

Ouachita Baptist University

Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita

Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine, 1990-1994

Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

9-23-1993

September 23, 1993

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/arbn_90-94



Part of the [Christian Denominations and Sects Commons](#), [Mass Communication Commons](#), and the [Organizational Communication Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Arkansas Baptist State Convention, "September 23, 1993" (1993). *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine, 1990-1994*. 91.

https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/arbn_90-94/91

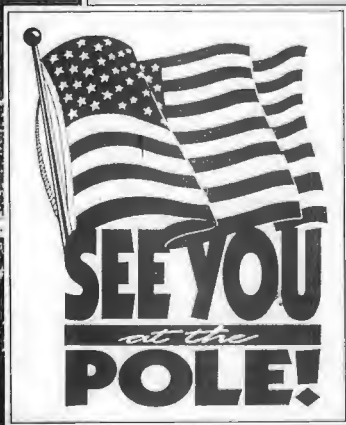
This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine at Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita. It has been accepted for inclusion in Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine, 1990-1994 by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita. For more information, please contact mortensona@obu.edu.

ARKANSAS BAPTIST



Volume 92, Number 19

September 23, 1993



More than 100 students gathered at Benton High School for a 7 a.m. prayer service on Sept. 15.

The students were among thousands of youth who gathered around school flagpoles across the state and nation as part of the annual student-led "See You at the Pole" prayer emphasis.

Ministry allows sight-impaired Baptists to 'read' Newsmagazine

By Colleen Backus
Arkansas Baptist

Blind for more than 40 years, Miss Glenn Kirkland of Plummerville left a legacy to a ministry that normally requires sight to utilize. The *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* Tape Ministry for the Blind, started in 1981 through gifts from Miss Kirkland and others, enables sight-impaired Baptists the opportunity to "read" the Newsmagazine.

Miss Kirkland endowed a continuing gift to the Newsmagazine through the Arkansas Baptist Foundation to provide for the tape ministry. The funds provide supplies, such as audio tapes and mailers, and the Woman's Missionary Union of Park Hill Church in North Little Rock records and ships the tapes.

"Reading the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* is, to me, like taking a double dose of vitamins," Miss Kirkland wrote in an ABN article shortly before her death in 1981 at age 86. "Every church member, every Sunday School teacher, and especially every pastor should feel that they have not fully met their great responsibilities to the Lord and to the church until they read, absorb and discuss the magazine with other fellow church members." Her strong feelings, despite the handicap which made her unable to actually "read" the magazine, laid the groundwork for today's ongoing ministry.

Park Hill Church members Emily Holland and Louise Melton have coordinated the tape recordings since the program's inception.

"A number of members of our church

take turns reading," said Mrs. Holland. "We make up a schedule three months in advance, make sure the reading gets done and that the supplies are available."

"We've had some positive responses over the years," said Mrs. Melton, who maintains the membership list and addresses the labels for the mailers. "We enjoy providing the service," she added.

Glenda Hammond, tape ministry secretary at Park Hill Church, duplicates the tapes and sends them out. "It's another act of showing God's love," Hammond said. "The ABN is so good — but not everyone can read it from cover to cover because of failing eyesight. Our ladies are more than willing to come and share their time — and their gift of sight — to record the magazine."

"We are deeply appreciative of the volunteers who give of their time to make this ministry possible," noted Newsmagazine editor Trennis Henderson. "It is a unique way to expand the Newsmagazine's impact as a vital ministry tool for all Arkansas Baptists."

One of those receiving the magazine on tape is Sandra Melton, also a member of Park Hill. "I pay attention to the local church news and Sunday School lesson commentaries," she said. "I've been receiving the magazine nearly since it started being available on tape more than 10 years ago."

One goal of those involved with the ministry is for it to be more widely utilized. Tapes are available free of charge to sight-impaired Arkansas Baptists by contacting the ABN at P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203, phone 376-4791, ext. 5152.

Cover Story



ABN photo / Trennis Henderson

'See You at the Pole'

Students throughout Arkansas and across the nation gathered Sept. 15 for the annual "See You at the Pole" prayer emphasis. Bert Spann, a senior at Benton High School who led the prayer effort there, said the event provides Christian youth an opportunity to "make a stand for Christ because Christ has made a stand for us."

Also inside

Perspective

You'll Be Glad to Know.....	4
The President's Corner.....	4
Straight from the Editor.....	5
One Person's View.....	6

Arkansas Baptists

Mission trip answers prayers.....	7
Sharing Christ on the court.....	8
Housing brings missions home.....	9
Arkansas All Over.....	10-11

World Missions

1993 foreign missions study.....	12
Rankin nominates Willis.....	13
'The Scrap-Paper Miracle'.....	15
Reavis: 'Be prayer warriors'.....	16

Nation

RTVC opposes TV violence.....	17
Literacy ministry opportunities.....	18
HMB disaster response office.....	19

Lessons.....	22-23
--------------	-------

Next issue: Oct. 7

ARKANSAS BAPTIST

USPS 008021

Trennis Henderson.....Editor
Mille Gill.....Executive Assistant to the Editor
Paige Cooper.....Operations Manager
Colleen Backus.....Production Manager
Diane Fowler.....Production Artist (part-time)
Erwin L. McDonald, Litt. D.Editor Emeritus

Letters to the editor are invited. Letters should be typed double-space and may not contain more than 350 words. Letters must be signed and marked "for publication." A complete policy statement is available on request. Photos submitted for publication will be returned only when accompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelope. Only black and white photos can be used. Deaths of members of Arkansas churches will be reported in brief form when information is received not later than 14 days after the date of death. Opinions expressed in signed articles are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect the editorial position of the Arkansas Baptist. Advertising accepted in writing only. Rates on request.

The Arkansas Baptist (ISSN 1040-6096) is published bi-weekly by the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine, Inc., 601-A W. Capitol, Little Rock, AR 72201. Subscription rates are \$8.85 per year (Individual) \$6.36 per year (Ordinary Resident Family Plan), \$7.08 per year (Group Plan), Second Class Postage Paid at Little Rock, AR. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Arkansas Baptist, P.O. 552, Little Rock, AR 72203; telephone 501-376-4791.

Member of the Southern Baptist Press Association Volume 92 • Number 19

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Greg Kirksey, Benton, president; Nelson Wilhelm, Fort Smith; Lane Strother, Mountain Home; Bert Thomas, Searcy; Curt Hodges, Jonesboro; Lucile C. Higgins, Fordyce; Cliff Palmer, Rogers; and Brenda Bruce, Newark.

Baptist workers call peace pact 'new day'

By Marty Croll

SBC Foreign Mission Board

JERUSALEM (BP)—Southern Baptist workers in Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip sat glued to television sets Sept. 13 watching a handshake between two bitter enemies — Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yasser Arafat and Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

"This is one of those rare moments you'd never really have thought was going to happen in your lifetime, and it's happening," said Ray Hicks, Southern Baptist representative in the West Bank city of Bethlehem. "We're in shock."

"There are so many people who have lost loved ones in the wars or in terrorist acts," said Southern Baptist representative Tom Hocutt, who has worked in Israel about 10 years.

"The way they seem to be looking at it is that... there's a hope for peace, that our sons and daughters don't have to be killed anymore. The mindset here has been that war is inevitable."

Hocutt and others discussed the prospects for peace in the region — and how it could affect Christian work — only hours after Israel and the PLO signed historic accords recognizing each other's right to exist. The accords promise evolving self-rule for Palestinians living in two Israeli-occupied areas lost by Arabs after they attacked Israel in 1967.

Palestinians in the West Bank, formerly part of Jordan, and the Gaza Strip, formerly part of Egypt, trace their roots to their parents and grandparents who fled there.

Exile was many Palestinians' only choice when the birth of Israel as a nation displaced the British territory of Palestine

in 1948. Those Palestinians who were not displaced and chose to become citizens of Israel have become part of the country's society as it has grown in world stature. Palestinian life in the Occupied Territories, on the other hand, is less advanced.

Nancie Wingo, a Southern Baptist representative who came to Gaza about six years ago after 23 years in Lebanon, watched as people flooded the streets in celebration at 3 p.m. the day the peace accords were signed. After waiting out a strike called by militant Muslims who oppose Arafat and refuse to accept Israel's sovereignty as a nation, people "paraded through the streets," she said, "waving Palestinian flags and showing Arafat's pictures" — both acts previously not allowed by Israelis.

Ministry opportunities

A more peaceful coexistence among Palestinians and Jewish settlers in Gaza could lead to increased opportunities for ministry, Baptist representatives in Gaza agreed. Still, they cautioned people to realize many sensitive issues remain to be worked out, and extremists will be trying to disrupt agreement.

In the Occupied Territories, the danger of terrorism has been omnipresent. "For years we've had to be extremely flexible with our scheduling because of strikes, curfews and such interruptions," Wingo said. "If this ended, it would make our work a lot easier."

Wingo teaches English at a Baptist lending library, the Center of Culture and Light, in Gaza City. More peace could allow the library to stay open all day instead of just a few hours, increasing its effectiveness and helping it reach more people.

Other places in Gaza also need someone to teach English, but it has been too dangerous to travel as necessary.

In the West Bank city of Bethlehem, Southern Baptist workers Ray and Beverly Hicks likely will ask new Southern Baptist representatives to come help believers there. The danger of living and working in the volatile area has caused them to freeze two requests for career workers needed in the West Bank.

"If this holds... I think it will be a new day of openness, of being able to share without being nervous or fearful of whom you're talking to or what you're talking about," said Hicks.

The Hickeys have worked in the West Bank since 1987 and in the Middle East since 1979. They moved to Bethlehem two years ago. The church there just finished its building — the first Christian sanctuary built in either the West Bank or Gaza since the beginning of the Palestinian insurrection known as the Intifadah in 1987.

Southern Baptist work in the area has been struggling, a result of the distrust and hatred that has made it difficult to survive. "It's just been sort of hanging on," Hicks said.

Celebrators in the West Bank had been blowing horns and waving flags since the night before, he added. He described the scene as "a release of emotion from people who have been unable to declare their identity for six years — when Israelis reacted against the newly formed Intifadah.

"I have said for years that until the PLO and Israel talk, nothing will happen, and it looks like something's happening now," Hicks said. "It's unbelievable. It's a new day here."

Arkansas natives appointed as US-2 missionaries

Arkansas natives Ashley Jones, Kim Chebahtah and Jay Sparks have been appointed US-2 missionaries by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. A US-2 missionary is a college graduate who works in home missions for two years.

Jones, a native of Little Rock, is the daughter of Anthony and Kathy Jones. A graduate of the University of Arkansas, her home church is Sylvan Hills Church in Sherwood. She will serve in Richmond, Va., as an evangelism missionary.

Chebahtah is a native of Magnolia and the daughter of Joseph and Leslie



Ashley Jones



Kim Chebahtah



Jay Sparks

Chebahtah. Her home church is Central Church in Magnolia. She is a graduate of Southern Arkansas University in Magnolia.

She will serve in New Orleans as a student worker missionary and plans to attend seminary after US-2 service. Chebahtah has served as a summer missionary in Louisiana, Alaska and Kazakhstan.

Sparks, a graduate of Williams Baptist College in Walnut Ridge, is the son of Elmer and Claude Sparks. His home church is First Church, Walnut Ridge. He will serve in Albuquerque, N.M., as a student worker missionary. He

has served as a summer missionary in Arkansas, Louisiana and Ohio. Sparks plans to attend seminary after US-2 service.

YOU'LL BE GLAD TO KNOW



By DON MOORE
ABCS Executive Director

A well-worn statement begins as follows, "What this world needs more than anything else is..." You can complete the sentence with any one of a dozen different options. We could debate over what we each believe the world needs most.

To narrow the scope a little, what does your church need most? The answers would range from buildings, finances and leadership to vision, location and organization.

I have no doubt that our greatest needs are in the realm of the Spirit. A church doesn't have to be a certain size or have a certain type leader or location to be mighty with God. Prayer is likely our greatest need.

What a prayer David prayed in Psalm 90:16-17 when he said, "Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it."

While the pastors certainly pray this prayer constantly, is it not time for the laypeople in our churches to be united in regular, ongoing prayer? United prayer by thousands of God's people would doubtless meet with the favor of God and result in a spiritual awakening.

This is the reason we have asked for every association to enlist a Bold Mission Prayer Thrust coordinator. It is now time for every church to enlist a prayer coordinator. Every church can and should do this. God has provided wonderful resources to help an individual or a church to have a fabulous prayer ministry. While there may be reasons for neglect or failure in some areas of church life, there can be no reason acceptable to God for a church not having a mighty prayer ministry. Neglect of prayer is neglect of God.

Who will have the burden, sense the call, and carry the torch of prayer concern in your church? With the pastor's support, ask us for practical helps to help you plan and lead a concerted prayer effort tailored to your church.

WILLIAM H. SUTTON

The President's Corner



It's the children, stupid

Don't be offended by the title. It is just an attempt to borrow an idea from James Carville, the brazen political strategist who hung the famous sign at Clinton campaign headquarters, "It's the Economy, Stupid."

As Southern Baptists we have much to make us busy and it is difficult not to lose focus. During the two years that you have allowed me to serve as your president, nothing has impressed me more than the war being fought over children.

We are doing many things well in ministering to our own children and those within our reach. Our program for children at Siloam Springs, our Bible schools and Sunday Schools are excellent. But the sad truth of the matter is that most of us have not heard the alarm nor sensed the urgency of time running out for a whole generation of children.

The system has changed. It is not valid for the church to assume that it is the Sunday refinement of godly spiritual training and encouragement received at home and in schools during the week. Instead, the church must realize that there are countless numbers of precious children throughout the land for whom the church is the only hope of their ever hearing a serious word about Jesus.

These children will not be escorted to the church's door by loving parents. We must be innovative so that we can reach children whose parents are indifferent to their receiving any spiritual training. This will take capably trained people and more ambitious programs. Sports and social programs, with little spiritual emphasis, will not do the job. Instead, we must learn to see ourselves as the lone source of serious evangelism, training and molding of Christian values for a high percentage of children who are "different" from us.

Jesus had a way of delivering a command. He would often say to do this "if you love me." Is there any doubt as to how we are to feel about children?

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these" (Matt. 19:14).

When somebody brings a child to your church, think of these words: "See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven" (Matt. 18:10-11).

Then you bring one and get closer to the kingdom of heaven.

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

Personal perspectives

"This is one of those rare moments you'd never really have thought was going to happen in your lifetime....It's unbelievable. It's a new day here."

—Ray Hicks, Southern Baptist representative to Bethlehem, discussing peace pact between Israel and the PLO

"Challenge people to be prayer warriors. Nations have opened up because Southern Baptists have prayed."

—Don Reavis, director of the Foreign Mission Board's missions ministries administration

Putting the 'bold' in Bold Mission Thrust

How important is Bold Mission Thrust in the life of local Baptist congregations? Is it a motivating factor as churches establish priorities related to prayer, ministry and finances?

Bold Mission Thrust was initiated by Southern Baptists in 1976 as an effort to share the gospel with everyone in the world by the year 2000. Denominational conflict, a sluggish national economy and diverse local priorities have been cited in recent years as reasons for shortfalls in key Bold Mission Thrust goals.

As we move rapidly toward the 21st century, Southern Baptists still have the opportunity to make significant strides in spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ around the world. Effective prayer, coordinated ministry efforts and sacrificial financial support are essential in moving Bold Mission Thrust closer to fulfillment.

The first priority is prayer. According to Baptist Sunday School Board prayer consultant T.W. Hunt, "Every time God initiated a major divine work in the Bible, He always raised up intercessors to pray for His work....In a day where Satan is fighting the propagation of the gospel more fiercely than ever before, we must turn to the Lord with His own method, which is prayer."

Bold Mission Thrust calls for each Baptist association to have an intercessory prayer network by the year 1995 and each local congregation to do so by the turn of the century. The biblical admonition to "pray without ceasing" takes on increased urgency as Southern Baptists strive to undergird worldwide ministry efforts with faithful prayer in the years ahead.

Combining the urgency of prayer,

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR

By TRENNIS HENDERSON



ministry and financial support is the Cooperative Program Prayer Thrust which is being highlighted throughout October as part of the denomination's annual Cooperative Program Month emphasis. The prayer thrust, scheduled to begin Oct. 3, provides churches the opportunity to pray for ministries that Southern Baptists are funding throughout the nation and world.

A related ministry emphasis, also set for Oct. 3, is the "Serve in Christ's Spirit Launch Day." The emphasis highlights the 1993-94 Bold Mission Thrust theme, "Share Heritage and Hope—Serve in Christ's Spirit."

The launch day, according to Bold Mission Thrust promotional material, is designed to help local churches "focus on the challenge to win persons for Christ and to serve in Christ's Spirit by ministering in love to people—strangers—in need."

As Southern Baptists serve in Christ's Spirit, Bold Mission Thrust goals call for more than 2.5 million baptisms during this decade; a total of 50,000 congregations by the year 2000; and increased involvement

in worship, Bible study, discipleship and missions education programs, including 13 million Southern Baptists enrolled in Sunday School. National and international goals call for a total of 5,000 home missionaries and 5,600 foreign missionaries by the year 2000. Financial goals include increasing CP gifts to \$1 billion by 1995 and \$2.5 billion five years later.

Southern Baptists currently are woefully short of achieving most of these goals. In a day of decreasing denominational loyalty, where do we begin? One essential strategy is seeking to actively include all Southern Baptists in denominational service and ministry. At the same time, Bold Mission Thrust must continue to highlight an integrated, three-pronged focus on prayer, ministry and financial support.

Hunt's call for focused intercessory prayer is a clear starting point on the spiritual front. In the area of ministry, making personal commitments to truly serve in Christ's Spirit can open doors to help fulfill numerous goals on the local, national and international levels.

Concerning financial support, Foreign Mission Board administrator Don Reavis put it succinctly as he recently remarked, "There is nothing bold about Southern Baptists' giving." Noting that Southern Baptists "will have to be far more sacrificial in their giving" in order to financially undergird Bold Mission Thrust goals, he added optimistically, "The potential is there."

Prayer, ministry and financial support. As Southern Baptists observe Cooperative Program Month and look ahead to the year 2000, now is the time to put the "bold" back into Bold Mission Thrust.

World hunger requires active response

By C. Ben Mitchell

Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission

Very few of us know what it is like to be really hungry. When hunger occurs, the body turns on itself and begins an ugly process of cannibalization. A person's own tissues become a source of sustaining energy until the body finally starves to death. Hunger is painful, confusing and debilitating.

Similarly, few of us are so callous that the news of a hungry person doesn't tug at our hearts. Yet relatively few of us are involved actively in feeding the hungry. James tells us, however, that genuine faith is one that is demonstrated—that faith expresses itself in obedient actions. Could

it be that there is a deadly chasm between our faith and our works?

The apostle James would not allow his readers to be comfortable with faith that was expressed merely in a confession, "I believe." Nor was faith to be understood solely as the acceptance of a creed, "I believe in one God." But a genuine faith was a demonstrated faith, "I believe in Jesus Christ and follow Him in obedient living."

James chooses the feeding of the hungry as an illustration of genuine faith. Today, many of us would no doubt choose something more exotic or esoteric as a means of demonstrating our faith. It is much easier and less messy to talk about beautiful buildings and bulging budgets.

But the most obvious expressions of our faith are simpler—a cup of cold water, a bowl of hot soup, a warm blanket.

The hurting hungry are all around us. Homeless children with their single mothers make up the most rapidly growing segment of homeless persons. These children are wasting away both intellectually and physically. Eastern European nations are overflowing with starving orphans. Dare we say to them, "Be warmed and filled?" Instead, may we renew our commitment to be "doers of the word, and not hearers only" (James 1:22) as we observe World Hunger Day October 10. Let us join heart and hand in the war against hunger. Demonstrated faith is profitable to others.

A response to Operation Rescue

Few in the pro-life movement have spoken out against Operation Rescue and similar groups. With summer protests grabbing the headlines and the tragic murder of an abortionist doctor in Florida a few months ago, we need to examine this overall movement more clearly.

It is my view that the Scriptures teach that life begins in the womb. Whatever else one may want to argue, it is an undeniable fact that left alone, life in the womb will develop into a small baby. The only exception to that would be a tragic miscarriage or stillbirth.

I have done about everything that can be done in the pro-life movement from collecting signatures to walking in marches. The one thing I have not done and will not do is participate in or support movements that violate the law.

One example of such a movement is Operation Rescue. Without question, Operation Rescue founder Randal Terry and those who follow him are committed to saving unborn children.

For the most part, they offer what is called passive resistance. This forces the police to physically carry them one by one away from the premises. Operation Rescue's goal is to gain national attention, thus convincing Americans that abortion is wrong.

What has resulted in the few years since Operation Rescue was established is not only a divided nation but a divided Christian response and even a divided pro-life response. Men like James Dobson and D. James Kennedy have supported the movement. In opposition are men such as Charles Stanley and Bill Gothard.

Many in the pro-life movement have kept quiet because although they disagreed with the tactics of Operation Rescue, they were in agreement with the overall goal of stopping abortion. This silence has left many pro-life advocates confused.

When a radical pro-life individual stepped over the edge and decided to be judge and jury on the life of an abortionist doctor, the silence had to stop. There is no doubt that Operation Rescue did not condone the murder of the Florida doctor. Nor is such action their strategy. However, that step beyond passive resistance to the laws of our land to the execution-style judgment of abortionists is clearly upon us. If reason does not prevail, the fight will continue to escalate.

So what should our response be? It has taken me several years to work through the reservations I have had in my spirit on this issue. Not all will agree with my positions. But if the pro-life movement is to regain the momentum we had in the mid

1 PERSON'S VIEW



By MARK BROOKS
Pastor, Elmdale Church, Springdale

'80s we must address the problems Operation Rescue is presenting us.

To begin with, I believe Operation Rescue is wrong because they operate from an incorrect premise. They legitimize their actions by saying they break a lesser law to uphold or defend a higher law, the life of the unborn. Although this argument strikes an emotional cord, it is incorrect.

Dr. James L. Holly of Beaumont, Texas, has written extensively on this subject. Dr. Holly says, "The confusion over Operation Rescue comes when Christians attempt to extrapolate the theocratic life which they live before God to the democratic life which they live before the government. Even if all of the arguments of 'being under authority' were removed, there is still no biblical imperative for obstructing the rights of others to live within the constraints of a democratic society, even when they have rejected the reign of God over their lives."

Holly goes on to say, "In a democratic society, the majority must rule. It is therefore possible for that which is immoral and/or unethical to be legal.... Abortion, like pornography, is immoral and unethical; it certainly is ungodly and unrighteous. However, in that abortion is legal, it by definition is not criminal."

Those who would argue that we must stop abortion at all costs, including breaking the law, fail to recognize a fundamental issue. The fact is abortion is not mandated by law for citizens as it is in China. Abortion, sadly, is a choice that is legal in our land.

The only time Christians must oppose a law by breaking a law is when that unjust law is forced upon us. Nowhere in the Scriptures do we find the Church seeking to impose their standards upon its society, even though those standards were correct. The gospel was the tool to defeat the immorality of the cruel Roman world. Should our response be any different?

Indeed, one of the fundamental flaws with Operation Rescue and many pro-life

groups is that they see this only as a legal issue. Abortions are performed in this land because the hearts of men and women are evil. Overturning the law, though certainly a worthy goal if it is done correctly, will not end abortion.

Thus, for the Christian, our primary tool in combating abortion should be seeking to win our nation to Christ and thereby winning their hearts.

Another reason I believe Operation Rescue's methods need to be rejected is that it is an organization born out of frustration. Radical pro-life groups have become frustrated with the fact that after years of debate and education, abortion is still the law of the land. Thus, out of their frustration that something has to be done and done quickly, groups such as Operation Rescue were formed.

Any movement born out of frustration should be suspect. Frustration is a failure to trust in the power and ability of God to solve a problem.

The final reason why I believe Operation Rescue's tactics must be rejected is that it destroys popular opinion. Abortion will stop in America only when Americans become convinced it is wrong. They will then stop having abortions, funding abortions and supporting candidates who favor abortion.

Public opinion is measured often with polls. When asked fairly, most Americans do not favor abortion on demand. Public opinion does not make an issue right or wrong. Yet in a democracy gaining public support for one's position is an absolute.

Operation Rescue has not only divided the church and the pro-life community, it has caused public opinion to sway against the pro-life movement. Not long after Operation Rescue came to Wichita, Kan., the Wirthlin Group polled a cross-section of Americans about their feelings on abortion. The respondents were asked how the Rescue in Kansas affected their view of abortion. Forty-eight percent of those polled said it made them more pro-abortion, 38 percent said it made them more pro-life and 11 percent said it didn't change their position.

There are perhaps other reasons to oppose Operation Rescue, yet those to me are the most salient. It is time that the Christian community closely examine this movement in the light of Scripture and in the light of reason.

Rejecting Operation Rescue, however, does not mean that we must be inactive in opposing abortion. There are scores of things that the average Christian can and should do to help stop this moral plight upon our land.

Mission trip answers 30-year prayer

Immanuel mission team helps establish new work in Petrolandia, Brazil

By Millie Gill
Arkansas Baptist

Thirty years of prayers were answered recently as a 16-member mission team from Immanuel Church of Little Rock helped establish a new work in Petrolandia, Brazil.

"This new work in Petrolandia is a project that the North Brazil Mission and the Brazilian Baptist Association have given top priority to since 1989," explained mission team coordinator Martha Hairston, a retired Southern Baptist missionary to Brazil. She noted that the city's mayor donated two lots and the association purchased a third lot when a new city of Petrolandia was established after a flood destroyed the older city.

"Immanuel's involvement began in early 1993 when an invitation was extended to the church in a cooperative effort between the evangelism department of the Brazilian Baptist State Convention and the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board," Hairston continued. "In April the church responded to this invitation when some members of the congregation gave money to purchase Bibles and Vacation Bible School materials, as well as donating \$10,000 which was used to construct both a sanctuary and educational building.

"With the basic structure in place, the mission team was able to do electrical installation, painting and build a baptistry," Hairston noted. "However, the most



Martha Hairston (left), a retired missionary to Brazil, interprets for mission team member Tim Allen from Immanuel Church of Little Rock as he shares his Christian testimony during an evening worship services at a new church in Petrolandia, Brazil. Members of Immanuel Church gave \$10,000 to construct the church facility.

rewarding part of the trip was the eagerness and cooperation of the team members as they prepared to share the gospel in worship services, Bible schools and visitation.

"God opened wide the doors of two public schools where we led Vacation Bible Schools for approximately 1,250 first through third graders," Hairston added. "We also shared with 600 fourth through sixth graders in chapel services. In fact, the principal requested that a Bible be

presented for library use."

Dorothea Wright, Acteens director for Immanuel Church, coordinated Vacation Bible School work, assisted by retired missionary Edith Vaughn who came from Virginia to assist the Arkansas team. Two Acteens, Michelle Wright of Immanuel Church and Wendy Hoag of First Church in Heber Springs, assisted with the team's children's work, as well as visitation. "Those girls were constantly busy," Hairston noted. "They never waited around for others to tell them what to do. In fact, they enlisted help from the Brazilians in visitation efforts."

According to John Gerlach, Immanuel's minister of education, "Dirt floors and makeshift benches did not deter crowds from packing the benches, lining the walls and gathering outside the church windows to be a part of the services."

The carpenter who was instrumental in constructing the church building, as well as his daughter, were among the Brazilians who made professions of faith during the worship services.

"Another highlight of the final night services was the ordination of the church's first two deacons," Gerlach added. "One of those ordained was the one who had prayed for 30 years for Baptist work to come to Petrolandia."

Gerlach said the greatest highlight of the trip was realizing that members of Immanuel Church "had assisted in giving birth to a new congregation that will continue to share the good news of the gospel."



John Gerlach (center), minister of education at Immanuel Church in Little Rock, shares with Brazilian children during a Vacation Bible School session. His interpreter was Edith Vaughn of Virginia, a retired missionary to Brazil.

Vining shares Christ on and off the court

Coaching trip to Africa demonstrates 'friendship first, competition second'

By Craig Bird

SBC Foreign Mission Board

MORONI, COMOROS—Ouachita Baptist University athletic director Bill Vining should have known that Comoran basketball was going to be a bit different when it took two days to find a needle to inflate the balls. Or when potential practice facilities were described as "with" or "without" rims.

But many things were different this time from other international trips the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics Hall of Famer has made to promote basketball.

First, he didn't find out he would be coaching competitive games until a couple of hours before he landed in the tiny Indian Ocean island nation floating between Madagascar and East Africa.

Second, the players he had to compete with against the Comoran national squad didn't quite match up to the caliber of former teams (i.e. Larry Bird and Magic Johnson). In fact, only one had played college ball and two didn't even play in high school.

Third, Vining retired from coaching three years ago.

But when you figured out a way to win 555 games over 34 seasons, you must be pretty inventive.

Vining had signed up to go to the Islamic Republic of the Comoros to hold clinics and help the national coaches get ready for the fourth Indian Ocean Island Games. He was part of a joint effort by the International Sports Federation and the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

"I thought I was going to watch the national teams practice and play and then make suggestions to the coaches," he said. "But when we got on the plane in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, to fly to the Comoros there were four American guys on the plane from Nairobi, Kenya, who said we were playing the national team!"

The Comoros had expecting university level opposition, but the American men's team had been unable to extend their trip beyond competition in Seychelles and Madagascar.



Ouachita athletic director Bill Vining goes one-on-one with a player during a basketball clinic in Mitsimiouli, Comoros.

The makeshift team that finally took the floor, wearing purple-and-gold Ouachita Tigers uniforms, wound up including a Texas Baptist Student Union director, a missionary and three recent college graduates currently working as short-term mission volunteers.

Rarely, if ever, has a Vining-coached team been treated so rudely — two 30-point losses the first two games.

While Vining did everything he could to win, this trip was different. He set the tone his first team meeting.

"When I coached an AAU all-star team in South American for a goodwill tour in 1965 we went 15-0," he said. "But after one game the American ambassador took us aside and said, 'I saw the basketball—when are we going to see the goodwill?' You guys need to remember that we are the only Christians some of these people

ever will have seen. Play hard but remember why we're here."

They must have listened. The third match the two squads were mixed so Americans and Comorans, Christians and Muslims could play together. Afterwards it took 20 minutes for all the players to get through having their pictures made with each other. The local paper's front page headline declared: "Friendship First, Competition Second."

Even getting pounded on the scoreboard, Vining had still been successful.

"I decided when I was in the army in Korea that my calling was to work with young men in athletics," he said. "And I've had many opportunities through sports to talk to people about my faith."

Those opportunities have included coaching trips to several nations; contact with America's finest amateur players while helping select the Olympic teams in 1968, 1972 and 1976; his own players and even the thousands of youngsters who have attended his summer basketball camps.

Unable to resist a chance to teach, Vining turned most team practice sessions into mini-clinics by drafting spectators into drills and even got to hold a real clinic in the town of Mitsimiouli, where Dr. Tim Myrick, an International Service Corp volunteer with the Foreign Mission Board, is on staff.

"The people in Mitsimiouli and in Moroni (the capital) know Tim and know he's a Christian and they know we are his friends," Vining said. "Hopefully they saw the good side of us as athletes and Christians and the good impressions we made will open a door for people like Tim."

Vining and his wife, Ann, tied the trip to Comoros with a visit to Tanzania where their youngest child, Lon, is working as a journeyman foreign missions volunteer.

"We just couldn't see how we could afford to come to Africa," Vining acknowledged, "but the subject just kept coming up over and over until we finally felt like it was something we were supposed to do."

Missionary housing brings many blessings

By Colleen Backus

Arkansas Baptist

A missions highlight for any church is when a foreign missionary comes to speak or show slides, bringing the mission field close to home. An even greater highlight for some Arkansas Baptist congregations is the opportunity to provide housing for missionaries who are home on furlough.

"We have deemed it important to 'rub shoulders' with those for whom our prayers are offered and for whose work our gifts are given," explained Walter Draughon, pastor of Calvary Church in Little Rock. "Calvary, like many other churches, is committed to the missions enterprise, no matter what form it takes." The Little Rock congregation provides a missionary house very near the church's property, currently occupied by Larry and Mary Hendricks, missionaries to Costa Rica.

"We appreciate a home, a place to put our hat," Hendricks said. "It is an immense relief not to have to look for a place; the folks from Calvary even picked us up at the airport."

Mrs. Hendricks is appreciative of activities for her children — ages 14, 11 and 6. "The Family Life Center gives them something to do, and being involved in a real worship experience is important to them," she commented, adding that the furlough gives their children opportunity to be involved in missions organizations unavailable to them in Costa Rica.

"Our children are involved with a youth group and the older boys went on a mission trip, an opportunity they wouldn't have on the field," Hendricks explained. "We help out when we aren't speaking at other churches by substituting in missions organizations, ushering, speaking at church during the week of prayer for foreign missions and teaching seminars," he said. "We get to do fun things, too — foreign missionaries can even play softball with the church team!"



Draughon stressed the importance of personal interaction between the congregation and missionaries. "There is a benefit to the church of being in contact with people on the front lines — our own experiences are opened to a broader vista," he explained. "By associating with missionaries we are confronted with the fact that sharing the gospel is a worldwide endeavor. Without that touch, we would have very little accuracy in our view of what is going on out there."

Furloughing missionaries have different reasons for their appreciation of the

availability of residences. Steve Smith and his wife, Tommie, missionaries to Portugal, sign up four to five years in advance for one of the missionary residences provided by Park Hill Church in North Little Rock. "This house allows us to be close to family and for our daughter to be in contact with those she knew the last time we were here," Mrs. Smith said.

"This time we were able to come back to take our son to college at Ouachita Baptist University for the first time," Smith said. Their son also had to have surgery in Memphis prior to the start of classes, so the home provided a central location.

Fred and Gayla Parker, missionaries to the Philippines, are grateful for the house that Conway First Church is providing for them. "It alleviates the worry and financial strain of being on furlough," Mrs. Parker said. "The pressure is further alleviated by the fact that the church even pays our utilities."

Olive Miller, pastoral secretary at Springdale First Church, has coordinated her church's missionary residence work for many years. "Our people enjoy doing it for the missionaries," she said. "Most of our missionaries become a part of our church and we find it a blessing."

Cabot First Church is one of the most recent churches to provide missionary housing. "Our church has wanted to provide a house for a long time," pastor Dale Medlin said. Recently the church purchased the nearby Methodist church and its parsonage, which became the missionary house. "It was a natural thing when we purchased this property that the parsonage become a missionary residence," Medlin commented.

"The other neat thing is that the first missionaries who will occupy the house are Steve and Kathy Dewbre, our former minister of education and his wife, who have been serving in South Africa."

Churches aren't the only ones involved in the behind-the-scenes ministry of providing missionary housing. Ouachita Baptist University provides housing for missionaries-in-residence. This year the house is being occupied by David and Phyllis Dupree, missionaries to the Dominican Republic. Dupree is teaching three courses at the university and Mrs. Dupree is teaching New Testament to Japanese students.

Affirming that providing missionary housing provides blessings both direction, Draughon added a biblical perspective to the significance of the ministry. "Anytime churches extend hospitality to a servant," he pointed out, "they are blessed spiritually by dictate of the Scripture."



James Spivey, assistant professor of church history at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, leads an off-campus seminary class at the Baptist Building in Little Rock. The church history class, attended by 14 students, is the first master's level class being offered in the state by Southwestern as part of Arkansas Baptists' continuing theological education program. The classes previously were administered by Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Information about future classes and other continuing education opportunities is available from Lehman Webb at 376-4791, ext. 5249.

Arkansas All Over

MILLIE GILL

Staff changes

Dan Ingram began serving Sept. 8 as pastor of Liberty Church of Dutch Mills, coming there from Sage Church. He previously was at Tuckerman. Ingram and his wife, Lorrie, have two daughters, Alicia and Rebecca.

Bob Massey resigned as pastor of Monte Ne Church, Rogers, effective Sept. 19. He has accepted the call to become pastor of Trafalgar Village Church in Memphis, Tenn.

Danny Hutcherson has joined the staff of Midway Church of Melbourne as music and youth, going there from Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis. He attended Mid-America Seminary, and is a licensed preacher. He and his wife, Melanie, have two sons, Jerry and Josh.

Andrew M. Hall of Fayetteville is serving as interim pastor of First Church of Farmington. He previously was at Liberty Church, Dutch Mills.

Tom McCone joined the staff of First Church of Booneville Sept. 20 as minister of music and director of family life ministry. He moved there from First Church of Monticello where he had served for eight years. A native of Crossett, he has served at First Church of Paris and First Church of Alvarado, Texas. McCone is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Jane, have two children, Cara and Alisha.

Earl Ashley began serving Sept. 19 as pastor of Linwood Church, coming there from Madill, Okla., where he had been administrative chaplain at Southern Oklahoma Baptist Village since 1988. A native of Redfield, he previously was pastor of churches in Texas, Oklahoma, Ohio, Arkansas, Illinois and Missouri. Ashley is a graduate of Texas Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Glenn Crain has joined the staff of Green Meadows Church of Pine Bluff as minister

of music. A member of the congregation, he previously served as organist.

Don Alred, a former Arkansas pastor, is now serving as pastor of First Church of Zeigler, Ill. He also recently participated in a mission tour to the Ukraine that resulted in numerous professions of faith and the distribution of 40,000 Bibles and 200,000 tracts.

T. Scott Williams has joined the staff of First Church of Cabot as minister of education, coming there from Carthage, Miss., where he has been associate pastor for First Baptist Church. He previously was minister to students at North Richland Hills Baptist Church, Fort Worth, Texas. Williams is a graduate of the University of Arkansas and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Cheryl, have a son, Thomas Scott Jr.

Johnetta Wilkinson is serving as part-time children's ministry director for Walnut Street Church of Jonesboro. She is a junior at Arkansas State University.

Dawn Hamilton has resigned as children's minister at Beech Street First Church of Texarkana to serve as minister of childhood education at Cliff Temple Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas. In addition, she will continue her studies at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

People

Gary Lynn Wallace of Salem recently earned the diploma of pastoral ministries from the Seminary Extension Independent Study Institute, Nashville, Tenn. The diploma was presented Sept. 12 by Lonnie McCall, young adult teacher, in services at Zion Hill Church where Wallace is pastor.

Kerry Powell, pastor of First Church in McGehee, recently earned the doctor of ministry degree from Trinity Theological Seminary in Indiana. Powell holds a bachelor of arts degree from Carson-Newman College in Jackson, Tenn., and both a bachelor of divinity degree and a master of divinity degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Ronnie Mayes, pastor of First Church in Beebe, recently was awarded Mid-America Theological Seminary's 1993 Outstanding Alumni Award. The award is given for outstanding effectiveness in ministry, loyalty to the seminary and devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ.



South Highland Church of Little Rock observed homecoming Aug. 22 with a noteburning service for the original note incurred on the auditorium and land when the church relocated in 1979. This service also capped a 12-week financial campaign in which \$39,000 was contributed, \$3,000 more than needed to complete the note payment. Roy Cook of Texarkana, pastor during the time of relocation, was the speaker for the afternoon service. Other former pastors and staff members were special guests. Burning the note were original building committee members James Hayes, Clyde Smith, Bill Rich, Herman Adams, Bernard Smith and Jack Thomas and pastor Randy Maxwell.

Church news

South Side Church of Damascus held a revival Aug. 29-Sept. 1 that resulted in 47 professions of faith, according to pastor Bill Griffith. William Blackburn of Fort Smith was evangelist.

Bingham Road Church in Little Rock held revival services Sept. 12-15 led by Eddie Harrison, pastor of Dollarway Church in Pine Bluff, and Clarence Hill of Hot Springs. Bill Hilburn is pastor.

Rogers First Church's music and education ministries launched their fall schedule Sept. 1 with a "Christmas in September Worldwide Tour." Children, ages three through sixth grade, were guided by missionaries through several "countries" including Israel, Guatemala, Brazil, Jamaica and countries in Africa and Europe. The children's ministry of the church presented the musical, "Amazing Journey" Aug. 29 as a culmination of the church's summer music camp. Children in first through sixth grades traveled back in time to Jerusalem in music, customs and characters of the first century.

Obituaries

Eulah Alice Barnett of Harrison died Aug. 30 at age 66. She was a charter member of Tomahawk Church and a lifetime resident of Searcy and Boone counties. Survivors are her father, David Barnett of Harrison; and two sisters, Connie Huskey of St. Joe and Flo Watts of Harrison.

News notes

Arkansas Baptist Men recently hosted statewide softball and golf tournaments. The softball tournament, which included nine teams, was held in Hot Springs. The golf tournament, held in Little Rock, featured 37 churches.

Hot Springs First Church, the host congregation, placed first in the "Exodus III" softball tournament. Markham Street Church of Little Rock placed second and Owensville Church finished third.

The first-place winner in the golf tournament was Central Church of North Little Rock. Martindale, Church of Little Rock placed second and Sheridan First Church was third.

Campers on Mission's Northwest Arkansas District met recently at Devil's Den State Park. Bible studies and summer missions involvement highlighted the meeting which attracted 18 participants.

Milton Edmonson, a retired pastor; Jerry

Ross, education director of Elmdale Church in Springdale; and Farrell Ard, pastor of First Southern Church of Goshen, were study leaders.

Ken Evans, a member of the construction team from University Church of Fayetteville, shared Guatemala missions experiences. Church planting in northwest Iowa was highlighted by Clayburn and Jessie Bratton of Fort Smith.

Ordinations

Immanuel Church in Little Rock ordained Rick Jaggars, minister to single adults, to the gospel ministry Aug. 22.

Dumas First Church ordained Joe Allen, V.O. Johnson, Robert Milner, Rickey O'Brian and Jim Snyder to the deacon ministry Aug. 22.

Indian Springs Church of Bryant ordained Ed Berg and John Moore to the deacon ministry Aug. 22.

Boles Southern Church ordained Steve Rogers to the ministry Aug. 8. He and his wife, Dianne, currently are serving in Wichita, Kan., as Southern Baptist Home Mission Board volunteers. He is working with the Baptist Student Union, ministering to students at both Wichita State and Friends College.

Pocahontas First Church ordained Al Robinson to the deacon ministry Aug. 29.

Upcoming events

Park Hill Church of North Little Rock will host a concert Oct. 2, beginning at 7 p.m. Featured musicians will be the Gaither Vocal Band, Michael English, the Bill Gaither Trio and Mark Lowry with Janet Paschal as special guest. Additional information is available by calling 753-3413.

Jacksonville Second Church's music and drama ministries will present the Broadway musical "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat" in a dinner theatre Sept. 23-25. For additional information call 985-2502.

Conway Second Church has scheduled 7 p.m. meetings Sept. 22-26 with John Jacobs and the Power Team, a group of seven world-class athletes who perform exhibitions of strength, inspiration and motivation. Team members share their personal testimonies and address the issues of drug and alcohol abuse, teen pregnancy and suicide.

Wilton First Church will hold a homecoming revival Oct. 13-16 and will

observe a centennial celebration Oct. 17. Centennial events will include a noon luncheon and a 2 p.m. historical presentation. Guest speakers will be Don Jones, director of missions for Little River Association, and former pastors Joe Cervini, Vic Simpson, Ray Nicholas, Herman Kapherr and Roy Conatser.

Indian Hills Church in North Little Rock will host a seminar Sept. 25 at 7 p.m. sponsored by the Central Arkansas International Friendship Partners. The seminar will feature a lecture by Louis B. Hamada on "Prophecy and the Middle East."

Cabot First Church will host a conversational English workshop Oct. 21-24 sponsored by Caroline Association. The workshop, which begins at 6 p.m. on Oct. 21, is designed to teach individuals how to teach English as a second language. Additional information is available by calling the associational office at 676-6558.

Hays elected associate director of Christian Civic Foundation

Bob Hays has been elected to serve as associate director of the Christian Civic Foundation of Arkansas.

The CCF is a statewide interdenominational ministry partially funded by the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. It is an educational resource on moral issues, assisting individuals, churches and denominations in effectively promoting civic righteousness.



Bob Hays

Hays will be working with Larry L. Page, executive director of the Christian Civic Foundation. Hays' duties will include public relations, office management, research, fund raising, and presentations to churches and civic groups.

Hays is married to the former Martha Tanner of Little Rock. They have two children, Andrew and Meagan. Hays and his wife are members of South Highland Church in Little Rock where Hays serves as a deacon and Discipleship Training director. He also has served as a Sunday School teacher and children's worship leader.

Hays attended the University of Arkansas at Little Rock where he was active in Baptist Student Union and the Missionary Baptist Student Fellowship.

Indonesia focus of foreign missions study

By Donald D. Martin

SBC Foreign Mission Board

KEDIRI, INDONESIA (BP)—When three Southern Baptist missionaries in the mid-1950s opened a rural medical clinic in Indonesia, local leaders scoffed, saying a shoe box would easily hold all the patients' records.

"It certainly didn't look very promising for three white, Christian women in a backwater, mostly Muslim town in Indonesia," said Kathleen Jones, recalling her time working in rural Kediri as a missionary physician with missionary nurses Everley Hayes and Ruth Ford. All three women are now retired; Jones lives in Little Rock.

From the start the three women had to prove themselves in Indonesia, home to the largest Muslim population in the world, according to the adult 1993 Foreign Mission Study, "Indonesia: Missions in Transition."

Southern Baptists produced the 1993 adult study in video format for the first time without an accompanying book. It's part of a three-year test sponsored by Woman's Missionary Union, Brotherhood Commission, Home Mission Board and Foreign Mission Board. Materials for youth and children come in print formats.

In Kediri, one village leader told Jones, Hayes and Ford that foreign women would find few Indonesians willing to come for treatment, much less attend the Sunday School they planned to lead in the garage of their home.

And, when they asked where they could buy a file cabinet to hold patient registration cards, the leader said that a shoe box would be big enough.

Yet the clinic outgrew that advice in less than a month. And although the three missionaries treated only 10 patients the first day, they had ministered to more than 100 people by the end of the month.

"From then on we never slowed down," Jones recalled. "It was amazing."

Today, the patient load has not only outgrown a shoe box, but the clinic as well. In its place, a 152-bed facility treats more than 85,000 patients a year. Currently, the Kediri Baptist Hospital sponsors a nursing school and has added a dental clinic.

"The Lord did help us in Indonesia. He opened many doors," Jones said. "When I think of the lives we touched through medicine and the thousands of persons God brought to us, I'm amazed.... God has done great things... from three white, Christian women, two houses and a Sunday School in the garage to a hospital that

Study pioneers new video format

RICHMOND, VA (BP)—The 1993 adult Foreign Mission Study, "Indonesia: Missions in Transition," has pulled the television out of the corner and placed it square in the middle of the meeting.

For the first time, Southern Baptists have produced the study on video, without an accompanying book.

"Churches have said they want to teach with video," explained Cindy McClain, an editorial manager for the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union in Birmingham, Ala., who worked on the study planning team.

The video mission study is part of a three-year test sponsored by the WMU, Brotherhood Commission, Home Mission Board and Foreign Mission Board. The test will run from 1993 to

1995 and will explore a variety of formats for home and foreign mission studies.

"It's organized in four segments to be adaptable," McClain said. "Ideally we want people to use all four segments because it gives the most well-rounded view of missions in Indonesia. However, if a church or an organization only has one hour to devote to the study, they can use one or two segments only."

Meanwhile, the 1993 Foreign Mission Study materials for youth and children remain in print formats. The youth study for grades seven through 12 comes in the form of a tabloid newspaper while the children's study for grades one through six uses a resource kit.

today reaches out to thousands of patients each year."

It's appropriate that Southern Baptist tests on new video approaches in foreign missions study should start with Indonesia.

Missionaries there have long dealt with change. The first Southern Baptist missionaries moved to Indonesia because of rapid changes in China in the 1950s.

"When I think of the lives we touched through medicine and the thousands of persons God brought to us, I'm amazed.... God has done great things."

— Kathleen Jones
Retired missionary to Indonesia

Indonesia's first three Southern Baptist missionaries arrived Christmas day, 1951, in the nation's capital, Jakarta. Buren Johnson, Charles Cowherd and Stockwell Sears left their wives in the United States for a time to begin laying the foundations in Indonesia for Baptist work. Indonesia, where Foreign Mission Board presidents Keith Parks and Jerry Rankin began their missionary careers, now has 77 Southern Baptist mission personnel assigned there.

The Johnsons, Cowherds and Sears had invested their lives in China. But it

was caught in a violent communist revolution. The news was still fresh that the communist government had arrested missionary doctor Bill Wallace of Wuchow and accused him of spying. Wallace died in prison.

The decision to leave China was painful. But the missionaries recognized the newly formed Republic of Indonesia had vast potential for gospel witness. Here was a land with a population as large as all of the other Baptist fields in Southeast Asia combined, and with new religious freedoms denied during Indonesia's Dutch colonial period.

"We'd felt China was a lifetime career and then that was broken. But God always opens one door when He closes another. We felt this was an open door," said Darlyne Sears. She and her husband retired in 1985 and live in St. Joseph, Mo. Buren and Kate Johnson and Charles and Marion Cowherd are deceased.

The door they entered has stayed open. Today Indonesian Baptists number more than 35,000 members in 260 churches and 300 mission points. They have launched a new outreach program to expand Baptist work.

By 1995, every Indonesian church plans to have begun a new church, developed a church already started into maturity and provided a building for another church.

The 1993 Foreign Mission Study, designed for all ages, will focus on what God has accomplished through Baptists in Indonesia in this century and their hopes for the next century.

Willis nominated as FMB vice president

By Robert O'Brien
SBC Foreign Mission Board

RICHMOND, VA (BP)—Arkansas native Avery T. Willis Jr., a national leader in discipleship training and a former missionary, has been announced as the president's nominee for a new senior overseas vice presidential role at the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

FMB president Jerry Rankin said Willis will join the board staff Dec. 1 if elected by trustees at their Oct. 11-13 meeting in Richmond. Rankin once served with Willis as a missionary in Indonesia.

Willis, 59, director of the discipleship and family adult department at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, played a major role in developing the MasterLife discipleship training program used worldwide by Southern Baptists and others.

He also was among the top candidates considered for the FMB presidency before a search committee nominated Rankin. Rankin was elected June 14 to succeed Keith Parks, another former missionary to Indonesia.

During 14 years in Indonesia, 1964-78, Willis worked in evangelism and church development for six years, then served at Indonesia Baptist Theological Seminary

for two years as a professor and six years as president.

In Indonesia, Willis led in developing and pioneering innovative strategies and programs of Theological Education by Extension and worked with others to structure the MasterLife prototype. MasterLife has since been translated into more than 50 languages.

Rankin's nomination, which already has been affirmed by a joint committee of 10 trustees and staff, will recommend Willis' election as senior vice president for overseas.

The joint committee also approved Rankin's recommendation that executive vice president Don Kammerdiener retain his position directly under the president and his role of relating to the entire organization. The former Latin America missionary and administrator was the board's interim president for nearly seven months.

Rankin praised Willis as a man whom Southern Baptists recognize as a spiritual leader and as one who has "exhibited

outstanding administrative ability, academic attainment and relational skills."

"All of this would equip him uniquely to give direction to our overseas work, help provide improved training for new missionaries and assist in mobilizing the support and involvement of Southern Baptists in reaching the world for Christ," Rankin said.

"I'm excited about the possibility of Dr. Willis joining our administrative team to give direction to our overseas task. He would be an asset to our global strategy as we respond to the unique opportunities God is giving us and (as we) move toward the challenge of the 21st century."

Kammerdiener added that Willis, because of his "rich background as a missionary and as a powerful friend of missions as a denominational leader," will provide "a major link between our wonderful missionary heritage and a creative and dynamic future."

Before becoming a missionary, Willis was pastor of three churches in Oklahoma and Texas from 1954-64.

A native of Lepanto, Ark., he received the bachelor of arts degree from Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee and master of divinity and doctor of theology degrees from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.



Avery Willis

Rankin affirms WMU partnership

BIRMINGHAM, AL (BP)—In his first visit to Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union since becoming president of the Foreign Mission Board, Jerry Rankin affirmed the 105-year-old partnership between the two organizations.

"Your faithful support means so much to our foreign missions effort," Rankin told the national WMU staff and area WMU leaders Sept. 3.

"After becoming president of the Foreign Mission Board, one of my top priorities was for us to get together and for us to affirm and solidify our partnership," he said.

Rankin told the WMU staff he strongly believes there is still work for Southern Baptists to do in missions. God isn't obligated to use Southern Baptists in reaching the world for Christ, he said. But He is calling out personnel and tapping resources among Southern Baptists to fulfill His purpose, he said.

Warrington accepts FMB volunteer post

RICHMOND, VA (BP)—J. Thomas Warrington began a new job Sept. 13 at the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board after three months of administrative leave to consider options at the board.

He became associate director for the Spanish South America, Middle America and Canada section in the volunteers in missions department. The post became vacant when veteran volunteer specialist James Cecil retired July 31.

In late June, Warrington was asked to step down from his former job as associate area director in the board's Europe area office. John Floyd, the new area director for Europe, said he was looking for someone with "a different match of gifts" who had lived in the area to fill the Europe associate role. He has since named Roger Briggs, missionary church starter in Brussels, Belgium, to the post.

Warrington, who has 13 years' experience with the board as a missionary and staff member, was asked to consider interviewing for another job at the board.

FMB president Jerry Rankin said he supported Floyd's wish to seek another person as his associate. But Rankin told

Warrington he "had no intention to terminate" him from the board as events made it appear, "merely to transfer him to another position." Rankin apologized to Warrington for miscommunication about the shift.

In his new role, Warrington will enlist and train short-term mission volunteers who go to Spanish-speaking South America, Middle America and Canada through FMB volunteer initiatives and state or associational mission partnerships.

Warrington knows the area. He was a missionary to Costa Rica for six years until resignation as a missionary in 1982. He rejoined the board in 1986 as a consultant to help guide missionary candidates through the appointment process. In 1991 former area director Keith Parker tapped him as associate director for Europe.

Warrington said many people voiced support and concern for him, including Rankin, after he left the Europe post.

"My love for missions has never dwindled," Warrington noted, "and the avenue Southern Baptists have is through the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board."

Ridgeview Church holds first services

Ridgeview Church in Wynne held its first worship services Aug. 15 with 51 in attendance for the morning worship service and 27 in the evening service.

James Tallant, pastor of the new congregation which is a mission of Union Avenue Church of Wynne, noted there have been four additions by letter since the first service. He added that program expansion plans also are under way.

"Though currently we are only holding traditional Sunday worship services and Wednesday evening prayer services, plans have been completed to begin both Sunday School and Discipleship Training in October," Tallant said. "Woman's Missionary Union missions education programs also are being planned."

Ralph Doss has been named Sunday School director and Buck Wilkins has been named Discipleship Training director. Other newly elected leaders include Rozene Whitney, treasurer; Susan Brawner, pianist; Mrs. Jim Smothers, organist; and Neal Brown, interim music director.

Tallant said members not only are contributing generously through regular offerings, but that needed appliances and furnishings, including a piano and organ and funds for hymnals are being donated. "Even though we are a mission and our sponsoring church has said it will financially aid us as needed, I believe we will be a self-supporting congregation if current giving reflects the commitment of members," Tallant declared.

The new congregation was able to begin meeting in a \$300,000 debt-free facility because of the foresight of Union Avenue Church which began preparation for the new work in early 1980 under the leadership of former pastor, Shelby Bittle.

The 9,000-square-foot facility houses a sanctuary with a seating capacity of 225 and a baptistry, a nursery, kitchen, fellowship hall, pastor's study and restrooms. Sidewalks and a parking lot also have been completed.

Mission committee members are Ralph Doss, chairman, Wylie Brown, Donald Cox, Jon Owens, Randy Leverette, N.A. Holbrook and E.G. Neiswander.

Sunny Gap Mission constitutes as church

Sunny Gap Mission of Conway was constituted Aug. 22 as the newest church in the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. The new church was constituted with 55 charter members.

The constitutional service was held at Pickles Gap Church which launched work in the Sunny Gap area as the result of a mission PROBE guided by Jack Ramsey, ABCS director of church extension. First Church of White Hall and Wayne Meyers of White Hall also have provided financial assistance for this new work.

"This congregation is one that could best be described as a 'sacrifice of love,'" declared Bob Dailey, pastor of Pickles Gap

Church. "Twenty-five key leaders from all age levels, including two deacon families were sent from our congregation to begin this work and are among the charter members. The pastor, Johnny Harrington Jr., also was one of our members.

"We at Pickles Gap had outgrown our facilities and could either enter a building program or launch a mission," Dailey said. "We opted for the mission, located in the fastest growing area in Faulkner County. I believe this is the biblical way of starting a new work."

Dailey affirmed the new church's stewardship commitment. "They already are giving 7 percent to the Cooperative Program and 3 percent to associational missions," he noted. "In addition, they are well under way to a full church program with Sunday School, worship services and Wednesday evening prayer time."

Dailey said the church also has adopted a constitution, has a full state of officers and elected Billy Vaughan, G. L. Hegl and Aubrey Phillips as deacons.

The congregation will continue to meet in a mobile chapel provided by the Arkansas Baptist State Convention until a permanent facility can be constructed on 6.5 acres of property that has been purchased for the church.

For Pastors and Their Wives

CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

- Great Bible Teaching
- Great Worship and Praise Times
- Special Times of Prayer for Revival and Awakening
- Close Fellowship with other Believers
- Special "Retreat" Program Daily for Pastors and their Wives
- Meals Provided for Pastors and Wives by Host Church
- Free Housing Provided for Pastors and Wives by Host Church

SPEAKERS

Ron Dunn, Dr. John Phillips, Bill and Holly Eliff

HOUSING

Housing for all Pastors/Wives will be provided by Life Line Baptist Church and Little Rock's First Baptist Church in the homes of their members. Please send in the Housing Registration Form by October 4.

If you desire to provide your own motel accommodations, a list of possible motels and prices can be provided upon request.

COST

There is no fee for the conference. A love offering will be taken nightly to offset the expenses of the meeting.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Contact Life Line Baptist Church at 545-3469.

First Annual Little Rock Regional Conference On Revival



October 10-13, 1993
Life Line Baptist Church
7601 Baseline Road

Interested in a Ministry of Love?

The Arkansas Baptist Home for Children is looking for a dedicated Christian couple with not more than two children to live and work in a cottage setting with eight children. **Salary and benefits.**

Contact: Royce Aston

P.O. Box 180, Monticello, AR 71655

Phone: 367-5358

Rudolfo's miracle: a timely scrap of paper

By Robert O'Brien

SBC Foreign Mission Board

PENJAMO, MEXICO (BP)—Rudolfo Halcon had an appointment with death.

He fretted impatiently through the endless day, waiting for night to cloak Penjamo Jail, where he'd vegetated for two years without a trial.

That night the deadly combination of a sharp razor and an empty heart would end his life. Only a miracle could stop him.

Outside dogs announced the milkman and his clip-clopping burro, roosters crowed, children shrieked with joy and street sweepers swished hand-tied brooms over cobblestone.

But Halcon — fingering his razor and waiting — could hear only self-loathing thoughts pound his brain until it throbbled.

Death, he felt, was too good for him — a man of means whose greed had driven him to defraud elderly people, a man whose selfishness had left his wife, Socorro, and four children destitute while he rotted in jail.

Socorro and the children said they still loved him. How could they? No one could; he didn't deserve it. Only a miracle could make someone love him.

Night came and he made his way — a regular shaving ritual — to the shower room toilet in the Mexican jail. This night he would slit his throat and bleed to death in lonely seclusion. He lifted the razor. But someone arrived as Halcon held the razor to his throat. Halcon lost his nerve and fled.

Now he'd have to endure another endless day and do his main daily chore — sweep the jail courtyard clean of leaves, debris and scraps of paper.

Halcon never read the scraps he swept up, but this particular day he did, according to *The Scrap-Paper Miracle*, a book by

Don Madaris, a Southern Baptist representative to Mexico. The book was published by New Hope Press, a publishing arm of Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union.

One particular scrap caught Halcon's eye. It spoke of death — and of life, which would soon ebb away. Or would it? Only a real miracle could stop Rudolfo Halcon this time.

'A crown of life'

But he read and re-read the scrap: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. 2:10).

The scrap had more words, but the words about death and life nagged at him. So did the name of the writer of an article from which the scrap was torn — Olivia S. D. de Lerin of the Baptist Spanish Publishing House in El Paso, Texas. The scrap even included her address:

Thoughts of death fled as Halcon pondered what the words about life meant. Halcon's heartfelt letter of inquiry overwhelmed Lerin. It was based on a scrap of an article she wrote a long time ago. How did the scrap even get there — and on that particular day?

Lerin wiped away tears as she read Halcon's letter and resolved to answer it right away. But it took six weeks to get to Penjamo, Mexico, through mail slowed by an airline strike.

Only as he daily read and clutched that scrap of paper did Halcon manage to wait that long for Lerin's words of life.

But it was time enough for another miracle — for his wife. It came not from a scrap but from a Gideons' New Testament, thrust long ago into her hands in a marketplace.

The New Testament had lain, forgotten, in her house. But it turned up among the few items she grabbed when police

confiscated her house and belongings and evicted her and the children after Halcon's arrest.

One day, when all else seemed hopeless, it caught her eye — and the words in it led her to accept Jesus Christ as her personal Savior. She found peace and joy she had never known. But she feared to tell her husband, knowing he had little use for the church and wouldn't understand.

But Halcon would soon understand. Lerin's letter arrived the day he once more verged on hopelessness. Her explanations and materials led him to understand that someone — Jesus Christ — did love him and could forgive him. He, too, accepted Jesus as his Savior.

Six more years would pass before Halcon would leave jail, but that was time enough for other miracles — even before any Mexican or Southern Baptist mission worker met Halcon.

By the time they arrived, he had already begun winning fellow prisoners to Christ. That grew into a church inside Penjamo Jail. Other miracles changed many lives — like Cecilio, who also had a late-night appointment with death in the Penjamo Jail shower room toilet. It would take a miracle to stop him.

"You're not out here to wash your face, are you?" an unexpected voice asked. "What's it to you?" Cecilio spat back at Rudolfo Halcon.

Throughout a long and emotional night, Halcon explained just what it was to him. He explained that Cecilio — in agony over murdering his children in a drunken rage — also could receive forgiveness from God.

Halcon shared words of life that led to Cecilio's acceptance of Jesus Christ and new hope for a new beginning.

It was just one more victory that began with a scrap of paper bearing the Word of God that came in the nick of time.

Arkansas Senior Adult



Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center

October 9-16, 1993

Mountaintop Experiences of:

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------|
| Worship | Fellowship |
| Inspiration | Mountain Crafts |
| Bible Study | and... |
| Interest Conferences | Sightseeing in The Beautiful |
| Leadership Training | Blue Ridge Mountains |



For reservations/ information, contact the ABSC Discipleship Training and Family Ministries Dept., P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203; phone 376-4791, ext. 5160.

FMB administrator urges Baptists to be 'prayer warriors' for missions

LITTLE ROCK—"Challenge people to be prayer warriors," Don Reavis urged furloughing foreign missionaries during a recent orientation session at the Baptist Building in Little Rock. "Nations have opened up because Southern Baptists have prayed," he added.

The meeting, designed for missionaries on furlough in Arkansas, was sponsored by the Arkansas Baptist State Convention stewardship/annuity department. The orientation attracted 14 Southern Baptist missionaries on furlough from ministry in seven nations around the world.

Reavis, a 23-year FMB staff member, currently is director of the board's missions ministries administration, working primarily with furloughing missionaries. He formerly was a personnel consultant for individuals seeking missionary appointment.

As missionaries speak in churches throughout the state, Reavis pointed out, "Southern Baptists need to know about our work around the world." He called on the missionaries to urge church members "to surrender to God, to be obedient to His leadership and to follow Him wherever He leads."

During an interview following the orientation, Reavis described the Foreign Mission Board as "a proven channel for Southern Baptists to be involved in missions."

Noting that more than 3,900 Southern Baptist foreign missionaries currently are serving in 131 countries around the world,

Reavis affirmed the denomination's long-term commitment to "call out the called" through foreign missions.

Looking toward the future, Reavis said mission priorities include "moving into front-line church planting experiences in countries we could not serve before." He added that Southern Baptists' growing volunteer missions emphasis "is doing more to call out the called when it comes to adults than anything else Southern Baptists are doing today."

Reavis said he believes it is possible within the next few months for the FMB to have more than 4,000 missionaries under appointment for the first time in history. To move toward the goal of having 5,000 missionaries on the field, however, "Southern Baptists will have to be far more sacrificial in their giving to support foreign missions."

Reavis said another key to missions expansion is for "Southern Baptists to continue to give major emphasis to missions organizations," adding that "so many of our missionaries came through the missions education ranks of local churches."

Reavis encouraged Southern Baptists to "pray that God will call out the finest people who are willing to surrender their ambitions, their occupations, their places of service and serve Christ in an overseas environment." He emphasized that "surrender to Christ should bring peace even though the task may be found to be difficult."

Youth Director Needed—Growing church in thriving town with expanding school district (also 2 colleges and 1 university) seeks committed youth director prepared to meet the challenge of guiding young people in spiritual growth. Submit resume with references to Personnel Committee, Harlan Park Baptist Church, 1895 Highway 286 West, Conway, AR 72032.

Christian Deer Camp — Lafayette Co. WMA, Canfield, Ark. Nov. 22-27. 6 day hunt - \$250, or Thurs., Fri., Sat., - \$175, Includes \$30 WMA permit, meals, bed, w/ac-heat, showers. \$50 deposit, 1st come, 1st served. Arkansas hunting license required. Call: 1-800-248-8547 for details.

Organist Needed — Sylvan Hills First Baptist Church, North Little Rock, AR. Contact Gary Powell at 835-2511 for information.

Classified ads must be submitted in writing to the ABN office no less than 10 days prior to the date of publication desired.

FOR YOUR SHOPPING CONVENIENCE

Beginning October 1st the Baptist Book Store will offer additional shopping hours.

**Thursday - Saturday
9:30 AM to 8:00 PM**

BAPTIST BOOK STORE

9101 West Markham, Little Rock, AR 72205

501-225-6009

(Monday-Wednesday still 9:30 AM - 6:00 PM)

For Christians...

ALL SAINTS

Scriptural concept of Burden Sharing averages \$112 per family per month

- \$300 Deductible
- 80/20 First \$5,000
- 100% Thereafter
- \$1,000,000 Coverage
- Maternity Coverage

**CALL: All Saints
1-800-259-0095**

A VISUAL
REALITY
OF ETERNAL
Life



HEREAFTER HOUSE

LIFE LINE BAPTIST CHURCH

October 19, 20, 21, 22, & 23

Call for information and reservations

568-LIFE

First Baptist Church, Albuquerque, N.M.,
has raised its Cooperative Program giving from
3 percent to 10 percent
in two years.

First Baptist Church, Albemarle, N.C., has met its
Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal every year for the last
19 years – on the 1st day
it was collected!

You Can Make a Difference!

These churches are putting their money where
they know it will make a difference.

Your church can too.

Give through the Cooperative Program and to the
Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and see your
missions dollars make a difference around the
world.



YOUR BRIDGE TO THE WORLD

Are your Seniors tired of
crawling over the HUMP? The
solution is a 15-passenger van
with an Aisle, Raised Roof &
Electric Step. Call Trinity
Transportation Today!



1-800-330-3622 • (617) 458-4844
BUSES! VANS! PEOPLE MOVERS!



**Quality
Van Sales**
Used 12 and 15 passenger vans, special prices
to churches. 501-268-4490, 1500 E. Race, Searcy
72143. Larry Carson

RTVC trustees take stand against TV porn, violence

FORT WORTH, TX (BP)—Trustees of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission Sept. 13-14 approved an \$8.9 million 1993-94 budget, welcomed the agency's first woman vice president and passed a resolution "pledging to the American family efforts to protect children from abuse because of violent and sexually suggestive material presented on television."

"Within the next three months, with your help," RTVC president Jack Johnson told trustees, "we plan to initiate an institutional advancement strategy that will chart our course for the future...a future geared to combating the pornography and violence responsible for shattered lives, ruined marriages, child abuse and criminal activity."

"We must be creative and resourceful ... smarter than our adversary. We must understand that our real enemy is not television or radio or magazines. Ours is a spiritual adversary ... Satan himself. He has used the media to capture the minds and souls of entire generations of youngsters. We must stand against him."

The battle, Johnson said, will be a long and expensive one, adding that developing high quality Christian programs for the family based on biblical values will be costly and time consuming.

"I have asked myself, if not you, who?" Johnson said. "If not now, when? We can't wait for someone else to do what we are uniquely qualified to do."

Deborah Key, who has been with the RTVC since 1984, was named vice president of network operations. For the past four months she has been general manager of ACTS, the agency's faith and family cable television service, and FamilyNet, its broadcast television program service.

Key is a graduate of Baylor University in Waco, Texas, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. She taught speech and religious drama classes in Southwestern's communications department before becoming a full-time employee of the commission.

Although the new \$8,969,000 budget is less than the 1992-93 budget of \$9,247,000, it appropriates more funding for program development and acquisition. Executive vice president Richard T. McCartney said downsizing staff, restructuring and better overall allocation of resources had resulted in more productivity at less cost.

Literacy missions addresses findings of recent study

By Sarah Zimmerman
SBC Home Mission Board

ATLANTA (BP)—A government study highlighting the demand for higher reading skills in the job market may open the door for Southern Baptist literacy missions.

Released Sept. 8 by the U.S. Department of Education, the study estimated 90 million Americans — 47 percent of the nation's 191 million adults — have poor literacy skills.

However, Kendale Moore, Home Mission Board associate director of church and community ministries, said many adults will not admit they are slow readers. The challenge to Southern Baptists is to be prepared to offer assistance to those seeking help, he said.

The government study focused on how reading skills affect job performance. People with higher reading skills, it concluded, are more likely to be employed and earn higher wages than those at lower levels.

Teaching a person to read requires a long-term commitment, Moore said. Developing a relationship with the student and demonstrating what it means to be a Christian make literacy missions an effective evangelism ministry, he added.

Six students in a north Georgia tutoring program and many students at a residential probation detention center have made professions of faith, noted Renna Acree, volunteer literacy coordinator for Georgia Baptists.

"We use the Bible as our teaching tool," Acree said. "Missions is at the center of our work."

Although Acree is a retired special education teacher, she pointed out that literacy missions volunteers do not have to be professional educators. One of the students at a training center for the mentally retarded became an excellent reader, took the required training and is teaching her peers to read, she said.

Another aspect of literacy missions is conversational English classes for non-English speaking residents. Last year, 15 ethnic Southern Baptist churches began as the result of conversational English classes, said Gayle Leininger, national home missionary for literacy missions.

Free brochures about teaching conversational English and working with adult non-readers are available by calling the Home Mission Board at 1-800-634-2462.



A Prayer Journey

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 8 • SATURDAY, OCTOBER 9,
MARKHAM STREET BAPTIST CHURCH
9701 West Markham

Featuring: **Minette Drumwright**
Director, International Prayer Strategy Office

A *Prayer Journey* will be an exciting time of inspiration, spiritual fellowship, and worship. Under Minette Drumwright's leadership our journey in corporate, individual, and group prayer will focus on personal renewal and national revival.

Schedule:

Friday - registration 6:00-6:30 p.m., session 6:30-9:00 p.m.

Saturday - session 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 noon

To make your reservations or for more information call 374-0319.

Pulaski Baptist Association Prayer Retreat

Tim Wildmon, Vice President of American Family Association,

will speak at a luncheon October 26, 1993, at Hot Springs First Baptist Church immediately following the annual meeting of the Christian Civic Foundation. Lunch will be served at twelve noon. Cost is \$7.50 for individuals or \$6.00 per person for two or more people. Registration deadline is October 11, 1993.

Send reservation along with checks to: Christian Civic Foundation, P.O. Box 193256, Little Rock, AR 72219-3256. For more information, call 568-0448.

Name: _____ Number attending: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____ Amount enclosed: _____

On May 17, 1991, a brilliant bolt of lightning struck the 90-member Valley Baptist Church in Middletown, Pennsylvania, causing a fire that destroyed the building.

"Church Mutual worked speedily to help us settle the claim and get on the road to rebuilding. They are an exceptional company, and I would endorse them 100%." —Robert M. Colvin Jr., Pastor

How we respond to claims is one reason Church Mutual is the largest church insurance company in America — protecting over 5,800 Southern Baptist churches alone. Call now for a free, on-site evaluation of your insurance needs from The Specialist.

Church Mutual
1 800 542-3465



In a single flash, 90
people lost their house.

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

Arkansas project planned as pilot for Senior Changers

LAKEVILLE, AR—Senior Adult World Changers will be piloted in Arkansas on Oct. 24-30 at Lake Village.

Senior Adult World Changers is an outgrowth of the highly successful World Changers projects for junior and senior high youth. Since 1990, more than 8,000 youth have ministered to hundreds of needy people through home construction and renovation in low-income communities across the United States, Puerto Rico and Mexico.

The Lake Village project will involve senior adults in painting, carpentry, roofing, sewing and home cleaning for needy residents. Evenings will feature singing, Bible study, testimonies and inspirational messages.

"Now the same World Changers experience is available for senior adults, a group of Southern Baptists who have been heavily involved in World Changers since the pilot for youth in 1990," said Andy

Morris, World Changers director at the Brotherhood Commission.

"Senior adults have so much to give, and this is one more way they can be a witness for Christ by helping someone who desperately needs help," Morris said.

The cost of the Senior Adult World Changers project is \$225 per participant and includes room and board for the week, preparation materials, World Changers apparel, insurance and building materials.

A \$25 non-refundable deposit is required to register for a project. Ten hook-ups are available for travel-trailers. The cost for participants who stay in their own trailers is \$190.

More information about Senior Adult World Changers may be obtained by contacting World Changers, Brotherhood Commission, 1548 Poplar Ave., Memphis, TN 38104; phone 901-272-2461.

HMB opens disaster response office and toll-free phone line

ATLANTA (BP)—The Southern Baptist Home Mission Board has established an office and a toll-free phone line to coordinate disaster assistance in the flooded Midwest, as well as Florida and Hawaii which were hit by hurricanes last year.

The toll-free number is 1-800-45BC-AID.

The office is open from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Central time. The office coordinator is Ray Gilliland, a retired home missionary who served in New York City for 20 years.

The Brotherhood Commission and Home Mission Board work as partners in disaster relief, with Brotherhood making an immediate response and the Home Mission Board leading the rebuilding phase.

The primary need now is reconstructing homes and churches, said Elmer Goble, HMB director of short-term volunteers. More than 23,000 homes need to be rebuilt in St. Louis alone, and at least 20 churches in Missouri need work.

Electricians, painters, carpenters and people who can hang and finish sheetrock are especially needed, Goble said. All volunteers do not have to be skilled in those areas, but it is best to have one skilled worker for every two or three volunteers, he said.

"The assistance we give is physical, but there is a psychological component to volunteers coming in and helping," said HMB president Larry L. Lewis who toured the flooded areas in August.

"Many people in the area are depressed and have little hope. They've lost everything. When they see others coming in to help, it renews their spirit and gives them hope.

"Volunteers will have a tremendous opportunity to bear a Christian witness as well as meet physical needs," Lewis continued. "That's what ministry is all about."

Western Sizzlin'

8312 Geyer Springs Road Little Rock
5306 John F. Kennedy Blvd. North Little Rock
500 Gregory Street Jacksonville

THE SOUNDS OF 317 INSTRUMENTS...AND THE PIPE ORGAN:
TRADITIONAL ORGAN BUILDING AND TECHNOLOGY

PDI™ DIGITAL ORGANS • PIPE ORGANS
Capitol Keyboard



RODGERS

• 13401 Chenal Parkway • Little Rock, Arkansas 72211 • (501) 228-9999 •

GUESTHOUSE INN

COMFORT AND CONVENIENCE AT AN AFFORDABLE PRICE.

Not just another hotel, Guest House Inn provides all the comforts of home and special features rarely found in other hotels. Our personalized service and attention to detail will make your stay a most enjoyable one.

- * Spacious rooms and suites complete with full-service kitchenettes
- * A quiet, relaxing atmosphere with controlled access after 11 p.m.
- * Daily complimentary continental breakfast
- * Courtesy transportation
- * Free cable TV and local phone calls
- * Non smoking and handicap rooms available
- * Call for special rates and monthly rates
- * Within walking distance to War Memorial Stadium, a golf course and zoo.

Close to where you need to be, serving medical center visitors, business and leisure travelers. The Guest House Inn is your perfect home away from home while you're in Little Rock.

For reservations and information, call: (501) 664-6800 • 301 South University Ave., Little Rock, AR 72205

located from University Mall & Park Plaza Mall, adjacent to St. Vincent Infirmary Medical Center and Dumas Hospital



Housing requests should be mailed Oct. 1

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—Hotel reservations for the 1994 Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting should be mailed Oct. 1, according to convention manager Jack Wilkerson.

Reservations must be postmarked on or after Oct. 1, 1993, and will be made on a first-come, first-served basis through the Orlando/Orange County Convention & Visitors Bureau's computerized housing system.

Individual registrants may not submit more than one request per person. Multiple registrants may submit no more than 10 individual requests in the same envelope.

However, information about requesting group housing for 50 or more people can be obtained by writing to the SBC Housing Information Office, 901 Commerce St., Suite 750, Nashville, TN 37203. Disabled persons needing special assistance can contact the same address.

**SBC meeting dates:
June 14-16, 1994**

ORLANDO

Official Hotel List and Rates

Map code	Hotel code	Hotel	Single	Double
1	BWP	Best Western Plaza International	\$65	\$65
2	CPH	Clarion Plaza Hotel	\$94	\$94
3	CORT	Courtyard by Marriott	\$94	\$94
4	DIC	Days Inn Civic Center	\$70	\$70
5	DII	Days Inn International Drive	\$61	\$61
6	ENCL	The Enclave Suites	\$87*	\$167**
7	ESI	Embassy Suites-Orlando South	\$120	\$120
8	EPI	Embassy Suite Plaza International	\$124	\$124
9	FII	Fairfield Inn	\$54	\$54
10	HERI	Heritage Inn Orlando	\$76†	\$86††
11	HII	Holiday Inn Intl. Drive Resort	\$79	\$79
12	HJI	Howard Johnson Intl. Drive	\$49	\$49
13	HYO	Hyatt Orlando	\$89	\$89
14	HROI	Hyatt Regency Intl. Airport	\$84	\$84
15	ORM	Orlando Marriott	\$69	\$69
16	TPO	Peabody Hotel Orlando	\$121	\$121
17	QII	Quality Inn International	\$49	\$49
18	QIP	Quality Inn Plaza	\$51	\$51
19	RAC	Radisson Inn on Intl. Drive	\$75	\$75
20	RHR	Ramada Hotel Resort Fla. Center	\$68	\$68
21	RIP	Ramada Inn Plaza International	\$69	\$69
22	RRP	Ramada Resort Maingate/Parkway	\$65	\$65
23	RRJ	Red Roof Inn	\$49	\$49
24	ROI	Rodeway Inn Civic Center	\$65	\$65
25	SHW	Sheraton World Resort	\$72	\$72
26	SVR	Sonesta Villa Resort	\$95‡	\$155‡‡
27	SOR	Stouffer Orlando Resort	\$119	\$119
28	TTH	Twin Towers Hotel	\$79	\$79
29	WYF	Wynfield Inn	\$58	\$58

* Studio Suite - up to four persons.

** 2BR Suite - up to six persons.

† Standard accommodations up to four persons

†† Deluxe accommodations up to four persons.

‡ 1BR Villa - up to six guests.

‡‡ 2BR Villa - up to eight guests.

Note: Room rates do not include Florida sales and occupancy tax.



MEETING SITE LOCATIONS

- Orange County Convention/ Civic Center is the location of the 1994 SBC Annual Meeting and Pastors' Conference.
- SBC Convention Hotel - Peabody Hotel
- Woman's Missionary Union Hotel - Clarion Hotel
- WMU meeting site - First Baptist Church

DUE DATES:

FORMS MUST BE POSTMARKED ON
OR AFTER OCTOBER 1, 1993
MAIL NO LATER THAN MAY 10, 1994
PHONE ORDERS FOR
RESERVATIONS WILL BE
ACCEPTED AS OF JANUARY 1, 1994
1-800-258-7666



OFFICIAL

SBC HOUSING REQUEST FORM

MAIL TO:

SBC HOUSING BUREAU
ORLANDO/ORANGE COUNTY
CONVENTION
& VISITORS BUREAU, INC.
7208 SAND LAKE ROAD, SUITE 300
ORLANDO, FL 32819

- PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE ALL ITEMS TO ASSURE ACCURACY AND COMPLETE EACH PART FOR CORRECT PROCESSING.
- SHOULD MORE THAN ONE ROOM BE NEEDED, FORM MAY BE DUPLICATED (NO MORE THAN 10 FORMS PER ENVELOPE.)
- CONFIRMATION WILL BE SENT TO INDIVIDUAL INDICATED IN PART I.

PART I

INSTRUCTIONS: NAME OF PERSON REQUESTING ROOM MUST BE ONE OF THE INDIVIDUALS OCCUPYING ROOM.

(FIRST NAME)

(M.I.)

(LAST NAME)

(STREET ADDRESS OR P.O. BOX NUMBER)

(CITY)

(STATE)

(ZIP)

(AREA CODE) (PHONE NUMBER)

PART II

INSTRUCTIONS: SELECT FOUR HOTELS/MOTELS OF YOUR CHOICE.

WHEN MAKING SELECTION WHICH IS MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU PRICE OR LOCATION?

1st CHOICE 2nd CHOICE 3rd CHOICE 4th CHOICE
(HOTEL CODE) (HOTEL CODE) (HOTEL CODE) (HOTEL CODE)

PART III

INSTRUCTIONS: LIST NAMES OF ALL PERSONS OCCUPYING ROOM, INCLUDING INDIVIDUAL IN PART I.
SELECT TYPE ROOM DESIRED AND ARRIVAL/DEPARTURE DATES.

OCCUPANTS' NAMES (PRINT LAST NAME FIRST):	Check type of room desired:	Arrival Date: _____ <small>(Check in after 3:00p.m.)</small>
1. _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Single (1 bed/1 person)	Departure Date: _____ <small>(Check out 12:00 noon)</small>
2. _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Double (1 bed/2 persons)	Other: _____
3. _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Double/Double (2 beds/2 persons)	
4. _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Triple (2 beds/3 persons)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Quad (2 beds/4 persons)	

PART IV

DEPOSIT REQUIREMENT: A deposit equal to the first night's stay is required within 14 days of receipt of the SBC Housing Bureau confirmation for all participating hotels. Do not send a check with this form. Wait until you have been assigned a hotel from the SBC Housing Bureau. Deposit check should then be made payable and mailed directly to the assigned hotel. Your deposit will be returned only if hotel is notified of your cancellation at least 72 hours in advance of your scheduled arrival date. Or you may use a credit card as indicated below to guarantee reservation.

CREDIT CARD AUTHORIZATION: The SBC Housing Bureau and assigned hotel are authorized to use this card information to assess one night's room charge for deposit on my hotel room. This deposit is non-refundable unless reservations are cancelled 72 hours prior to scheduled arrival date.

Card Type: American Express Master Card Visa Diners Expiration Date: _____

Card Number: _____

Cardholder's Signature: _____

Convention Uniform

Trust and obey

By Dennis Coop, minister of education, Park Hill Church, North Little Rock

Basic passage: Genesis 12:1-3; 15:1-18
Focal passage: Genesis 12:1-3; 15:1-6
Central truth: Abram is an example of the "trust and obey" principle.

The God who intentionally created man and his environment began something new with Abram. This new chapter in the relationship of God to His creation opens with Genesis 12:1. Through the call of Abram, God begins to establish His covenant people. God's intent was for this people to be His chosen instrument for revelation and redemption in the world.

Abram had to leave all his security to follow God's call. He sacrificed his family heritage, a sure thing. He left his native religion. He went from certainty and security to uncertainty and insecurity...or did he? Perspective determines the answer. The perspective of 'fiscal responsibility' might paint Abram as irresponsible. The perspective of faith frames Abram as a portrait of courageous obedience.

The word "covenant" does not occur in the opening verse. Chapter 15, however, identifies Abram's relationship with God as a covenant relationship. The covenant described here is not the first covenant between God and man. A previous lesson depicted a covenant between God and Noah. But the covenant between God and Abram signaled a new beginning for God's relationship with His people.

God wanted a faithful people to serve His purpose. That purpose was redemption. The covenant between God and Abram would become a focus for the development of a nation.

The covenant between God and Abram called for Abram to go to a new land, make a new beginning and become the founder of a new nation.

There is a message for us in Abram's experience. God has established a new covenant with His people. That covenant still calls for man to trust and obey. It calls for him to communicate God's purpose of redemption.

I once asked a fishing buddy how he perceived God's will for his life. He replied that his starting point was God's will for every child of His. That will, according to my friend, is for every child of God to convey His loving plan of redemption to humanity until His return.

Life and Work

Near-sighted vision

By Michael Seabaugh, pastor, Plke Avenue Church, North Little Rock
Basic passage: Isaiah 40

Focal passage: Isaiah 40:1-8
Central truth: Man has his limitations, but that does not limit God.

Isaiah 40:1 is the hinge of this book. Upon it the doorway of judgment swings open to reveal God's path of comfort. Isaiah was sent to preach judgment (Isa. 6:9-10) but God now reveals a coming rebirth of hope. God reforms Isaiah's calling to be one of comfort. He must look beyond the present judgment and see what God intends to do.

That hope is seen in God's call to prepare a highway for His glorious return. God has rehabilitated Judah (v. 2) and now He challenges His people to prepare a highway for Him in the wilderness (v. 3). It is not to be a highway to heaven but a highway from heaven on which His glory will return. God's highway is cleared, smoothed, and leveled through the repentance of God's people. (Matt. 3:2-3)

It is a truly wonderful vision. Yahweh is marking the end of His judgment (Isa. 6:9-13) and the beginning of comfort through His people.

Challenged with the vision of God's highway of glory, the exiles are content to travel the low-road of near-sighted vision. To see what God is doing, we must be able to look beyond ourselves. In verses 6 and 7 the exiles respond to God's call and state their view that man is too limited to achieve God's goals. How often do we interpret God's challenge in light of our ability?

The problem of near-sighted vision is that it only views part of the picture. Man is limited. However, God is not.

God desires that we travel the high-road of His ways. Verse 8 gives the whole picture. We need to be near-sighted enough to realize our limitations but faith-sighted enough to see that God has given us His word to serve as a corrective lens. We should not just look at ourselves, but we must look at our God.

His word is a scenic route of God's higher ways (vv. 10-31). As Isaiah, we should point to the greatness of our Lord. "Behold your God!" (v. 9) he cries out. Look beyond yourself. See the limitless power of the one you call upon.

Bible Book

Problems of disobedience

By Maurice L. Hitt, DOM., Red River Association
Basic Passage: Deuteronomy 1:1-4:3
Focal Passage: Deuteronomy 1:19-46; 4:15-40

Central Truth: Disobeying God robs us of blessings, disrupts His intentions, and distorts His image.

Moses summarizes the nearly 40 years since the giving of the Ten Commandments. He reminds Israel of their victories and errors, and calls them to keep their promises to God as they enter the land that God had promised. The following are lessons they learned about disobedience.

1. Disobedience robs blessings. The Israelite adults refused to enter the promised land saying their children would be an easy prey for Canaan (1:39). Yet their children would enter in, and the excuse-makers would miss the blessing. The entrance was delayed for 40 years, and the excusers died in the wilderness.

Remember that excusing disobedience only postpones the challenge of faithfulness and does not remove any difficulties for the following generation. They had the same call to obey, but lacked a testimony of faithfulness in their fathers.

2. Disobedience turns holy war into an unholy struggle. Israel refused to attack the Amorites (1:26) on God's directive despite promise of victory. When Israel heard God denying them entrance to the promised land, they rebelled again by pursuing the attack they previously refused. Defeat came swiftly. Israel learned that war is "holy" only when it is God's directive and timing; a battle becomes "unholy" when we move on our impulse and for our selfish motives.

3. Disobedience distorts the nature of God. The Bible speaks of God creating man in His own image. Making God in man's own image is idolatry. Moses clarifies God's image in chapter 4. In verse 24, he reminds that "God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God." In verse 31, the reminder is that "thy God is a merciful God." In short, "the Lord he is God; there is none else beside him" (4:35,39). God is jealous, merciful, pre-eminent, and totally unique. To fashion God to suit us is distortive toward God, corruptive toward us, and destructive rather than redemptive toward the world (4:16,23,26). God's true nature is found when we seek him with all our heart and soul (4:29).

Convention Uniform

The Human Solution

By Dennis Coop, minister of education, Park Hill Church, North Little Rock

Basic passage: Genesis 16

Focal passage: Genesis 16

Central truth: Man's attempts to manage God's plan result in mismanagement.

The childless condition of Abram and Sarai was a prominent feature in their story. But frustration with the condition reached a new level in Genesis 16. Abram's concern had been the focal point. Now Sarai's frustration had become obvious.

Faith is severely tested when God doesn't operate according to our schedule. Abram had been promised descendants to form a great nation. Where were they to come from? Had God forgotten?

Abram's frustration was felt by Sarai. Her response to their combined frustration was to offer her servant girl, Hagar, as a prospective birth mother for Abram's child. The story is there to read. Abram and Sarai implemented this perfectly legal and, in their day, morally acceptable plan. One result was the birth of Ishmael.

Abram agreed to this idea. He accepted it as a solution to the perceived problem. It was, in fact, a problem to Abram and Sarai, not to God. God's plan was on schedule. Man would attempt to take that plan into his own hands. The apparent result would be frustration of the divine plan. Only a temporary interruption would occur, however, in this case. The solution attempted by Abram and Sarai proved woefully inadequate and troublesome. But God continued to be faithful in His promise.

A serious rift developed between Sarai and Hagar. Abram became involved. He blamed Sarai for failing to control her maidservant. Sarai blamed Abram for allowing Hagar to get out of hand. Hagar decided to run away from it all. The human's solution now began to play itself out. Trouble resulted. Human attempts are once again implemented. Once again they are unsuccessful.

God's redemptive nature is evident in this account. Hagar is the beneficiary of that intent. God comes to her revealing Himself as a "God of Seeing." God had seen her troubles. Now He proved His concern. Hagar learned a lesson for all mankind. God has good will toward persons rather than ill will. When He touches life, He does good rather than evil.

Life and Work

You can go home again

By Michael Seabough, pastor, Pike Avenue Church, North Little Rock

Basic passage: Isaiah 1

Focal passage: Isaiah 1:1-20

Central truth: God desires to have a relationship with His children.

The cases of Kimberly Mays and Gregory K., the children who desired to divorce their parents, has raised the question of whether children have the right to do so and upon what grounds they can, in fact, legally sever their relationship with their biological parents. Next, parents will want to divorce their children.

A similar issue is raised in the first chapter of Isaiah. Our heavenly Father calls His children into the high court of the universe (vv. 2-3) to answer to the charges of rebellion, ignorance, and sinfulness.

Isaiah portrays a disappointed father who weeps over the painful failure of His children. He has nourished and trained them and still the family pet is better behaved than they are (v. 3). He desires to comfort them (v. 6b). He wishes to spare them further punishment (v. 9).

However, Yahweh's offspring are unmoved by the poignant picture of a father wounded by their transgressions. They are dysfunctional (v. 4), defiant (vv. 5-6), and deceptive (vv. 11-15).

Our heavenly Father has laid down some spiritual house rules for His children (vv. 16-17). Take a bath (Confession). Clean up your room (Repentance). Act right (Cease from evil). Share (Do good). Play fair (Seek justice). Don't be a tattletale (Rebuke). Take care of family (Defend and plead).

God has every reason to divorce his adopted children. How often have we taken our inheritance and squandered it only to end up in the hog pen? How many tears has He shed over the pain of our rebellion?

Like the father of the prodigal son, the Lord waits for us to come to ourselves. He wants us to find the way home (v. 18-20). Our heavenly Father is willing to forgive (v. 18), if we are ready to return home and follow the house rules (vv. 19-20). God desires that we know that we can come home again.

Bible Book

The Ten Commandments

By Maurice L. Hitt, DOM., Red River Association

Basic Passage: Deuteronomy 4:44-5:33

Focal Passage: Deuteronomy 5:1-33

Central Truth: The Ten Commandments are expressions of God's love.

My parents had expectations for me. It helped me as I realized their love and desire to protect me from my undoings motivated them to make rules. As we realize that God's love motivated his words to us, we can see the intent in his commands.

1. God seeks to protect us from lifeless religion. The first four commands deal with worship, its corruption (idolatry), use of God's name, and a work and worship ethic (5:7-15). A true disciple recognizes no other god. He will not limit God to an imposed image. He will not speak vainly or insincerely of God. He will treat every day as holy and dedicate time for worship. All these things do matter to God. Any other formula leads to lifeless religion!

2. God seeks to protect us from the power of selfishness. The final five commands emphasize respect for life. Murder violates the sacredness of life. Adultery violates the holiness of marriage and human sexuality. Stealing and greed (covetousness) devalues humanity to possessions. Bearing false witness shows disrespect for truth and the life of another. And what is the root of one's disregard for others? It is selfishness, valuing oneself above all others. No wonder Jesus said the second great command is to love others as ourselves. Love is one power greater than selfishness.

3. God seeks to preserve the strength of family. The fifth command intends respect for parents, and promises longevity for the nation (5:16). It is no secret that the family is the center for learning respect. Respect toward God and humanity is learned in the context of a home where lifeless religion is unwelcome, and where selfishness is unbecoming. Notice that the command promises to those who live out honor and respect for their parents that the nation will prolong its days. This would indicate that the nation that forgets and ignores respect for its parentage will soon lose its glory and power. These commands seen as words of love are protections against three constant evils: lifeless religion, selfishness, and the weakened family.

Subscriber Services

The *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* offers subscription plans at three rates:

Every Resident Family Plan gives churches a premium rate when they send the Newsmagazine to all their resident households. Resident families are calculated to be at least one-fourth of the church's Sunday School enrollment. Churches who send only to members who request a subscription do not qualify for this lower rate of \$6.36 per year for each subscription.

A Group Plan (formerly called the

Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine, Inc.
P.O. Box 552
Little Rock, AR 72203

CAR-RT SORT **CR39
017557 COMP 2230
HISTORICAL COMMISSION
901 COMMERCE ST STE 400
NASHVILLE TN 37203

Club Plan) allows church members to get a better than individual rate when 10 or more of them send their subscriptions together through their church. Subscribers through the group plan pay \$7.08 per year.

Individual subscriptions may be purchased by anyone at the rate of \$8.85 per year. These subscriptions are more costly because they require individual attention for address changes and renewal notices.

Changes of address by individuals may be made with the above form.

When inquiring about your subscription by mail, please include the address label. Or call us at (501) 376-4791, ext. 5156. Be prepared to give us your code line information.

NEWS DIGEST

Land: NEA funding of homosexual films is 'outrageous'

WASHINGTON (BP)—A recent decision by the National Endowment for the Arts to restore funding denied for three homosexual film festivals is "outrageous and unacceptable," said the leader of the Southern Baptist Convention's Christian Life Commission.

The NEA announced it was reversing a 1992 decision denying a \$17,500 grant to support homosexual film festivals in Los Angeles, New York and Pittsburgh. Past Pittsburgh festivals included films on a "transvestite orgy," safe sex for lesbians and lesbianism among teenagers, according to reports in *The Washington Times*.

"Public monies should not be used to promote a lifestyle that violates the moral convictions of the vast majority of the population and is perceived as deviant by multitudes of people," said Richard Land, CLC executive director. "It is outrageous and unacceptable that the public's tax money would be used to subsidize the distribution and display of such filth....The issue is not censorship but subsidy and sponsorship."

Thomas resigns BJCPA post to move to native Tennessee

WASHINGTON (ABP)—Oliver Thomas, general counsel and associate director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, has resigned to move to his native state of Tennessee, where he plans to preach, teach and practice law.

During his eight-year tenure with the religious-liberty agency, Thomas has provided leadership in several areas — perhaps most notably as chairman of the Coalition for the Free Exercise of Religion.

The Religious Freedom Restoration Act would restore the "compelling interest" test the U.S. Supreme Court formerly required government to meet before it could restrict religious liberty. The test virtually was abandoned by the high court in 1990.

Thomas indicated he will continue working with the coalition until RFRA is passed.

Virginia Baptist conservatives formalize state organization

RICHMOND, VA (ABP)—Virginia Baptist conservatives have taken another step toward a state organization for fellowship and missions.

Meeting eight months after forming the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia, approximately 300 pastors and laypersons approved a constitution and bylaws, elected officers, established a structure of committees and approved guidelines for receiving and spending funds for mission causes different from those of the Baptist General Association of Virginia.

But leaders of the SBCV insisted their organization is a not new state convention to rival the BGAV. "We have not formed a new state convention today," said Tommy Taylor, pastor of London Bridge Baptist Church in Virginia Beach, Va., and president of the SBCV. "That's not on the agenda. We are part of the Baptist family of Virginia, the BGAV."

Taylor urged conservatives to pray more and talk less. "Pray for a healing of wounds. Pray for repentance on both sides of the aisle....Rhetoric is not getting the job done and it's not the Lord's way."

'Christian Women of Excellence' nominations sought

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—Nominations are being received for the second annual "Christian Women of Excellence" recognition sponsored by the Baptist Sunday School Board and the Woman's Missionary Union.

The honorees will be presented during "Panorama: National Christian Women's Enrichment Conference" in Atlanta, March 24-26, 1994. Women nominated should exemplify biblical values of Christian women and be considered role models for Christian women of the '90s. Four women will be chosen from these categories: two laypersons, one minister's wife and one woman in vocational ministry.

Recommendations must be submitted on a form which can be obtained by writing or calling Christian Women of Excellence, 127 Ninth Avenue North, MSN 171, Nashville, TN 37234; phone 615-251-2277.

Broadman & Holman Publishers cited in 'top 10'

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—Broadman & Holman Publishers, the publishing arm of the Baptist Sunday School Board, has been ranked number nine in the "top 10" Christian publishers, according to *Christian Retailing* magazine.

B&H emerged ninth in the top 10 list, based on responses to questionnaires sent to 1,011 retailers. In categories rated by the respondents, B&H ranked seventh in pricing, third in receipt of merchandise, fourth in customer service and ninth in sales representatives.