"We've been working on a church-to-church or church-to-association level," he explained. "Approximately 45 churches have requested partnerships and 41 have been partnered. From those partnerships, we have generated about 50 projects so far."

Plummer noted that 1995 projects already had begun. "We already have completed eight projects involving about 30 people."

Projects either under way or completed in 1995 have included church construction in Brackley, England, Jan. 12-23 by a team from First Southern Church in Bryant, Woodlawn Church in Little Rock and Wye Mountain Southern Church in Bigelow. Another church construction team representing First Church in Jacksonville and First Church in Cabot worked in Kaiserslautern, Germany, January 23-Feb. 2.

Other projects included: a Winter Bible Study conducted in Celle, Germany January 17-26 by Bobby Walker, pastor of First Church, Danville; a marriage/family enrichment conference in Frankfurt, Germany, Feb. 7-16 by members of Immanuel Church in Little Rock; and a deacon retreat in Klone, Germany, Feb. 2-13, led by Harmony Association director of missions Jim Edwards.

Other partnership highlights include:

■ Kay and Norman Roberts, members of Park Hill Church in North Little Rock, left in early February to serve as on-site partnership coordinators. They will be responsible for organizing requests and projects among the 60 churches in the EBC.

■ Rogers Edmondson, a medical doctor from Greenbrier of will leave in March to spend several months in Bucharest, Romania, establishing a medical ministry.

Mike Kemper, pastor of International Baptist Church in Bucharest, said "Our plan is for (Edmondson) to work in church, village and seminary clinics. We hope this will be a compliment to what the churches are trying to do and will be an evangelistic opportunity also," Kemper added.

Plummer also emphasized continuing needs for the partnership. "There is still a need for interim pastors who can stay between three months and three years." He noted that Arkansas Baptists recently sent Emmitt Phipkins, a retired pastor and member of Central Church in Hot Springs, as the partnership's first volunteer interim.

"We still need partners for five churches and a church in Rota, Spain, needs a revival team consisting of at least a preacher, music leader and instrumentalist," said Plummer. He added that requests for smaller needs have come through his office.

"The European Baptist Convention has asked for an overhead projector and the International Baptist Church in Stuttgart, Germany has a need for new or used sheet music," he said. "There also is a need from many churches for bilingual Bibles." He said churches interested in sponsoring requests may contact him at the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Brotherhood department office; phone 376-4791, ext. 5190.

English said the youth volunteers also benefited from the trip. "We had a service when we returned. They said they didn't want to go back on fun trips. They wanted to teach, to see kids change before their eyes."

Other Arkansas Baptists crossed the U.S. border to conduct volunteer projects. Stephen Davis, pastor of First Church in Russellville, said the church's "Acts 1:8: Volunteers in Missions" ministry sent volunteers not only across Russellville and Arkansas and into Montana and Iowa, but to several foreign countries in 1994. The church supports its volunteers through a volunteer reserve fund, which equals 1 percent of the congregation's annual budget.

Davis, an FMB trustee, said individuals and groups from the church conducted "volunteer work in India, Africa, Brazil, Venezuela, Russia and China. We have had 120 members involved in volunteer missions," he noted. "We had 35 in 1994."

He said the church's Acts 1:8 ministry is a mandate from God. "We believe whenever God called us as Christians, we have a ministry to fulfill; to be faithful to go wherever God leads us and opens the door."

Missions work, he added, should be an "act of obedience as joyful and as frightening as it can be."

Davis said the growth in foreign volunteer missions is a result of years of mission work in other countries. "I believe what has happened is that all the missionaries' work for all these years is starting to come forth into a harvest. We are reaping the harvest of the work of those who went before us."

"So volunteer missionaries are basically to go in and assist existing ministries," he said. "Especially where God is at work in an evangelistic way."

For Bob Hettinga, minister of business administration for First Church, using volunteers in 1994 made "business sense."

"From the business aspect of it, we're looking at volunteers as more bang for the buck," he said.

"For every person who prayed to receive Christ, our cost was \$6 per person," Hettinga said. "We added up all the costs for transportation and out-of-pocket expenses to support the mission and divided the total by the number of people to who pray to receive Christ."

Hettinga added that the church works through the FMB in planning its missions efforts. "The Foreign Mission Board provides us accountability. The FMB also provides someone to travel with us."

Davis underscored the need to send volunteers on missions projects. "It's a battle every time you start to do one. It is spiritual warfare."

## Garland highlights children's ministries at 'heart' conference

"It takes an entire village to raise a child," an African proverb declares. But today, families often have no support system to help them rear their children. Focusing on those needs, Arkansas Baptists' 1995 "Have a Heart Like Jesus" conference highlighted the theme, "A Heart for Children." The sixth annual event, sponsored by the Arkansas Baptist state missions department, was held Feb. 9 at Immanuel Church in Little Rock.

"I think sometimes we ignore the real needs of children," said conference coordinator Diana Lewis, the missions department's Christian social ministries consultant. "Especially in the parts of the community that are unreached, we need to center ministries around the needs of children."

The need for the church to intervene in the lives of children was emphasized by keynote speaker, Diana Garland, dean of the Carver School of Social Work at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Capturing participants' attention with a dramatic rendition of Mary as a harried Jewish mom on her way to synagogue, Garland also pointed out hard facts about the lives of children.

"In Arkansas, a family of three persons receives a maximum monthly benefit of \$204 and food stamps that average about 50 cents per meal per person," she pointed out. "Do we really believe people choose such a life because it's easy? How easy would it be for you to support your family on \$204 a month?"

"We must stop punishing people for being poor, for feeling helpless to get their lives together," she declared. "If there is one thing we know from Scripture, it is that God values poor folks."

"Poor children are often neglected, but they are not the only neglected children in our society," Garland added. "Most children spend at least a portion of each day...on their own." Describing "an army of young people roaming without supervision for three or more hours each day," she added, "We are learning that these are the hours when youngsters are experimenting with drugs and sex."

"What can we do?" she asked. "There are so many ways Christians can put actions to their theology in ways that will communicate to our lost society."

Churches can offer friend-to-friend caring for families in poverty or crisis."

Garland reviewed ministry activities, such as pairing church families with families in homeless shelters, starting church day care centers and taking gift baskets to new moms in the hospital.

Other seminar leaders addressed practical ways to minister to the needs of children. Discovering needs of children, ministering to migrant and low-income children and their families and tutoring children and youth were among topics explored.

Elizabeth Holmes, consultant for family and women's issues with the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission, spoke on advocacy for children. Being an advocate means "taking seriously the idea of



Garland

intervening with children you come into contact with — personally," Holmes noted. This is often done institutionally, through a denomination or child welfare agencies, but in addition, she said, "Each Christian has an obligation to care for children individually."

Garland said part of that individual care includes nurturing the faith development of children. The foundations of faith are trust, unconditional love and grace, she noted. "Children learn to trust by watching others relating to them in a trustworthy way. That element of trust is crucial to having faith in God."

"Focus discipline on guidance in the context of unconditional love," Garland added. "This is discipline that guides children into the future, into making the leap to the self-discipline that comes from within, not from without."

In order to help ground children's faith, adults must help youngsters develop moral behavior, Garland noted. "Give them positive personality labels that reflect positive behavior and point out their gifts," she explained. "On the other hand, when the child misbehaves, label the behavior, not the child."

"Parents need the support of people who will hold their children, bless their children, see their gifts and promise," Garland emphasized. "Children need an adult who thinks they are special. As Christian we must recognize that your children are my children. They belong to all of us."



# Convocation highlights history, theology of revival

By Russell N. Dillard  
Associate Editor, Arkansas Baptist

"The American way will never bring revival. Only God's way will," Paul Cedar told participants at the North American Convocation in Revival Feb. 15.

The convocation, held Feb. 14-16 at First Church, Little Rock, brought spiritual leaders from five countries and hundreds of Arkansans to services focused on revival, spiritual awakening and reformation.

"Most of us know enough about revival to know you can't organize one," said Cedar, president of the Evangelical Free Churches.

Preaching from the third and fourth chapters of Acts, Cedar insisted that "the basic ingredient for revival is prayer."

Cedar, one of several nationally-known leaders speaking during the convocation, noted that the passage recounted "the first controversy in the early church." After Peter and James healed a crippled beggar, they were brought before the Sanhedrin for questioning.

"What did Peter and James do at this time of crisis?" He asked. "They went back and did what the church always should do. They lifted their voices in prayer."

Cedar emphasized the three parts of the prayer: "They acknowledged God, affirmed Scripture and asked for help."

"What happened?" he asked. The place was shaken. This sounds like Acts 2. Could this be the first reviving or renewing of the early church? I believe this is God's norm for the church. It is how He wants us to live: in His presence."

Calling participants to join in prayer for revival across denominational lines, Cedar said, "Brothers and sisters, it is time to pray and it is time to pray together."

The convocation, planned by brothers Bill and Jim Elliff, was sponsored by First Church, which Bill serves as pastor, and Christian Communicators Worldwide, which Jim serves as president.

"Bill and I wanted pastors and leaders, many of them exemplary of everything we have ever thought of," said Jim Elliff, "to leave with a flaming burden to be much deeper, more serious theologians and preachers of the truth."

## Day sessions attract leaders

The convocation's day sessions, attended by invitation only, attracted more than 180 spiritual leaders from 30 states as well as participants from Canada, Indonesia, Korea and China. The sessions concentrated on lectures and dialogue on

the theology, experience and history of revival and reformation.

Bill McLeod, who works with Canadian Revival Fellowship in Winnipeg, Canada, said he attended "because I am deeply interested in revival. When people are meeting together as this body is here, I wanted to come and just be part of it."

"One thing I am certainly getting out of it is fellowship with other believers who are concerned about revival," McLeod said. "It is not everybody that cares about revival, even in churches today."

Jim Elliff said planners targeted "people who have had direct and serious interest in the subject of revival, including pastors who have a hunger for revival."

At least five denominations were represented at the meetings, as well as non-denominational churches and several parachurch organizations such as Precepts Ministries, Campus Crusade and God's Love in Action.

"What we were trying to do is to first of all discover what is authentic revival, because there can be false fire," Jim Elliff explained. "Then we were trying to discover different types of revival and wanted to know what the characteristics of lasting revival are. Third, we asked, 'How can we prepare for revival?' We are



Paul Cedar, president of the Evangelical Free Churches, preaches during the Wednesday evening session of the North American Convocation in Revival, held Feb. 14-16 at First Church, Little Rock.

doing that by studying the history, theology and the experience of revival."

In addition to Cedar, featured speakers included: Richard Owen Roberts, president of International Awakening Ministries; Henry Blackaby, director of the department of Prayer and Spiritual Awakening for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board; Timothy George, dean of Beeson Divinity

School at Samford University in Birmingham, Ala.; and David Bryant, president of Concerts of Prayer International.

Daytime session topics were varied. They ranged from a lecture on Martin Luther's involvement in the Reformation to a panel discussion in which participants answered questions on church discipline, salvation and family television watching.

"It's been challenging," said Jim Hale. "It's been challenging thinking of some of the ideas and being able to gather with others that have an interest in this."

Hale, a pastor of a congregational church in Malta, New York, said he attended because of a "deep interest in revival and awakening. I felt we might experience something similar to things that occurred (during past revivals)."

Evening worship services held nightly were open to the public. They included sermons by feature speakers, special music and prayer sessions. The services attracted more than 1,200 participants each night from many Central Arkansas churches. Participating laypeople also anticipated an urgency for revival.

Melinda Martin, a member of South Highland Church in Little Rock, attended the Wednesday evening session because "I've sensed God's moving and calling His people to revival."

She said "just knowing the people who would be at this conference and knowing their walk with the Lord" attracted her to the service. She also said she appreciated "the outspoken boldness of the Word of God" preached in the services. "So many times we have drifted from that. This convocation is calling us back to that."

Bill Elliff said the idea for the convocation stemmed from the brothers' mutual burden for revival. "I've had a 20-year burden for revival. I traveled for two years with Life Action Ministries, which is devoted to nationwide revival."

"One of the things we were particularly interested in emphasizing," Jim Elliff said, "is that we not only need revival, but we need a great reformation, particularly of (church) leaders."

"Revival without reformation will be short-lived and prone to aberrations," he noted. "But in revival with reformation there is more stability and strength."

He noted that there has not been a nation-wide revival, "or 'Great Awakening,' in 135 years. Our early history was periodically punctuated by revival. It brought us back to our knees, the faith of our fathers and fervency and many church members were converted.

"I don't suppose anything among Baptists would be more important in our day than for the millions of church members who are on the rolls to be converted," he said.

# Burned churches a result of accident, arson

Two Arkansas Baptist church facilities were destroyed by fire in unrelated incidents during January. The fires may result in one church rebuilding and the other relocating.

Westside Church in Warren began burning late Jan. 17 and Cross Roads Church in Liberty Association burned during the early hours of Jan. 28.

"They discovered the fire just before midnight on Jan. 17," said Westside pastor Wally Ferguson. "I haven't seen an official report, but heard they had done an investigation and something malfunctioned in the heating unit. They didn't find any evidence of tampering."

According to Lonnie Latham, director of missions for Bartholomew Association, the damage to Westside "was total. It just burned to the ground. The educational building, which was attached, also burned."

Latham said he was out of town when the facility burned, "but when I drove over to the building that afternoon, there were still flames coming up from the far corner of the building. There was smoke everywhere and the walls were caved in. It just breaks your heart."

"It's been devastating for some of the members," agreed Ferguson. "Emotionally, some had a problem, but they gathered up and said, 'The Lord has something else in mind.'"

The fire may have been most devastating to Ferguson. "I lost my library, \$15,000 worth of sound equipment and instruments (from a former evangelistic ministry), a classical music collection and a hymnal dating back to the 1700s. That's irreplaceable. Every day I think of something I need to run over and get from the church and then I think, 'I can't do that.'"

Ferguson noted that the fire is not the first tragedy the 200-member congregation has had to endure. "The church burned in another fire that happened around 1971 or 1972," he said, "and a tornado came and destroyed the building on Good Friday in 1975. Each time the church rebuilt on this spot."

Despite the third tragedy, Ferguson said, "The church has a real positive outlook."

Latham also noted a positive spirit among church members and described

the church's first Sunday service after the fire as "expectant. There was a certain disbelief, but they were expectant that the Lord's work was going to go on."

"They had a very positive service in facilities that were much smaller than they were used to," said Latham, "and had one saved that morning and one saved that night."



Westside Church in Warren (above) burned into the morning of Jan. 18 as a result of a heater malfunction. The next Sunday members met for worship services at a nearby rented sanctuary (inset).



Ferguson said the positive attitude of church members has resulted in future plans being made for rebuilding. "In fact, we've already elected a building committee and are in the process of determining whether the Lord wants us to build on this site or move to a new location."

"We've already settled with the insurance company and have begun to clean the original site to see if the old slab will do," he said. "At the same time, we're looking at other pieces of property."

Meanwhile, he added, the Westside congregation is renting a former Pentecostal church, "and we're crowded. Our attendance since the fire has been up, so that's complicated things, but it's a good complication."

Cross Roads Church in Liberty Association near Louann, burned about 4 a.m. Jan. 28 as the result of arson.

Tommy Robertson, director of missions for Liberty Association, said the arsonist also "burned Rehobeth Primitive Baptist Church...and vandalized a couple of other churches."

"At Southside Church," Robertson reported, "he broke a window and he did steal some heaters and a speaker or two. At Ebenezer Church, he pulled some heaters out and left the gas going. If it had not been found, it would have blown up."

"They think the same man did all of it," he added. "It all happened the same night."

Robertson said the accused arsonist, a 19-year old Smackover man, is also the primary suspect in the September 1993 slaying of a woman on the Sandyland community.

Union County Sheriff's Office investigator Bob Calhoun said the suspect, Anthony Church, will be charged with arson and homicide.

Calhoun said the church fires provided the evidence needed to arrest Church. Calhoun has been investigating the Sandyland murder for the past 15 months.

"We investigated many other leads in this case," said Calhoun, "but the trail always led back to Anthony Church."

Calhoun said he did not think Church is "a true pyromaniac, but he loves to see stuff burn."

Cross Roads pastor Gordie Givens said the fire was not the first time the church had been victimized by crime.

"In November, they took a big fire extinguisher and covered all our books and Bibles," he remembered. "They also turned the water faucets on and it looked like they had tried to burn the church."

He said the November vandalism caused "about \$1,000 worth of damage to have it cleaned up and replace a fire extinguisher."

Givens reported that the congregation, which recently had dwindled to a few active members, is meeting in the nearby conference center at Beech Springs Camp, which is owned by the association.

Givens emphasized that the church's primary focus will be on gaining new members. "Calls offering to help the church have already started as a result of the news coverage," he said. "But I don't want their money or their help as much as I want them."

He said the congregation is undecided about its future plans. "They want to know what we're going to do," he said. "We plan to rebuild, but slowly. We have to rebuild our congregation back first."

## Pat Ratton retires from ABSC Sunday School department

A foot-high pile of calendars were stacked in front of Pat Ratton as she turned the pages of each, recalling 27 years of service to Arkansas Baptists. Ratton, who retires Feb. 28, has served as an associate in the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Sunday School department since October 1967.

As she sifted through the years represented on her desk, she reflected on her participation in Baptist training and the changes in Sunday School training activities.

"In September 1968 we had a four-night enlargement campaign at First Church, Cabot....March 1970 we had a four-night training school for Liberty Association....February 1976 a three-night training school at First Church, Lewisville....February 1986 a two-night training school for Buckner Association."

She said that as laypeople's schedules became busier, training personnel were asked to come for less time and during weekends.

In addition to changes in training, she noted changes in the faces of state convention employees with whom she has worked. "I made a list and came up with 212 names," she noted.

Ratton, 62, whose responsibilities have included preschool Sunday School and weekday early education, recalled her beginnings in children's ministries. "My call came from the Lord opening and

shutting doors in my life.

"I had been a fourth grade school teacher in El Dorado and the door opened for me to come to First Church in Little Rock and work in the church office," she said. "I felt like I was not using the training I had received in college.

"The minister of education at First Church in Texarkana, Texas, called and wanted to open a kindergarten," she remembered. "I went down there and started a kindergarten program."

In the following years she served as director of children's work for Second Church in Little Rock, minister of childhood education and director of the kindergarten program at Immanuel Church in Pine Bluff and educational secretary for First Church in Little Rock.

She said she considers her work with weekday early education a "significant part" of her ministry. "When I started in 1967, there were mainly kindergartens and not many day care programs. We had our first Weekday Early Education (WEE) workshop for kindergarten teachers in 1972 and I think we had 85 people. We've evolved into two workshops a year and last year we had 637 attend."

Milton Redeker, ABSC Sunday School department director, said Ratton "has built the WEE workshops into something great in Arkansas where four or five state are represented. It is probably one of the best things we do as Arkansas Baptists."

Ratton added that she also has had success "in developing special workers throughout the state."

Redeker said Ratton's retirement will mean the loss of "detail to the department. Pat's probably the most detail-oriented

person I've worked with in my life."

Redeker characterized Ratton as "humorous, a good conference leader, a hard worker and a good friend. God has really used her in a tremendous way."

Ratton said she hopes she has taught others the need "to teach preschoolers the way they learn. Not just sitting down and instilling facts in their heads. We want them to learn some facts, but they can have a miserable time in church learning facts. They need to learn through play."

She said that churches "need to see the importance of teaching babies through five-year-olds."

"We have many of our churches who are still babysitting on Sunday morning," she explained. "Preschool teachers for the last 27 years have heard me say, 'Please don't call the baby room the nursery because that implies custodial care.' If you call it a preschool room, that implies that some teaching can be done.

She said babies "are not going to learn a lot of facts, but they can learn feelings. They can learn that God loves them through their teachers.

"The principles of teaching preschoolers haven't changed all that much," she added, "just the names. We used to be nursery and beginner and now we are preschool."

Ratton, a native of Smackover, earned the bachelor of sciences degree from Southern State College (now Southern Arkansas University) in Magnolia and attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

She plans to do volunteer work with children and continue to work with children in her church, Park Hill in North Little Rock, where she serves as coordinator of the four- and five-year-old departments. She also plans to travel, read, crochet and "spend some time with my great-nieces."



Pat Ratton

## Woman's Mission Union annual meeting to explore growth

Arkansas Baptist women will find "A Time to Grow" during the 106th Woman's Missionary Union annual meeting March 17-18 at First Church, Conway. The meeting will include worship, WMU business sessions and a 25th birthday party for the Mission Friends, Girls in Action and Acteens organizations.

Although it is a WMU event, Julia Ketner, director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention WMU department, said the meeting "is a missions event for all: men and women."

The theme, "will explore three areas of growth: a time to grow spiritually, numerically and a time to grow in ministering and witnessing."

Ketner emphasized the importance of the missions speakers, Bible study and a Friday evening fellowship.

The meeting will feature speakers: Ellis and Judy Leagans, foreign missionaries to Colombia; Thurman and Kathie Braughton, foreign missionaries to the Philippines; Debbie Moore, foreign missionary to Liberia; Dorcas Byrd, home missionary in Houston, Texas; and ABSC missions department director Jimmy Barrentine.

Other program features will include Bruce Tippitt, pastor of Fianna Hills Church in Fort Smith, leading each Bible study session and Cindy Duke of the Southern Baptist Convention WMU leading "Growing through Change" segments.

A Friday night fellowship will highlight the 25th birthday of Mission Friends, GAs and Acteens. Ketner encouraged GA and Acteen members to attend the fellowship following the Friday evening session. The fellowship also will feature a question and answer session with national and state WMU leaders about changes in the WMU structure for 1995.

There is no cost to attend the meeting. A nursery for birth through pre-first grade will be provided during each session.

Participants are responsible for their own lodging and meals. Reservations may be made with: Holiday Inn, phone 329-2961; Days Inn, phone 450-7575; Best Western, 329-9855; Comfort Inn, phone 329-0300; and Motel 6, phone 327-6623.

For more information, contact the state WMU department; phone 376-4791, ext. 5137.

## BSSB trustees receive good financial report

By Charles Willis

Baptist Sunday School Board

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—After a 1993-94 loss of \$8.2 million, the Baptist Sunday School Board has experienced a successful first quarter ahead of budgeted income, trustees learned during their Feb. 6-7 meeting, where they approved a new upper management structure designed to improve budget management.

Citing resources such as Sunday school literature, "Experiencing God" and "The Mind of Christ," President James T. Draper Jr. said the board must "provide materials to point individuals to the only food that satisfies spiritual hunger for eternity." Meeting the needs of individuals and churches through development of these kinds of materials, along with stronger financial controls, has contributed to a positive report, he indicated.

Actual revenue of \$59,073,000, was \$687,000 above the revised budget of \$58,386,000 for the first quarter, which began in October 1994. Expenses of \$56,707,000 were \$2,215,000 below budget. Funds provided from operations (FPO), which is revenue after costs and expenses, stood at \$1,575,000, compared with a budgeted negative \$1,349,000.

Trustees approved a revised 1994-95 operating budget of \$243,403,073, and FPO of \$100,000 or .04 percent of total revenue. They also approved a revised fixed asset budget of \$9,314,010.

Trustees approved a newly created position of executive vice president and chief operating officer and elected Ted Warren, vice president for business and finance, to the post. He will continue serving as interim vice president of the renamed finance and business services group until a vice president is elected to the position.

Among other actions implemented for the current fiscal year are:

- reworking the 94-95 budget, with

### Henry sees 'solidifying' among Southern Baptists

NASHVILLE, TN (BP) — Southern Baptist Convention President Jim Henry told Baptist Sunday School Board trustees during their semiannual meeting Feb. 6-7 he senses "a solidifying and settling in a good way among Southern Baptists."

"We're moving ahead" is the sense I get from people. It doesn't mean we are out of the woods, but the rank and file appreciate what is taking place," he observed.

"Let's keep talking and praying. Let's keep the door open. I think we can see

our best years in front of us," he said.

"There is a tremendous respect for the SBC from outside the convention," Henry continued. "Sometimes it is grudging, but a lot of the time it is gratifying. When I go where other evangelical groups are represented, I realize the SBC is greatly appreciated by the evangelical church and even beyond. There is a respect for who we are."

He noted "the future of denominations is a cultural challenge. We have to work hard at keeping an appreciation for the denominational entity."

realistic, conservative goals, expense reductions and a commitment to effective management.

- monthly and quarterly accountability meetings.

- cost control and reductions, using component work groups, establishing authority levels, emphasizing purchasing policies and procedures and using a communication plan.

- financial and operating information with improved accuracy, supplemental reports and short-term fixes.

Draper listed challenges he sees for the board. First, the board must "get our financial house in order, giving our best efforts to operate on a cash, break-even basis." Referencing the positive financial report, he added, "we understand that one quarter does not a year make. We are committed to continued efforts."

Also, the board must fine-tune the organization and structure for best results. Draper said he and Warren now make decisions about board operations after input from the executive management group which includes the vice presidents and executive director for corporate affairs.

To effectively serve churches, he said, "we must provide the very best in resources

to assist in Great Commission ministry."

In another matter, a charter amendment that will result in the downsizing of the board of trustees from its current 93 members to about 58 members by the year 2000 was approved. The amendment also must be approved by the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee later this month and by messengers to the 1995 Southern Baptist Convention in June in Atlanta. Downsizing will be accomplished by attrition with all current trustees allowed to complete their terms of service.

Currently, states with 20,000 members are eligible to have one trustee of the BSSB and one additional trustee for each 250,000 members. As amended, the requirement for additional trustees would be increased to 500,000 members.

"This is in keeping with actions being taken by other agencies of the convention," Draper told trustees. "Part of the benefit is financial. More importantly, a smaller board enables each trustee to give more input and exercise more influence."

In other actions, trustees approved a 4 percent conference center rate increase for 1997-98 and re-elected Kirk Humphreys, a layman from Oklahoma City to a second term as trustee chairman.

## Officials grapple with literature ordering problems

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—Acknowledging numerous problems in getting orders for dated literature to churches accurately and on time the last two quarters, Baptist Sunday School Board officials announced corrective actions in progress.

"We really missed the mark" for October-November-December (OND) 1994 and January-February-March (JFM) 1995, said Ted Warren, executive vice president and chief operating officer. "Our service level to the churches has been far below our standards, and we are doing everything we can as fast as we can to get things fixed."

"Our goal is high-value dated literature orders that are filled with a 100 percent accuracy rate, arrive on time and at the lowest possible cost to churches," he said.

Warren said the board responded to customer requests to make Sunday school literature more "timely and relevant" by reducing production schedules from 40 months to less than 12 months for some titles. This resulted in the need to change processes at every stage, including reducing the eight-week shipping cycle to six weeks.

He listed eight problem areas and corrective actions being taken. Warren said the entire literature production, distribution and shipping process is under continuous review, errors are analyzed and improvements identified and implemented.

"The prayers, suggestions and support of Southern Baptists would be appreciated as we work hard to solve these problems and meet the needs of individuals and churches."

## Staff changes

**Garland Brackett** retired Jan. 29 as pastor of Green Meadows Church in Pine Bluff, following more than seven years as pastor. In his 33 years of ministry, Brackett served churches in Greenwood, Cedarville, Ozark, Hensley, Arkadelphia, North Little Rock and Pine Bluff. He has been a member of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Executive Board and served in numerous associational leadership positions. Brackett is a graduate of Westark Community College in Fort Smith, Ouachita Baptist University and was the first graduate of the Little Rock Center of Boyce Bible School. A retirement reception for Brackett and his wife, Annetta, will be held in the fellowship hall of Amhoy Church in North Little Rock March 18 at 2 p.m. The Brackets will reside at 4300 Lorraine Drive, Little Rock, AR 72206; phone 501-888-5573. He will be available to do pulpit supply work, lead revivals or serve as an interim pastor.

**James Gregory Lawson** is serving as pastor of Calvary Church in Walnut Ridge, going there from Jonesboro where he had been a member of Central Church. Lawson, who has served as interim pastor of Shannon Church in Pochontas, is assistant professor of religious education and director of counseling for Williams Baptist College. In addition, he has served as a consultant-teacher of the Prayer for Spiritual Awakening for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board and minister of education and prayer for Royal Oaks Church in Dallas, Texas. He is a graduate of Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, Tenn.; Tennessee Technological University of Cookeville; Campbell University School of Law in Buies Creek, N. C.; Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary; and the University of North Texas in Denton. Lawson and his wife, Betty, have two sons, James Gregory II and John Taylor.

**Schanon Caudle** became pastor of First Church in Marvell Jan. 31 where he had served as interim pastor since July 1994. He previously served as youth minister of Shady Grove Church in Van Buren and as both part-time youth minister and full-time associate pastor of Calvary Church in Fort Smith. Caudle is a student at Mid-America Seminary in Memphis. He is married to the former Cassandra Williams of Fort Smith. They have a son, Andrew.

**Edd Spurlock** joined the staff of Second Church in Little Rock Feb. 19 as youth/college minister. He and his wife, Jayne, will move to Little Rock from Fort Worth, where he has been director of prospective



## ARKANSAS ALL OVER

By MILLIE GILL

student services for Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He previously served churches in Louisiana and Texas. Spurlock is a graduate of Northwestern State University in Natchitoches, La., and Southwestern Seminary.

**Mitch Martin** began serving Jan. 22 as pastor of Hindsville Church where he had served as associate and interim pastor.

**David Spraggins** became pastor of First Church in Hampton Feb. 5, coming there from Atlanta, Texas. He previously was pastor of other churches in Arkansas, including those in Dumas and Fouke.

**Robert "Bob" Parsley** will begin serving March 5 as pastor of First Church in Smackover, coming there from Waialae Baptist Church in Honolulu, Hawaii. He previously was pastor of First Church in Dardanelle, First Church of Prescott and Lula Church in Lula, Miss. He also has served as a chaplain for Baptist Medical Center in Little Rock. Parsley is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is married to the former Carole McKenzie of Hughes who formerly served as a Southern Baptist missionary teacher in Nigeria. They have three sons, Robert, Tim and Kelly.

**Al Ray Taylor** will join the staff of First Church in Mena March 5 as minister of music and youth, coming there from Hamburg where he has served First Church in the same position for 13 years. In addition, he has served on the staff of Gardner Church in Hamburg and Parkview Church in El Dorado. He also has served in numerous associational leadership roles, as well as chairman of the Baptist Student Union area committee. He is a member of the Master Singers of Arkansas. Taylor is a graduate of the University of Arkansas at Monticello. He and his wife, Carrie Ann, have two daughters, Margaret and Mollie.

**Steve Bushey** has accepted the call to join the staff of First Church in Little Rock as minister to students and will come there from First Baptist Church in Brandon, Miss. He also has served as a youth pastor in Missouri and Oklahoma. Bushey is a graduate of Southern Nazarene University in Bethany, Okla., and is working toward his master of divinity degree through seminary extension classes of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Janet, have five children, Leah, Evan, James, Samuel and Hannah.



*Arkansas Baptist evangelist Angel Martinez (center) of Fort Smith was recognized during the recent Arkansas Baptist evangelists retreat for 60 years of ministry in evangelism. The first annual retreat, held at Sonshine Mountain Retreat Center near Mountainburg, was coordinated by Tom Cox (right) of Mountainburg. Ron Pledger (left), president of the Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists, was among the featured speakers at the two-day retreat.*

## Church news

Mountain Home First Church will host Christian recording artists Ray Boltz, Ron David Moore and Greg Long in concert for two nights, Feb. 27-28, at the church.

Berry Street Church in Springdale recently dedicated its new 400-seat sanctuary and education facility with a service that included presentation of the building key to pastor Richard D. Perry by Gene Ingram, building committee chairman. Speakers were Harold Gateley, director of missions for Washington-Madison Association, retired pastor Burton A. Miley and former pastor James Criswell.

Conway Second Church held a note-burning service Jan. 8 to celebrate the final payment of their \$850,000 education fellowship center that was completed in 1988. Pastor Larry Pillow was assisted in the service by finance committee chairman Keith Johnson, fund-raising chairman Conrad Carroll and building committee chairman Joel Hawkins.

Clarendon First Church launched the observance of "A Century of Love" with an adult Valentine party Feb. 14 that included Sunday School class skits and a potluck dinner. Other centennial activities will include a pie supper, cake walk, ice cream supper and an October homecoming.

Gentry First Church will begin observance of its centennial April 29 with a 7 p.m. old-fashioned social. The 100th anniversary celebration will continue April 30 with a 10 a.m. worship service that will be followed by a luncheon and a 1:30 p.m. centennial celebration.

Crosspoint Church in North Little Rock sponsored a drive to collect blankets for the Transient Lodge in North Little Rock as part of an effort to involve young men of the church in a hands-on mission project. Royal Ambassadors and their leader delivered the blankets as part of the mission outreach project.

## Obituaries

Louise Fowler, a member of Brown's Chapel Church of Manila, died Feb. 7 at age 78. A resident of Manila since 1930, she was the widow of Harvey Fowler who had served as pastor of several Arkansas Baptist churches. Her funeral services were conducted Feb. 10 at a Manila funeral home by her sons, Van Fowler, a pastor in DeSoto, Mo.; Carrol Fowler, a pastor in Indianapolis, Ind.; and Jim Fowler, a pastor in Sallisaw, Okla. Other survivors are a sister, seven grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

## 'Here's Hope' witnessing efforts include training, prayer and commitment

"The number one objective of the 60 days of the 'Here's Hope. Share Jesus Now.' witnessing effort is to share Christ with every lost person in Arkansas," explained Clarence Shell, director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention evangelism department. "It's of critical importance."

The national witnessing emphasis began Jan. 9 and will continue until March 9. It will culminate in many churches with harvest revivals in March and April.

"We are trying to involve laypeople in present-day witnessing that will continue for their lifetime," Shell emphasized. He noted that this is the first time in the history of the Southern Baptist Convention that the denomination has promoted a concentrated emphasis on personal witnessing.

Shell has personally provided much of the witnessing training for churches in the state that are participating in the emphasis. Larry Wilson, pastor of Cullendale First Church in Camden, noted that Shell kicked off the church's witnessing effort with a special emphasis on the "Roman Road" witnessing technique and a Sunday blitz of preaching morning and evening on the Here's Hope emphasis.

"I don't know what's going to happen — but we're going to try," Wilson said. "We've had quite a few visitors and our congregation is catching the vision." The church will follow the witnessing effort in six weeks with a harvest revival.

A smaller church with a bivocational pastor also is catching the vision. Hurricane Lake Church in Bryant has compiled a list of prospects, provided witness training and are cultivating prospects, according to pastor Max Deaton. "We had a soul-winning dedication in January, 20 people contacting the prospect list and continue to have weekly reports on Wednesday nights," Deaton noted.

"We have one couple with four in the family anticipating getting into church and a lady and her child, who had been attending Vacation Bible School for two years, both attend Sunday School as a direct result of lay witnessing efforts," he reported. "God can use the people if we will let Him."

Hurricane Lake Church also will hold a harvest revival March 12-16 and continue the witnessing through the year

with the goal of "25 in '95."

Clarendon First Church is continuing witnessing efforts even though the church currently is without a pastor. The process was already in the planning stage when the former pastor left, church secretary Melinda Plumly explained.

"The revival committee just kept pushing, kept encouraging people to make day-to-day contacts," she said. Cottage prayer meetings and keeping the witnessing effort in front of the people were essential to keeping the process on track. "We're a praying church," Plumly said. The church's harvest festival is already scheduled for next month, whether the church secures a pastor by that time or not. "We're in full swing," she commented. "We're out there witnessing on the streets, at jobs, in the stores."

A large congregation that has approached the witnessing effort in a big way is Park Hill Church in North Little Rock. "We're having our own evangelism conference," said Dennis Coop, minister of education. John Sullivan, executive director of the Florida Baptist Convention, will lead an evangelistic weekend starting Feb. 24. Events will include a Friday night rally, a Saturday morning breakfast with Sullivan for men and boys and a noon luncheon for women and girls.

"All three sessions are aimed at ways of using your contact in witnessing and concern for lost people," Coop said. On Sunday morning, both services at Park Hill Church will be geared toward having people make commitments to witnessing. "There will be several commitment options," Coop explained. "One will be to witness to 10 people in the next 12 months, another will be to participate in a witness training program, the next would be to participate in prayer and share accountability groups and finally a commitment to pray for the persons who have made the witnessing commitment."

After the 12-month commitment, the church will hold a harvest revival in February 1996. The entire staff is involved in the effort, Coop said. Churchwide goals include having a minimum of 50 persons make a commitment to witnessing as well as seeking to baptize 100 people during the 12-month period.

# FMB sends world 'valentine,' adopts 7 basic principles

By Robert O'Brien

Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board

WAKE FOREST, NC (BP)—Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board trustees sent a "valentine" to the world Feb. 14 as they appointed 44 new missionaries to join more than 4,000 others.

They also approved seven principles to undergird the board's missions program during their Feb. 13-15 meeting at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C.

FMB President Jerry Rankin challenged those appointed in the Valentine's Day service to make known the "mystery" of Jesus Christ on their far-flung mission fields.

Meanwhile, trustees conducted business, including unanimous adoption of the seven principles. That included strengthening the second principle to emphasize belief in the reality of Hell.

Rankin noted that the principles and previously approved vision and mission statements grew out of a yearlong process of fine-tuning input from trustees, missionaries and staff.

He urged their ratification to go along with the vision and mission statements in setting "the direction for this board as we move into the 21st century."

The principles declare:

■ "Our basic commitment is obedience to the lordship of Jesus Christ and God's infallible Word.

■ "Our basic belief is that Jesus Christ is God's only provision for salvation and that people without personal faith in him are lost and will spend eternity in Hell.

■ "Our basic means of understanding and fulfilling God's mission is prayer.

■ "Our basic purpose is to provide all people an opportunity to hear, understand and respond to the gospel in their own cultural context.

■ "Our basic task is evangelism through proclamation, discipling, equipping and ministry that results in indigenous Baptist churches.

■ "Our basic strategy is to send and support gifted, God-called missionaries who, with mutual respect, accountability and cooperation, carry out the Great Commission in an incarnational witness.

■ "Our basic role is to lead and facilitate the international missionary involvement of Southern Baptists in partnership with overseas Baptists and other Christians who are fulfilling the Great Commission."

Trustees also pondered, without any action, whether missionaries and FMB staff should be asked to sign the document.

In other business, trustees passed actions to safeguard against conflict of interest by trustees, staff and their relatives and to outline wording to be used in reporting termination or resignation of missionaries who depart under less-than-satisfactory conditions.

Trustees also learned that overseas baptisms exceeded 300,000 for the first time in board history last year, and that 1994's record-breaking appointment year has risen from 534 (reported earlier) to 545. Eleven more two-year workers were added after the previous report in early December.

The 545 total breaks 1993's record of 498. It includes 255 career and associate missionary appointments — the highest in seven years — and a record 290 two-year International Service Corps workers and journeymen. The two-year worker total tops the 1993 record of 275. The board's record for career and associate appointments was set in 1985 with 304.

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# Sunday School emphasis begins March 12

Arkansas Baptists are urged to "Bring Them In" to Sunday School during a six-week emphasis on Sunday School attendance and outreach. The campaign, "Bring Them In: Reach Arkansas," will begin March 12 and conclude Easter Sunday, April 16.

Milton Redeker, director of the Arkansas Baptist Sunday School department, said the campaign is an opportunity for churches to "give a fresh expression of

compassion for members and prospects who need Bible study" and to "renew their spiritual vitality through visits with people who need to know Jesus."

He said an outreach campaign also allows a church "to stretch itself and get a new vision of what God can do through a church that cares about people."

Redeker said the campaign will support his "Five by Two" goal of having 500,000 people enrolled in Sunday School by the year 2000. "That's a God-sized vision. I believe we can reach more than the 257,907 we have presently enrolled in Sunday School in Arkansas."

Noting that Sunday school growth in Arkansas has progressed slowly in the past 45 years, Redeker added, "In 1949, the first record we have, we had 160,305 enrolled in Sunday School."

Redeker said the attendance campaign will emphasize "the basics." Pointing to Luke 14:23 as support for the emphasis, he said the passage begins, "Compel them to come..."

"That is a command," he said. "Look at the words 'bring' and 'compel.' You don't ask people anymore to do anything and they do it. You have to go out and make a friend and bring them, compel them to come in. That is the only way it's going to be done."

He said the spring emphasis will be in addition to the annual October "Great Day in the Morning" high-attendance Sunday.

He reminded pastors of the need for their support in promoting the campaign.

"Remember, the most powerful place of promotion for the pastor is the pulpit. The pastor could preach sermons built around the Scripture passage or theme of the campaign."

Redeker also offered several tips for churches to increase their attendance and outreach efforts during the campaign:

■ Start one or more new classes before of during the campaign.

■ Conduct prospect visitation every week during the campaign.

■ Set contact goals. "Often we fail to reach attendance goals because of insufficient contacts," he explained.

■ Visit the homes of all prospects and chronic absentees during the week prior to high attendance day.

Redeker urged churches to use a packet of support materials to promote the campaign. The packet contains emphasis information, adhesive attendance stickers, clip art, commitment cards and campaign posters.

He said churches can order the material packets from the ABCS Sunday School department. "They can get as many commitment cards, stickers and campaign posters as they need. We've had a tremendous response to this already."

He said the packet cost is \$10.50 per church, adding that "we haven't changed our price in years."

For more information, contact Brenda Seal at the ABCS Sunday School department, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203; phone 501-376-4791, ext. 5128.

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**Deadline for student summer missions, Sojourners applications approaches**

ATLANTA (BP)—March 10 is the deadline for applications to be a Sojourner or student summer missionary with the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

The Sojourner program is for high school students who have completed their junior or senior year. Sojourners work as volunteers six to 10 weeks in full-time home missions service. Food and housing are provided.

The student summer missions program is for college students who serve 10 weeks in full-time summer missions work. Housing and food are provided for summer missionaries, who also receive assistance with transportation and a \$600 stipend.

More information is available from state convention offices or the Home Mission

Board at 1-800-HMB-VOLS.

Although there is a March 10 deadline for HMB student summer missions, the Arkansas Baptist State Convention missions department still has a need for student missionaries this summer," said department associate Pete Petty.

Petty said the department "uses summer missionaries in migrant centers, migrant missions, resort missions and for some associational and local missions work.

"It has been rewarding," said Petty, "to see the great work summer missionaries have done in Arkansas and the number of people which have been won to the Lord."

For more information, contact Petty at the missions department; phone 376-4791, ext. 5249.

**Choir robes for sale** — Robe color: Eggshell (59). Two sets reversible stoles, red & brown, purple & green. \$20 each for robe & stole. Please contact Jerry Miller, (501) 843-6546.

**Accepting resumes** — for part-time youth minister. Send to First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 438, Dierks, AR 71833.

**Receiving resumes** — for full-time pastor. Natural Steps Baptist Church, Roland, Ark. Average Sunday School attendance 160. Growing community in west Little Rock. Contact Bill Blankenship, Search Committee Chairman, 24809 Saddle Ranch Lane, Roland, AR 72135.

**Position open** — for full-time youth/music minister. Send resume to Search Committee, Calvary Baptist Church, P.O. Box 825, Osceola, AR 72370.

**Accepting resumes** — for minister of music/education. Calvary Baptist Church, Hwy. 4 East, Camden, AR 71701.

**Accepting resumes** — for part-time youth director. Send resumes to Personnel Committee, Fairfield Bay Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1029, Fairfield Bay, AR 72088.

**Accepting resumes** — for minister of youth and singles. Seminary degree required. Search Committee, East Side Baptist Church, 529 East Court St., Paragould, AR 72450.

**For Sale** — 1978 Chevrolet 25-passenger bus; 350 auto trans; a/c, good tires, seats newly recovered; 83,000 miles; nice city bus. Also, 1983 GMC 44-passenger bus; 454 Allison auto trans; separate a/c motor; good tires, high back seats newly recovered; 67,000 miles; nice road bus. East Side Baptist Church, 529 East Court Street, Paragould, AR 72450; 501-236-6255; or 501-236-3473.

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**MUSIC FESTIVALS**

**State, area music festivals held for youth**

Youth choirs, vocalists and instrumentalists will perform for recognition and awards during the area and state Youth Music Festivals held this spring. Six area festivals have been scheduled and are requisites for the state festival May 6 at Geyer Springs Church in Little Rock.

Rob Hewell, director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention church music ministries department, said the festivals "provide an adjudicated event...which encourages the best effort in the choice, preparation and presentation of music suitable for worship in the corporate setting."

Hewell said participating choirs and individuals must attend an area festival to be eligible for the state festival. Although choirs do not have to adjudicate at one of the area festivals, soloists, vocal ensembles, instrumental soloists and ensembles, pianists, organists and song leading participants must be adjudicated and receive a "superior" rating to be eligible for participation in the state festival.

Area festivals will be held at the following dates and locations:

March 5 at First Church in Hope; contact James Alcock at 777-5757; March 5 at Walnut Street Church in Jonesboro, contact Ric Hunt or John Dresbach at 935-1950; April 1 at Pulaski Heights Church in Little Rock, contact Jim Munns, phone 661-1129; April 2 at First Church in Warren, contact Bob White, phone 226-5884; and April 3 at Emdale Church in Springdale, contact Allen Cade, phone 524-3106.

The time and place of an additional area festival in northwest Arkansas will be announced. For more information, contact Tommy Havens at First Church, Russellville; phone 968-1316.

The cost for the state festival is: \$2 per person for choirs and large ensembles; \$10 per small ensemble; and \$5 per vocal or instrumental vocalist. There is a \$50 maximum per choir and an \$80 maximum per two choirs.

The registration deadline for these costs is April 10. Costs will increase after April 10. To register, send the form found in the *State Music Ministry Handbook* and fees to ABCS Church Music Ministries, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock AR 72203.

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East Point Baptist Church	227.07
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Ola First Baptist Church	163.90
Plainview First Baptist Church	265.92
Pleasant View Baptist Church	334.14
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### ARKANSAS VALLEY BAPTIST ASSN

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Friendship Baptist Church	971.35
Helena First Baptist Church	1,242.00
Holly Grove First Baptist Church	25.00
Hughes First Baptist Church	1,010.00
Immanuel Baptist Church	161.00
Laabrook First Baptist Church	506.17
Lena First Baptist Church	1,140.50
Marvell First Baptist Church	390.51
Monroe Baptist Church	500.00
Mona Baptist Church	1,073.00
Pettys Chapel Baptist Church	120.00
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Gardner Baptist Church	100.00
Harding First Baptist Church	210.00
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Spring Lake Baptist Church	329.25
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Carrollville Baptist Church	1,073.30
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	349.94

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Ward First Baptist Church	640.25
Wattensaw Baptist Church	124.05

### CENTENNIAL BAPTIST ASSN

	Gift
Abeyard First Baptist Church	\$ 160.00
Albers First Baptist Church	944.75
Delmit First Baptist Church	1,409.00
East Side Baptist Church	100.00
Faith Baptist Church	63.33
Gillett First Baptist Church	315.00
Hagler Baptist Church	110.00
North Maple Baptist Church	71.00
Redwell Baptist Church	1,042.21
Rocky Side Baptist Church	25.00
St. Charles Baptist Church	443.42
Stuttgart First Baptist Church	8,103.05
Titchner Baptist Church	70.00

\$ 13,944.76





Concord Baptist Church	26.00
Cove First Baptist Church	336.45
Dallas Avenue Baptist Church	804.40
De Queen First Baptist Church	1,685.00
Dillman Baptist Church	197.00
Grannis Baptist Church	182.58
Hatfield First Baptist Church	253.05
Hendon Baptist Church	50.00
Hena First Baptist Church	3,373.00
New Hope Baptist Church	48.00
Palmer Baptist Church	293.85
Two Mile Baptist Church	106.00
Vanderwood First Baptist Church	343.46
Wicker First Baptist Church	570.00
Yocana Baptist Church	150.00

Bales First Baptist Church	1,091.19
Bidney Baptist Church	364.50
Zion Hill Baptist Church	859.84

WASH-MADISON BAPTIST ASSN.	Gift
Berry Street Baptist Church	9 346.75
Black Oak Baptist Church	805.00
Brush Creek Baptist Church	319.44
Grand First Baptist Church	1,276.63
Edeleda Baptist Church	1,639.07
Fayetteville First Baptist Church	301.51
Greenland Baptist Church	1,465.00
Hindsville Baptist Church	383.31
Huntville First Baptist Church	424.00
Kingston Baptist Church	26.00
Liberty Baptist Church	494.73
Lincoln First Baptist Church	128.00
Old Missouri Rd. Baptist Church	195.00
Prairie Grove First Baptist Church	1,341.36
Providence Baptist Church	608.82
Sangremont Baptist Church	165.00
Sierra Estates Chapel	25.00
Blent Grove Baptist Church	228.00
Southside Baptist Church	131.24
Springdale Baptist Church	424.26
Springdale First Baptist Church	585.00
Walter City Baptist Church	186.00
University Baptist Church	1,487.77
Western Hills Baptist Church	16.40
Winslow First Baptist Church	61.93

**PULASKI COUNTY BAPTIST ASSN**

Alexander First Baptist Church	6 389.16
Archview Baptist Church	645.56
Barnett Memorial Baptist Church	174.15
Brookwood First Baptist Church	290.00
First Southern Baptist Church	570.00
Calvary Baptist Church	2,649.67
Crystal Hill Baptist Church	559.08
East End Baptist Church	646.75
Forest Tower Baptist Church	545.34
Geyer Springs First Baptist Church	3,474.20
Hansen Memorial Baptist Church	100.00
Holly Springs Baptist Church	100.00
Isaiah Baptist Church	4,344.28
Indian Springs Baptist Church	150.00
Ironbound Baptist Church	1,174.74
Lakeshore Drive Baptist Church	100.00
Lancaster Road Baptist Church	78.53
Life Line Baptist Church	1,119.69
Little Rock First Baptist Church	1,223.95
Little Rock Second Baptist Church	100.00
Mehanna Street Baptist Church	420.00
Martindale Baptist Church	3.00
Natural Steps Baptist Church	3,642.00
North Point Baptist Church	163.00
Oliver Baptist Church	41.00
Older Creek Baptist Church	91.00
Parkway Place Baptist Church	1,610.00
Pine Grove Baptist Church	1,171.82
Plainview Baptist Church	21.00
Pleasant Grove Baptist Church	228.07
Pulaski Heights Baptist Church	1,305.00
Roland Baptist Church	100.00
Rosedale Baptist Church	315.00
Shannon Hills First Baptist Church	1,117.00
Sherridan First Baptist Church	1,159.00
South Highland Baptist Church	463.00
Southern Lane Baptist Church	1,000.00
Trinity Baptist Church	431.67
Tyler Street Baptist Church	413.00
Wise Baptist Church	1,685.00
Woodlawn Baptist Church	78.50
Woodson Baptist Church	598.94

SOUTHWEST ARK. BAPTIST ASSN	Gift
Anderson Baptist Church	9 221.50
Archie Heights Baptist Church	112.74
Beach Street First Baptist Church	27.00
Bredley Baptist Church	60.00
Calvary Baptist Church	26.00
Carfield Baptist Church	401.76
Central Baptist Church	4,527.75
Cornerstone Baptist Church	186.00
East End Baptist Church	41.34
Fellowship Baptist Church	143.37
Garland Baptist Church	35.00
Genoa First Baptist Church	374.74
Highland Hills Baptist Church	112.00
Hope First Baptist Church	2,195.00
Macedonia #1 Baptist Church	162.00
Macedonia at Oddridge Bap.Church	1,000.00
McNeil Second Baptist Church	120.00
Memorial Baptist Church	175.00
Mt. Zion Baptist Church	145.17
Piney Grove Baptist Church	112.35
Pigeon Baptist Church	82.00
Rocky Mount Baptist Church	209.00
Shiloh Memorial Baptist Church	125.00
Springhill Baptist Church	478.00
Stamps First Baptist Church	100.00
Sylvanite Baptist Church	250.00
Tennessee Baptist Church	127.64
Trinity Baptist Church	1,237.72
Westside Baptist Church	829.77

TRIO-COUNTY BAPTIST ASSN	Gift
Antioch Baptist Church	9 140.00
Barton Chapel Baptist Church	135.00
Beckwour Baptist Church	35.77
Calvary Baptist Church	642.98
Cherry Valley Baptist Church	600.00
Colt Baptist Church	130.00
Crawfordsville First Baptist	232.38
Earle Baptist Church	1,507.49
Essanah Baptist Church	141.42
Fair Dale Baptist Church	136.20
Fitzgerald Baptist Church	388.93
Forrest City First Baptist Church	1,117.00
Great City Second Baptist Church	1,159.00
Gilmore Baptist Church	15.00
Gladden Baptist Church	325.00
Good Hope Baptist Church	200.00
Harris Baptist Chapel	200.00
Hydrick Baptist Church	25.00
Isaiah Baptist Church	200.90
Ingram Boulevard Baptist Church	168.12
Hudson First Baptist Church	31.44
Hurricane Baptist Church	150.00
Midway Baptist Church	359.35
Horton Baptist Church	760.53
New Life Baptist Church	105.00
Palatine First Baptist Church	130.00
Parkin First Baptist Church	854.00
Pleasant Hill Baptist Church	165.00
Ridgeview Baptist Church	65.18
Shell Lake Baptist Church	62.41
Tilton Baptist Church	914.00
Turrell Baptist Church	717.68
Union Ave Baptist Church	525.00
West Memphis First Baptist Church	895.64
West Memphis Second Baptist Church	215.00
Wheatley Baptist Church	1,353.00
Wynne Baptist Church	2,466.00

WHITE RIVER BAPTIST ASSN	Gift
Antioch Baptist Church	9 257.14
Archie Baptist Church	1,000.00
Big Flat Baptist Mission	129.22
Brown Baptist Church	36.57
Bull Branch First Baptist Church	624.85
Crutter First Baptist Church	2,524.43
East Oakland Baptist Church	98.45
Eastside Baptist Church	253.43
Fairfax First Baptist Church	1,000.00
Gaswell Baptist Mission	18.33
Gaswell Baptist Church	506.03
Henderson First Baptist Church	133.00
Hill Top Baptist Church	130.00
Hopewell Baptist Church	23.00
Lone Rock Baptist Church	150.00
Midway Baptist Church	631.48
Mountain Home Baptist Church	65.00
Mountain Home First Baptist Church	3,423.00
New Hope Baptist Church	137.95
Peel First Baptist Church	24.99
Piggas Baptist Church	158.44
Plyant Baptist Church	136.61
Tenahawk Baptist Church	129.96
Whiteville Baptist Church	210.12
Yellowville First Baptist Church	1,628.00

**RED RIVER BAPTIST ASSN**

Anchor Baptist Church	9 12.00
Antoine Baptist Church	360.00
Arkadelphia First Baptist Church	50.00
Arkadelphia Second Baptist Church	1,270.00
Beach Street Baptist Church	761.11
Berline First Baptist Church	249.00
Bethel Baptist Church	100.00
Biswack First Southern Church	126.00
Caddo Valley Baptist Church	417.00
Center Point Baptist Church	302.00
Curtis First Baptist Church	61.00
DeGray Baptist Church	790.00
East Whelan Baptist Church	303.00
East First Baptist Church	303.00
Harmony Hill Baptist Church	73.70
Lakeview Baptist Church	31.84
Halverson First Baptist Church	120.00
Harbrock Baptist Church	40.00
Mt. Olive Baptist Church	114.00
Mt. Zion Baptist Church	57.00
Park Hill Baptist Church	511.00
Prescott First Baptist Church	28.00
Shiloh Baptist Church	464.00
Sycamore Baptist Church	10.00
Unity Baptist Church	463.00

TRINITY BAPTIST ASSN	Gift
Anderson Tully Baptist Church	9 137.95
Black Oak Baptist Church	178.37
Calvary Baptist Church	467.00
Central Baptist Church	1,009.76
Cornerstone Baptist Church	421.00
Eastside Baptist Church	188.31
Faith Baptist Church	156.61
Fellowship Baptist Church	70.77
Fisher First Baptist Church	578.00
Harrisburg First Baptist Church	379.00
Lebanon Baptist Church	333.89
Leopanto First Baptist Church	148.35
Marked Tree First Baptist Church	1,118.00
McCrack Baptist Church	717.68
Neal's Chapel Baptist Church	210.00
Newslander Baptist Church	396.00
Pleasant Hill Baptist Church	1,000.00
Pleasant Valley Baptist Church	649.94
Providence Baptist Church	419.37
Red Oak Baptist Church	26.00
Riverview Baptist Church	821.00
Shiloh Baptist Church	175.00
Trinity Baptist Church	85.00
Trueman First Baptist Church	204.00
Tyrone First Baptist Church	418.00
Valley Baptist Church	210.00
Holdenburg Baptist Church	25.00
Weiner First Baptist Church	120.00

OTHER CHURCHES	Gift
Osage* Baptist Fellowship	9 211.00
Clarksville First Baptist Church	1,700.00
Community Fellowship Church	400.00
Monrovia Baptist Mission	100.00
Round Mountain Community Church	725.00
Shiloh Baptist Temple	275.00
Trinity Baptist Fellowship	1,000.00
Zion Baptist Church	33.03

**ROCKY-BAYOU BAPTIST ASSN**

Ark Flat Baptist Church	9 01.00
Belview Baptist Church	2,980.13
Belview Baptist Church	35.90
Calico Rock First Baptist Church	2,355.00
Cherokee Village Baptist Church	875.82
Denton Baptist Church	26.00
Evening Shade First Baptist Church	77.50
Finlay Creek Baptist Church	120.39
Goodrich Baptist Church	16.00
Hardy First Baptist Church	362.92
Horseshoe Bend First Baptist	225.00
Hubbardsville First Baptist Church	110.00
Midway Baptist Church	66.80
Mt. Pleasant Co. Baptist Church	106.00
Nyman Baptist Church	480.94
Rege Baptist Church	897.58

TRINITY BAPTIST ASSN	Gift
Anderson Tully Baptist Church	9 137.95
Black Oak Baptist Church	178.37
Calvary Baptist Church	467.00
Central Baptist Church	1,009.76
Cornerstone Baptist Church	421.00
Eastside Baptist Church	188.31
Faith Baptist Church	156.61
Fellowship Baptist Church	70.77
Fisher First Baptist Church	578.00
Harrisburg First Baptist Church	379.00
Lebanon Baptist Church	333.89
Leopanto First Baptist Church	148.35
Marked Tree First Baptist Church	1,118.00
McCrack Baptist Church	717.68
Neal's Chapel Baptist Church	210.00
Newslander Baptist Church	396.00
Pleasant Hill Baptist Church	1,000.00
Pleasant Valley Baptist Church	649.94
Providence Baptist Church	419.37
Red Oak Baptist Church	26.00
Riverview Baptist Church	821.00
Shiloh Baptist Church	175.00
Trinity Baptist Church	85.00
Trueman First Baptist Church	204.00
Tyrone First Baptist Church	418.00
Valley Baptist Church	210.00
Holdenburg Baptist Church	25.00
Weiner First Baptist Church	120.00

ARKANSAS BAPTIST COLLEGE'S HOME AND FAMILY MISSIONS	Gift	
ASSOCIATION	CHURCH	AMOUNT
Greene	Bowen's Chapel Baptist	139,182.00
Liberty	El Dorado First	19,925.00
Constitution	Stephens First Baptist	6,183.00
Horseshoe	Pine Bluff First Baptist	7,744.00
Black River	Jacksonport Baptist	6,953.00
Concord	Fort Smith First Baptist	5,771.00
Pulaski	Geyer Springs First Baptist	5,474.00
Carroll	Seneca First Baptist Church	4,996.00
Ark. River Valley	Roseville First Baptist	4,890.00
Southwest	Central Baptist Church	4,520.00
Central	Hot Springs Second Baptist	4,366.00
Ashley	Jarvis Chapel Baptist	3,923.00
Carry	Spartan First Baptist	3,721.00
North Ark.	Valley Springs First Baptist	3,673.00
Pulaski	Natural Steps Baptist	3,643.00
Central	Beaumont First Baptist	3,593.00
Duchette	Hena First Baptist	3,575.00
Pulaski	Immanuel Baptist Church	3,434.00
White River	Mountain Home First Baptist	3,421.00
Northwest	Siloam Springs First Baptist	3,354.00

9 6,649.30

## Convention Uniform

### *The power of God*

By Rich L. Kincl, pastor,  
Central Church, Magnolia  
Basic passage: I Corinthians 1:18 -  
2:16

Focal passage: I Corinthians 1:18-21,  
2:2-5, 9-12

Central truth: Acknowledging God as the source of true wisdom is the key to spiritual understanding.

■ *God's wisdom turns secular wisdom into folly* (vv. 1:18-21).

Greek wisdom and philosophy had neither led men to the knowledge of God nor brought deliverance from sin. The standards of secular wisdom called the preaching of the apostles, the *kerygma*, folly. By accomplishing through preaching what secular wisdom had been unable to do, God turned that wisdom into folly.

Men are inclined to solve problems and fight battles by their own ingenuity and power. Human ingenuity and power only get in God's way. Men's efforts hinder God rather than help Him. "There is a way which seems right to a man but its end is the way of death" (Prov. 14:12).

Human wisdom sees an immediate cause of a problem but not the root, which is sin. As long as human wisdom looks on God's wisdom as foolishness, its own wisdom will be foolish.

■ *We are wise when we rely on God's spiritual power* (vv. 2:2-5).

Paul had great abilities, but did not rely on them. He wanted his hearers to identify with God's wisdom. The Corinthians needed what Paul brought: a demonstration of the Holy Spirit and of power.

Unbelievers today do not need a new philosophy. They need a new life. Only the message of God brings with it the power and wisdom of God. God will use us to do His work when we become a channel of His message and life to others.

■ *God's wisdom is ours when we rely upon His Spirit* (vv. 2:9-12).

God's truth, plan and wisdom are not hidden from us, but we cannot discover them on our own. Just as we know our own thoughts better than anyone else, the Spirit of God alone can grasp divine truth. The Holy Spirit, who indwells us from the moment of salvation, will interpret to us God's direction for our lives.

If we want to know the ultimate meaning and purpose in life we must look beyond what even the best human minds can discover. We must look to God and ask for His wisdom (James 1:5).

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## Life and Work

### *True worship*

By Kenneth W. Overton, pastor,  
First Church, Marked Tree  
Basic passage: Mark 11:1-25  
Focal passage: Mark 11:15-18

Central truth: The place of worship is sacred.

The Jewish people felt that worship was accepted only at the temple in Jerusalem. In the synagogues in each town, priests carried on the duty of worship and religious instruction. It seemed incomplete to a devout Jew until he visited the temple in Jerusalem.

If the temple was so sacred, where then was this place that the religious leaders of Israel would allow marketing? It was the outer court of the Gentiles. Since the Gentiles were not acceptable followers of God, it was considered appropriate to set up a market area where they worshipped.

This caused a desperate situation for the Gentiles to worship. There was noise, confusion and fraud all around them. No one can effectively worship God with this kind of distraction.

It is no surprise that Jesus cleaned the area. The temple looked like a place of business. The Jews were obviously not happy. Jesus, in essence, expelled the Jews from the temple. That is like expelling them from the presence and favor of God.

More than that, Jesus said some harsh things. The businessmen were accused of turning God's temple into a den of thieves. It was a place where robbers could hide without fear of being caught. They were criminals stealing in the house of God with approval of the religious leadership.

Jesus indicated that God's house was "a house of prayer for all nations" (Isa. 56:7). If this was to be so, then the outer court of the Gentiles (nations) needed to be protected for prayer and worship. Instead, scoundrels blocked the area with selling booths. The Gentiles were deprived of their only area for worship. Jesus reclaimed the area for its rightful owner, God.

The chief priests and teachers of the law began searching for a way to kill Jesus. This action of Jesus was a direct challenge to their authority. They approved of the market and received a part of the proceeds. The Scriptures tell us of their reason for trying to kill Him. It was not because they believed Jesus was wrong, but because they feared Him as a threat to their authority. They did not act immediately, though: public opinion of Jesus gave the chief priests reason to wait.

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## Bible Book

### *The Book of Hope*

By Stan Parris, pastor,  
First Church, Hope  
Basic passage: Jeremiah 30:1-33:26  
Focal passage: Jeremiah 30:1-33:26  
Central truth: Hope for the future is found in the Lord of the future.

It should not be surprising that someone in a desperate situation would be drawn to a Baptist church in a place called Hope. This particular gentleman was a truck driver and he said to me, "Pastor, I decided that I had to talk to someone or I was going to explode. I cried out to God for help, and the next thing I saw was the sign on I-30 that read, 'Hope - Next Exit.'"

Chapters 30-33 are referred to as The Book of Comfort because they contain messages of hope about the glorious future of God's people. They remind us that there is always hope.

■ *A New Hope of Restoration* (vv. 30:3, 11) - A reminder that God's purpose in discipline is redemption and the purpose of God's grace is to provide healing to incurable conditions (vv. 30:10-17).

■ *A New Joy* (vv. 31:1-20) - The reasons for joy are seen in God's "everlasting love" (v. 3), the understanding that God's purpose is "to build" and "to plant" (vv. 4-5), the fact that God has both "ransomed" and "redeemed" them (v. 11) and the revelation that even the weakest who are brought back from exile will experience prosperity, peace and joy (vv. 12-14).

■ *A New Covenant* (vv. 31:27-34) - The repetition of the pronoun "I" in these verses suggests that God is the initiator. The emphasis is on a relationship that is inward, individual and universal ("for they shall all know me..."). The covenant is based on God's forgiveness of individual sins (vv. 27-30, 34). God clarifies once and for all that fellowship with Him is not on the basis of outward observances, nor on the basis of God-directed sacrifices, but rather on the basis of a God-directed heart.

■ *A New Faith* (vv. 32:1-44) - While Jerusalem was undergoing siege, Jeremiah was imprisoned and the people were in despair, the prophet preached his greatest sermon by acting out his hope for the future and his faith in the Lord. Purchasing the property was Jeremiah's statement of faith that life would again be normal.

■ *A New Name* (vv. 33:1-26) - Because of the new hope, the new covenant and the new restoration, Jerusalem's name would be associated with salvation, safety and security.

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## Convention Uniform

### How God evaluates

By Rich L. Kincl, pastor,  
Central Church, Magnolia  
Basic passage: 1 Corinthians 4  
Focal passage: 1 Corinthians 4:1-5  
Central truth: The true servant of  
God is obedient and faithful.

The young "preacher boy" had just delivered his first sermon at his first church. As church members greeted him afterwards, one man gave him an ear full. The sermon was too long, he shouted too loudly and his tie was tied too short. The next lady in line told the preacher, "Don't listen to him. He just goes around repeating everything he hears!"

■ *Others' evaluations of us—even our own are at best imperfect* (vv. 3-4).

The counsel of a wise, spiritual friend can be invaluable. Do you have a close friend who knows you well? He can give you sincere input and feedback when you seek direction.

We can benefit and learn from criticism, but always consider the source. Is it meant to help or hurt? Is it legitimate? Can I grow as a result of making suggested changes?

I have learned that I am not qualified to judge the legitimacy, quality or faithfulness of another's work for the Lord. Paul said he was not even qualified to determine those things for himself (v. 3).

■ *God's is the only evaluation that ultimately counts* (v. 5).

Paul knew of no serious sin or deficiency in his own life (v. 4). He knew he could be wrong. He acknowledged the only evaluation that makes a difference is the Lord's. Paul followed the counsel he gave to Timothy: "Be diligent to present yourself approved unto God" (2 Tim. 2:15).

■ *We are to be faithful stewards* (vv. 1-2).

The Greek word for steward literally means "house manager," a person placed in complete control of a household. All Christians are to be good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Pet. 4:10).

Church leaders, particularly Sunday School teachers, are important stewards entrusted with proclaiming the mysteries of God (v. 1). These hidden truths of God are only known by divine revelation. As a steward of God's mysteries, a Sunday School teacher is to take God's revealed Word and dispense it to God's household (his/her Sunday School class).

## Life and Work

### Acceptance or rejection

By Kenneth W. Overton, pastor,  
First Church, Marked Tree  
Basic passage: Mark 11:27-12:12  
Focal passage: Mark 12:1-12  
Central truth: God will judge  
correctly the religious leadership.

This parable of a vineyard and the relationship of the owner and tenants was one of a few illustrations that the Jewish leadership understood (vv. 12-12). It reflected on the poor attitude and action of the Jewish leadership in their treatment of God's people and prophets.

It was common for the owner of a vineyard to rent to others. The owner expected a share of the harvest as payment of the rent. In this case, the tenants were wicked. They had worked the land and were not willing to give any back to the owner.

The tenants began mistreating the servants (messengers) sent to receive the owner's part. Mistreatment is a mild term to describe their cruelty: beatings, stonings and killings. But then nothing was as cruel as the murder of the owner's son.

He was surely sent with the thought that "they will respect my son" (v. 12:6). No one respects the life of another when greed, dishonesty, violence and murder is a part of their life. They killed the son, threw his body out of the vineyard, exposed it to vermin and left it unburied; the ultimate insult.

What would you believe is the proper way to deal with these tenants? The tenants had signed their own death warrants. The reason Jesus asked the chief priests and teachers (v. 11:27) how the owner should deal with the tenants was that through their own mouths they would condemn themselves. Justice was about to take place. Would they recognize it? Eviction notice had been given. Would they read it? The emphasis was not on the vineyard but on the utter wickedness of the tenants.

These people exist today. They attempt to steal from God what belongs to Him. They are unwilling to listen to the owner (God) of the vineyard.

The son that God sent to the tenants was the cornerstone they rejected. What God had accepted as the standard for men's lives, the tenants of the vineyard killed. There is no other standard like Christ. Jesus, born to a mother named Mary, is the foundation of the church. When all is complete, we will say, "The Lord has done this and it is marvelous in our eyes" (Mark 12:11).

## Bible Book

### Response to the Word

By Stan Parris, pastor,  
First Church, Hope  
Basic passage: Jeremiah 34:1-36:32  
Focal passage: Jeremiah 34:1-36:32  
Central truth: A right response to  
God's Word produces right living.

Perhaps the most important decision we make in this life is how we are going to respond to the Word of God. These three chapters contain several examples of how not to respond to God's Word.

■ *Verses 34:1-7* – King Zedekiah was again warned by the faithful prophet that Jerusalem will be lost and that resistance was hopeless. But, if Zedekiah would "hear the word of the Lord" and cooperate with the will of God, he would not die by the sword, but in peace. The record shows that his refusal to obey resulted in a humiliating death (Jer. 52:8-11). A right response would have resulted in a peaceful death.

■ *Verses 34:8-22* – The motivation for obeying the covenant to release all the Hebrew slaves is unclear. It seems that the men of Judah had agreed to the covenant, not out of heart-felt obedience, but as a guarantee of divine deliverance. When the siege was temporarily lifted, they "turned" and "profaned" the name of God (v. 16). Their feigned obedience was disobedience to the Word of God and that kind of response literally "wounds" or "defaces" the honor of God. A right response would have resulted in honoring the name of God.

■ *Verses 35:1-19* – Jeremiah used the Rechabites as an object lesson. These sons of Jonadab were faithful in their obedience to life-style restrictions and commandments given to them by their father. Jeremiah was not suggesting that the people of God should mimic that lifestyle, but emphasized that complete obedience is pleasing to the Father. What a sad commentary that men are more loyal to the commandments of men than to the commandments of God (vv. 14-16). A right response would have resulted in pleasing the Father.

■ *Verses 36:1-32* – Hearing the message read by Baruch, the king's officials responded with holy fear, but the king responded with contempt. Verse 23 seems to indicate that the king heard the complete message on the scroll before casting it piece by piece into the fire. He may have heard it, but he did not listen to it (v. 31). A right response would have resulted in repentance and forgiveness (vv. 1-3).



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## NEWS DIGEST

### Southwestern Seminary to appeal probation

FORT WORTH, TX (BP)—Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary will appeal the probation ruling issued earlier this month by the Association of Theological Schools, according to the seminary's president, Ken Hemphill.

"It is in the best interest of Southwestern to participate in the appeals process to present our case," Hemphill said. "As we have stated, probation was too strong of a decision based on the facts of our case."

The Commission on Accrediting, an arm of ATS, has placed the seminary on a two-year probation, citing concerns about presidential evaluation and trustee accountability to constituencies, academic freedom, faculty tenure and promotion. Probation does not mean a loss of accreditation, according to Hemphill and Daniel O. Aleshire, associate director of the commission.

### Professor withdraws from New American Commentary

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—Carey Newman, assistant professor of New Testament at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, informed Broadman & Holman Publishers of his decision to withdraw from a writing assignment for the *New American Commentary*.

David Dockery, vice president for academic affairs and dean of the school of theology at the Louisville, Ky., seminary, has agreed to replace Newman as author of the New Testament volume on Ephesians at the request of the commentary's New Testament editors. Dockery is former general editor of the commentary.

In withdrawing from the assignment, Newman cited "ever-growing politicizing of the series" and his belief that "issues other than consensus building and conversing with other evangelicals have come to the fore."

He maintained his theology has not changed since the earlier agreement, and he told Baptist Press the mutual withdrawal earlier this year of a Joshua volume manuscript by Stephen Wyrick of the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor in Belton, Texas, was not directly related to his decision.

### HMB elects African American to chaplaincy department

ATLANTA (BP)—Albert W. Holmes was elected director of institutional and business-industrial chaplaincy by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board executive committee during its meeting Feb. 7.

Holmes is the first African American to join the chaplaincy division staff. He said one of his goals is to encourage more minorities to serve as chaplains.

Holmes has worked for the Texas department of criminal justice nine years, most recently as a program administrator based in Huntsville, Texas. He fills the position vacated by Bill Donovan who retired last year.

Holmes' new responsibility, effective March 1, includes educating Southern Baptists about ministry opportunities in prison systems. Greater emphasis is being placed on discipling prisoners and matching volunteers with prisoners in a mentoring program.

### Swanberg named special assistant to Hemphill

FORT WORTH, TX (BP)—Former Arkansas Baptist pastor and humorist Dennis W. Swanberg has been named special assistant to the president for seminary relations at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He will come to his new position after four years as pastor of First Baptist Church of West Monroe, La.

A Southwestern graduate, Swanberg will work closely with President Ken Hemphill and the seminary's office of student services, particularly in student recruitment.

Swanberg is a graduate of Baylor University and Southwestern Seminary. He has served as pastor of churches in Arkansas and Texas, as a trustee for New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, and a member of advisory boards for Louisiana College and Northwest Louisiana State University's Baptist Student Union.

### Southern pays tribute to alumnus W.A. Criswell

LOUISVILLE, KY (BP)—W.A. Criswell's alma mater paid tribute to the Baptist pastor Feb. 7 by presenting him the institution's highest honor. Criswell, senior pastor of First Baptist Church in Dallas, received the E. Y. Mullins Denominational Service Award from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., during a chapel service.

During 50 years of ministry at First Baptist, Dallas, Criswell "established that pulpit as a bulwark of evangelical biblical exposition that is both scholarly and passionate," seminary president Al Mohler said.

Criswell said he has fond memories of the seminary, where he received the Th.M. degree in 1934 and the Ph.D. degree in 1937. He noted that he and his wife were married on the school's campus on Valentine's Day 60 years ago.