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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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ARKANSAS BAPTIST



Volume 92, Number 24

December 2, 1993



**CHANGE THE WORLD
NOW!**

Week of Prayer
for Foreign Missions
November 28 - December 5
Lottie Moon Christmas Offering
National Goal: \$85 million
State Goal: \$3 million

SBC leaders tell Disney of concern over Touchstone ads on 'NYPD'

By Herb Hollinger

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—Two top Southern Baptist Convention officials have sent a letter to the chairman of The Walt Disney Company asking the company to reconsider its sponsorship of the controversial television show, "NYPD Blue," or the SBC might reconsider its plans to promote Walt Disney World at the SBC annual meeting in Orlando, Fla., in June.

The letter was signed by SBC president H. Edwin Young, pastor of Second Baptist Church of Houston, and Morris H. Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee. It was sent to Michael Eisner, chairman of The Walt Disney Company and parent company of Touchstone Films which advertises one of its movies on 'NYPD Blue.'

Greg Albrecht of Walt Disney Attractions told the *Houston Post* that Touchstone Pictures and Walt Disney World should not be viewed as offering the same products.

"Families and family values are our No. 1 priority. But we're two separate brands," Albrecht said. "Disney World will not advertise on 'NYPD Blue.' Walt Disney attractions are the finest in family values."

SBC officials had been negotiating with Disney officials to offer Magic Kingdom discount tickets for Baptists attending the 1994 annual meeting in Orlando.

"Using the guise of realism, ('NYPD Blue') introduces into the living rooms and family dens of America the persons (law enforcement officials) children have been taught to respect freely using profane

and vulgar language and participating freely in sexual dalliances. The nudity, the language and the glamorizing of promiscuous sex further the deterioration of America's family values," reads the letter sent by Chapman and Young.

"Basic to the cause of our strong objection to your sponsorship of 'NYPD Blue' is the fact that for years we have believed that our families could trust Disney Productions to provide and support family value programming and we had hoped this confident endorsement could continue....

"Regrettably, we must now reconsider our immediate plans for promoting attendance at your Orlando venues and, more seriously, inform Southern Baptists that they must be suspect of promotions of The Walt Disney Company's entertainment offerings.

"We urge you to reconsider the position of The Walt Disney Company in relation to 'NYPD Blue' and other entertainment forms designed to denigrate Judeo-Christian morality and family values," Chapman and Young's letter reads.

"We are disappointed with the television show advertisement by Disney," Chapman told Baptist Press, "but we are trying to help Disney understand how important these values are to Southern Baptists. We will continue discussions with Disney officials."

The SBC executives' action was prompted by Walter Carpenter, a Houston attorney and member of Second Baptist Church of Houston. Carpenter had earlier requested the SBC boycott Walt Disney World at the Orlando meeting next year.

Cover Story



CHANGE THE WORLD NOW!

Week of Prayer 7-9

Southern Baptists are being challenged to help "Change the World Now!" during this week's annual Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions. Southern Baptists' foreign missions efforts are personalized this week in a series of feature articles beginning on page 7.

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ARKANSAS BAPTIST

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Shirley Moore's life, ministry remembered

Shirley Moore, wife of Arkansas Baptist State Convention executive director Don Moore, died Nov. 23 following an eight-month battle with cancer. She was 58.

Funeral services for Mrs. Moore were held Nov. 26 at Geyer Springs First Baptist Church in Little Rock, with burial in Searcy.

Less than two weeks prior to her death, Arkansas Baptists adopted a resolution expressing their love to Mrs. Moore and pledging to "continue in Christian love to pray for her."

In addition to her husband, Mrs. Moore is survived by their daughter, Cindy Spicer, of Little Rock; their son, Jeff, of Searcy; and five grandchildren.



DANIEL R. GRANT
President Emeritus,
Ouachita Baptist University

My appreciation for Shirley Moore grew steadily during the years I served as president of Ouachita Baptist University. She came to the campus in many different roles—as wife of a Ouachita trustee and pastor, wife of the president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, wife of the executive director of the convention, as a member of Ouachita's Development Council, and as mother of a pre-med student at Ouachita—but she always came with an encouraging smile for the Ouachita president and his wife.

In a time when the world is expected to take care of "No. 1," Shirley Moore's infectious smile radiated Christian love and a concern for others more than for herself.

PAUL SANDERS
Pastor, Geyer Springs First Baptist Church

Few people have made such a positive impact on the lives of others as did Shirley Moore. She was genuinely concerned about the needs of others, and had a great heart of compassion for those who were hurting.

We will greatly miss this godly woman who loved her Lord and His church. She was a wonderful example of what a minister's wife should be. She was committed to her husband and family and to the Lord's work. She was always kind in her speech and a reflection of her Lord in life.

Shirley, Bro. Don and their family have been a great encouragement and example of how believers face suffering and death. Our lives and the work of the Lord have been enriched because of her godly life.

MINETTE DRUMWRIGHT
International Prayer Strategy Director,
Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board

Shirley Moore has been a bright "point of light" in my life. No one has been more loving and affirming. Invariably, I have felt uplifted by her very presence.

I am deeply saddened by our loss of Shirley's life from this earth. Only recently, in the hospital, I had the sweetest, most precious visit and time of prayer with her. Even in the depths of her pain and illness, she was courageous and overflowing with faith and grace. I treasure that memory.

One of the most moving statements I have ever heard is one that Shirley made to Don. She said, "After all these wonderful people who are spending so much time praying for me no longer have me as their prayer burden, my desire is that they spend that same time and prayer energy praying for revival and spiritual awakening in Arkansas." How this reveals her heart!

With gratitude to our Lord for her beautiful life and ministry, I salute the memory of this valiant friend who blessed my life immeasurably.

It was a wonderful day for her when she entered the glories of heaven. We wonder what place in heaven Shirley was given. Surely it was a wonderful one because of her salvation through the Lord Jesus and a life of selfless service and love. We miss her so!

DONALD V. WIDEMAN
Executive Director,
Missouri Baptist Convention

The best way to describe Shirley Moore is simply to say, Shirley was a *Christian*. She loved the Lord, His Word, and people. If anyone needed to see a model of Christianity, Shirley was it.

Shirley was our dear friend. We love her and will miss her very much. She brightened our lives on earth and will live on in all the lives she touched.

TRENNIS HENDERSON
Editor, Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

Although I did not have the privilege of knowing Shirley well, I quickly grew to love and respect her during the past year.

I will always remember her contagious smile, gentle spirit and unshakable faith. In recent months, during visits in her hospital room, Shirley's wit, wisdom and warmth were continually evident. She was a constant encourager.

I thank God that He allowed our paths to cross, however briefly. My life is richer and my faith is deeper by having known Shirley Moore.

JIMMIE SHEFFIELD
Associate Executive Director, ABSC

I remember Shirley:

■ For her total devotion to Dr. Moore and his ministry. She was a constant companion and supported Brother Don 100 percent.

■ For the love she showed to those of us who worked with Brother Don. I knew she loved us because she often told us.

■ For her spiritual depth. She loved God with all her heart. She was a great prayer warrior and her faith was strong.

■ For her friendship and hospitality. She was a friend to everyone. She never met a stranger and she made you feel comfortable.

I will miss her. We will all miss her, but her testimony and legacy of devotion, love, faith and friendship will always be with us.

MARJORIE GROBER
President, State Woman's Missionary Union

I count every little bit of time I have spent with Shirley Moore as a precious gift. I have admired and appreciated Shirley from the first time I met her, a beautiful lady. She built others up and always wanted to be all she could be for the Lord.

I was privileged to share some of her deep thoughts and concerns as she recognized how ill she was. These concerns were for her family and whether she would be a good witness. I know I am one among many who is a better person for having known Shirley.

WILLIAM H. "BUDDY" SUTTON
Past President, ABSC

"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience" (Col. 3:12).

Of all the people I have met in Christian service, I believe none so completely embraced these words and made them come alive as did Shirley Moore.

Just one year ago, she spoke briefly to one of our groups at the state convention. She did so well but was embarrassed and surprised with all the compliments. Bless her heart. In her pure humility she did not know that she had done so well nor, indeed, that we would have loved anything she had to say because her life portrayed eloquence at its best.

May her spirit continue to draw us toward the life of compassion, humility and gentleness she so beautifully displayed.

ARLENE MOORE O'NEEL
Sister of ABSC executive director Don Moore

It was a wonderful day when I first met Shirley Terrell Moore. She was singing in a youth choir led by my brother, Don, at First Baptist Church, Smackover. I loved her from that moment and will love her always.

It was a wonderful day when Shirley became a part of our family. We were a loving family but she taught us how to more readily demonstrate our love. Her love was contagious!

It was wonderful to see her devotion to God and to Don through difficult times such as illnesses, accidents and many other crises. Many more were their happy times. Many are our precious memories.

YOU'LL BE GLAD TO KNOW



By DON MOORE
ABS-C Executive Director

The day had taken its toll. Decisions were many. The future ministry of some was at stake. The welfare of a church's fellowship was at stake. Employment and livelihood were at stake. I staggered into the house to say to my wife, "I hold too many destinies in my hand." There was no one to shift the responsibility to. Such is the burden of leadership. And so, with fear and trembling and with fervent prayer for God's direction, the leader presses on to face both responsibility and accountability to God, to the kingdom, to himself and to his employer. It goes with the territory.

Now, church leaders, you also have some destinies in your hands. You, too, will have to give an account for the destinies that grow out of your leadership. The buck stops with you. Some churches are fussy, stingy, stagnant, sterile and negative. Others are fresh, exciting, enthusiastic, flexible, generous and positive. Right now, the destiny of your church is being formed. What a burden to bear!

The eternal destiny of thousands around the world are also going to be charged to me and to you. God has broken down walls, opened doors and created windows of opportunity greater than we have ever had opened before. November and December are absolutely the best times of the year for pastors and other church leaders to begin to turn their church in the direction of being a world missions station. As Southern Baptists, there is no excuse for a church not having missions as one of its top priorities and emphases. It is basic to what it means for a believer in Christ to be concerned about getting the gospel to every person in the world.

I just want to challenge every church leader to see to it that there is mission education, prayer and an opportunity for every member of their church to give to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering this year. The doors are open. The world is waiting. The destinies are in your hands. You will only bless yourself, your church and the kingdom by going all out for missions, both at home and abroad.

CHRIS FENDLEY

Woman's Viewpoint

Stand by your man

Most of the time pastors' wives hear it is our place to stand "beside" our husband. As his helpmate and encourager we are able to see his needs where others never knew needs existed. Beside him we are able to help him carry the load that sometimes becomes almost impossible for him to carry alone. Two minds working together make it easier to keep track of the appointments, meetings and visits that must be kept.

Not too often in today's world do we hear about the place of a wife as standing "behind" her husband. We support our husbands beside them; behind them refers to allowing them to do what they must do and not begrudging them for the path they have to travel so much of the time alone. There are the late nights away from home, the meals that are missed, the telephone calls, visits and counseling sessions that seem to always have to come first. We must remember that God has called him to a job that isn't a nine to five, five days a week job. It is one that may require him any time of the day or night.

Another place that we must stand is

"apart" from our husbands. Even though we are the wives of pastors, we are still women with our own calling in life. We must pursue that calling whether it is working inside or outside the home. God has a plan for our lives and we would dishonor God if we did not follow through with our calling. There are many lives that we can touch that maybe our pastor husbands could never touch.

It has taken me a while to realize that we stand "with" our husbands in ministry in all of these places. Just as Priscilla was talented in tentmaking, this ability gave her the power and opportunity to teach and touch lives of many people. But nothing was probably more important to her than her place as wife of Aquilla. Our real test comes in knowing which place to be at which time. That's where prayer and trusting God really plays a vital part.

We must know when God is speaking to us and to stand in the place He has for us each moment of the day.

Chris Fendley is the wife of Jackie Fendley who is pastor of First Church of Mountain View. She is a school teacher and the mother of three children.

Personal perspectives

"It is high time we had an open and honest reaffirmation of the role of American citizens of faith—not so that we can agree, but so that we can argue and discourse and seek the truth and seek to heal this troubled land."

—President Bill Clinton

"We'll be there until the Lord is ready for us to come home."

—David Posey, Southern Baptist missionary surgeon to Indonesia

"My vision for women's enrichment ministry is every woman in church walking intimately with the Lord, becoming women of prayer absorbed in Bible study, then reaching out to a hurting world of women."

—Denise George, newly appointed women's enrichment ministry specialist, Baptist Sunday School Board

Changing the world: Will you do your part?

It's impossible. It can't be done. Why even bother to try? Those may be initial responses to this year's challenging Lottie Moon theme, "Change the World Now!"

As Christians confronted with the countless needs and problems of today's world, where do we begin in an effort to make a significant difference in the world around us? How can we as individuals and as local churches hope to have any lasting impact on our hurting world?

As troubling as the questions seem, there are legitimate, realistic answers to those overwhelming concerns. One starting point is personalizing specific needs and dividing them into manageable size. From a human perspective, it seems impossible to imagine that a tiny baby born 2,000 years ago in an obscure stable could be the eternal answer to man's sin problem. But He was—and is.

Just as Jesus Christ reached out to the world around Him throughout His earthly ministry, we are called to do the same. Recognizing needs and taking action to address them is one sure way to help change the world.

Noting that sharing the gospel message "is what Christmas is all about," Foreign Mission Board president Jerry Rankin emphasized, "Jesus was born as God's gift in order to personalize salvation for all who would believe and receive Him as Lord and Savior....We could never give as God gave to us, but it is appropriate that we give in order that others may hear

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



By TRENNIS HENDERSON

this good news of great joy."

It remains true that one individual—once committed individual—can still make a significant impact for the cause of Christ. I recall an old gospel song my Dad used to sing that included the phrase, "Little is much when God is in it." Matthew 19:26 puts it this way: "With God, all things are possible."

Still, the world—and its needs—are huge. Yet Southern Baptists remain on the cutting edge of making a difference in the world one person at a time. There currently are almost 4,000 Southern Baptist foreign missionaries serving in more than 130 nations. Last year's Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and Week of Prayer emphasis in the Newsmagazine personalized foreign missions by featuring the photos of approximately 140 Arkansas Baptists serving around the world.

This year's emphasis, found on pages

7-9, highlights three missionary couples currently on furlough in Arkansas. Representing Southern Baptists' diverse worldwide missions effort, the three families are involved in church planting in France, medical missions in Indonesia and Christian social work in Brazil.

Jim and Kathryn Ingram, David and Faith Posey and Ron and Alana Greenwiche are helping "Change the World Now!" and we have the opportunity to join them. Obvious ways to help include giving generously to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and praying consistently for foreign missions, both during and beyond the annual Week of Prayer. Other options suggested by the Foreign Mission Board include joining a missions education organization in your local church, getting involved in ministry to international students, participating in volunteer mission projects—and remaining open to God's call to career missionary service.

"How many million more souls are to pass into eternity without having heard the name of Jesus?" Lottie Moon asked a century ago. That question is still valid today. The answer is to faithfully join with the Ingrams, the Poseys, the Greenwiches and thousands of others who are committed to truly "Change the World Now!" with the gospel of Christ. What better way could we find to celebrate our Savior's birth?

One question remains. Will you do your part?

HMB action questioned

Is the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board in the business of separating husbands and wives? In the recent action in which Home Mission Board trustees appointed Mrs. Rebecca Waugh and rejected her husband (*Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*, Oct. 21 issue, page 18) we have what appears to be the makings of a strained marriage. They should have appointed both of them, or neither of them.

Daniel and Virginia Harrison
Clarksville, AR



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

of Seminary Relations, the following specific issues were involved.

Dr. Stancil rejected inerrancy by referring to the "matter" of the Bible as "the history of salvation." This "matter," he said, was without error. He repeatedly refused to state that the entire Bible is inerrant. For example, he holds that the Adam and Eve of Genesis 4 are not necessarily the same first man and first woman of Genesis 1-3.

In addition, Dr. Stancil rejected the historical Baptist interpretation of the doctrine of believer's baptism. He stated that if he were approached by an individual who had been "baptized" earlier in their

life but had since been saved, he would not necessarily counsel them for "rebaptism." Dr. Milton Ferguson, seminary president, acknowledged a problem with Stancil's views about baptism, calling them "fuzzy wuzzy."

Dr. Stancil claimed in his address to the trustees immediately following their denial of tenure that theirs was a "shameful action," that he had been slandered and lied about, that "for many trustees truth and justice are negotiable, and unethical behavior and power politics are acceptable and effective methods to carry out kingdom work," and that they wanted him to "mindlessly parrot their theological jingles."

With this information in mind, Arkansas Baptists can be proud of their new president, Bro. Ronnie Rogers, and his stand as a Midwestern trustee for the truth of God's Word.

Warren Watkins
Pine Bluff, AR

'Standing for the truth'

The recent denial of tenure to Dr. Wilburn Stancil of Midwestern Seminary in Kansas City and its coverage in the press prompts me to share information not commonly held. According to an article released by Midwestern Seminary's Office

RFRA passage cited as 'landmark' event

WASHINGTON (ABP/BP) — President Bill Clinton signed the Religious Freedom Restoration Act during a Nov. 16 ceremony on the South Lawn of the White House.

Approximately 200 religious and civic leaders, including Rex Horne, pastor of Immanuel Church in Little Rock, watched the president sign what many have heralded as the most important legislation affecting religious liberty since the Bill of Rights was ratified in 1791.

RFRA, backed by a 68-member coalition headed by the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, restores the high standard of protection lost in the 1990 Supreme Court decision, *Oregon vs. Smith*.

In *Smith*, the court ruled government no longer had to demonstrate a "compelling interest" before restricting religious freedom. RFRA was introduced in mid-1990 as a legislative response.

The new law will require any government body to demonstrate a policy serves a "compelling interest," such as public safety or health, and is the "least restrictive means" in fulfilling the government's interest before limiting the free exercise of religion.

"The power to reverse...by legislation a decision of the United States Supreme Court is a power that is rightly hesitantly and infrequently exercised by the United States Congress," Clinton said before signing RFRA, "but this is an issue in which that extraordinary measure was clearly called for."

"What this law basically says," Clinton noted, "is that the government should be held to a very high level of proof before it interferes with someone's free exercise of religion. This judgment is shared by the people of the United States as well as by the Congress."

Clinton lauded the unique RFRA coalition, which represents virtually every point on the political, ideological and religious spectrum. In addition to the BJCPA, the coalition ranged from the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission to the American Civil Liberties Union.

The country's founders placed religious liberty as the first freedom listed in the Bill of Rights because they understood its significance, Clinton said.

"They knew that religion helps to give our people the character without which a democracy cannot survive," he said. "We are, after all, the oldest democracy now in history, and probably the most truly multi-ethnic society on the face of the earth."

"And I am convinced that neither one of those things would be true today had it not been for the importance of the First



President Bill Clinton signs the landmark Religious Freedom Restoration Act as Vice President Al Gore and members of Congress witness the historic event.

Amendment and the fact that we have kept faith with it for 200 years."

In a written statement, Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, a chief sponsor of the bill, heralded the signing of the landmark legislation as a restoration of a fundamental right guaranteed to all Americans by the Constitution.

"This act restores the precious balance between the interests of our government and the religious liberties of our citizens," he wrote.

Restoration celebration

At a press conference held after the ceremony, Oliver Thomas, former BJCPA general counsel who chaired the coalition, said that since the *Smith* decision "there has been a steady drumbeat of bad (court) decisions for religion."

"All told, more than 60 cases have been decided against religious claimants since *Smith* was handed down," Thomas said. "Today we celebrate the end of this dark night."

James Dunn, BJCPA executive director, said, "When anyone's religious liberty is denied, everyone's religious liberty is endangered. We believe passionately that our religious liberty is a gift from God."

CLC executive director Richard Land described RFRA's passage as "the greatest victory for religious freedom in my lifetime and probably in this century."

Robert Dugan, director of the Office of Public Affairs for the National Association of Evangelicals, noted, "This historic act

would gladden the heart of Thomas Jefferson, who called religious liberty 'the most sacred of all human rights.'"

According to Rabbi David Saperstein, director of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, "the Religious Freedom Restoration Act is the most important religious liberty bill in our lifetimes, and the free exercise of religion of every American today is vastly safer than it has been for the last three and a half years."

Prior to signing the bill into law, Clinton noted, "It is high time we had an open and honest reaffirmation of the role of American citizens of faith — not so that we can agree, but so that we can argue and discourse and seek the truth and seek to heal this troubled land."

Clinton said the nation is involved in a debate about the "extent to which people of faith can seek to do God's will as political actors. I would like to come down on the side of encouraging everybody to act on what they believe is the right thing to do."

He lamented a climate in which Americans are embarrassed to advocate positions and actions based on religious beliefs. "I submit to you today, my fellow Americans, that we can stand that kind of debate in this country."

"Let us...respect one another's faiths, fight to the death to preserve the right of every American to practice whatever convictions he or she has, but bring our values back to the table of American discourse to heal our troubled land."



CHANGE THE WORLD NOW!

1993 Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions

Ingrams take gospel to 'post-Christian' France

By Colleen Backus

Arkansas Baptist

While many people envision Paris, France, as a romantic international city, being missionaries there is hard work. "Many French people consider themselves 'post-Christian' and they think God doesn't impact their lives," Jim Ingram explained.

Ingram and his wife, Kathryn, have been serving as Southern Baptist missionaries in Paris for the past three years. Prior to leaving for the field in 1990, he was associate pastor and minister of evangelism at Olivet Church in Little Rock.

"Eighty percent of the French population claim to be Catholic, but 50 percent also claim to be atheists," Ingram said. "Only 12 percent of that 80 percent actually go to church once a month, and only 5 percent go once a week." The Catholic affiliation has become more of a cultural identity, rather than a spiritual one, he pointed out.

"There are people who respond, but a high level of mistrust permeates French society, not just toward foreigners, but toward each other," Ingram explained. "They have an almost inherent rebellion against any kind of institutional authority. You have to earn their respect. They are very skeptical."

That skepticism is something Ingram understands on a very personal level. Raised in Hampton, Va., and a graduate of the Virginia Military Institute, Ingram intellectually understood who Christ was, but had refused to let Jesus into his heart. Two years after college, at a "really low point" in his life, Ingram gave his life—heart and mind—to the Savior. Feeling called to the ministry, he enrolled in Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

It was at Southwestern that he met Kathryn, a native of Arkansas, who had also felt called to full-time Christian work. A graduate of Ouachita Baptist University, she grew up in Searcy where her father is a veterinarian. The Ingrams married in May 1980, and after he completed seminary, they returned to Virginia where he was pastor of First Baptist Church in Hampton, his hometown, for three years.

Mrs. Ingram, who had always been drawn to missions, began to feel the pull of God in both of their lives, "but we needed more experience, and God provided that," she explained. The couple also had three young girls, which made



CHANGE THE WORLD NOW!



Jim and Kathryn Ingram

- Missionaries to France
- Appointed in 1989
- Jim, a church planter, is a native of Virginia
- Kathryn is a native of Searcy, Ark.

considering missions service difficult. In 1987, the family moved to Little Rock, where Ingram served at Olivet Church.

It was during the 1988 Southern Baptist Convention in San Antonio that the couple made public their private pledge to become missionaries. "God moved in both of our lives at the same time," Ingram said. During the appointment process, the challenge became finding a good job match for their skills.

"We had no preconceived idea of a particular place to go, but we couldn't find a peace about what was available," Mrs. Ingram explained. Then the job description for France came up, and the match of gifts and the kind of work was "just amazing," she said. "Jim had even studied French in high school and college."

Intensive language study

The Ingrams have undergone some of the most intensive language study of any missionaries on the field in Europe. "The French expect a very high level of language competency, and they speak very quickly," Ingram explained. The couple was in full-time language study for the first 18 months that they were on the field. The second half of their service was spent taking French university-level courses part-time and also working in a French church with a national pastor.

However, after the couple had worked with the church for several months, the French pastor was called to another church and the congregation asked Ingram to assume pastoral duties. "It was a blessing in disguise," Ingram said. "I led a Bible study, discipleship class and preached once a month. Working with the church was a really good experience."

Even though the Ingrams have had a good working relationship with the church, there are difficulties involved with living in Paris. "The pace of life in Paris is unbelievable," Ingram said. "I can easily sit in traffic for an hour or two in the evening."

The Ingrams also are concerned for their daughters, who attend French schools. "French school is very difficult," Mrs. Ingram noted. "The girls are in school until 4:30 and still have homework."

Even though the children do well in school, the Ingrams point out that due to dwindling Lottie Moon Christmas Offering funds, private school could not be an option. Many missionaries throughout the world have concerns related to their children's education, and some leave the field because of it, the Ingrams explained.

The Ingram children will be attending semi-private schools when they return to France next year. The Ingrams will be serving in Vienne, in the southern part of France near Lyon. Historically, Vienne was the first French town to receive the gospel from Christians in the first century.

Ingram will serve as a church planter for a congregation of 10 people brought together by a French pastor. "It will be the first Baptist work ever in this area," Ingram said, excited by the possibility. "There are only 7,000 Baptists in all of France, and only 5,200 of them are affiliated with the French Baptist Federation."

As the Ingrams return to France—the least evangelized western European country—they face not only countless challenges but countless opportunities. In addition to gifts through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, Arkansas Baptists can support their ministry through the 1993 Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions.



Surgery is ministry tool in Indonesia

By Colleen Backus

Arkansas Baptist

David Posey heard a missions speaker when he was 10 years old and the Lord kept impressing the need for missionary work overseas throughout his life. Having just returned from his first term of missionary service to Indonesia with his wife, Faith, he keeps giving credit to the Lord.

Posey is a missionary surgeon at the Rumahsakit Immanuel hospital in Lampung, where surgeries he performs in a single day may range from a newborn baby with intestinal difficulties to repairing a trauma wound. "You certainly can't specialize," Posey said with a laugh.

Posey, a native of Crossett, is a graduate of Arkansas State University in Jonesboro and the University of Arkansas Medical Sciences in Little Rock. Part of his medical education was paid for with funds provided through the Arkansas Baptist Foundation.

Faith Posey met her future husband on a blind date set up by a 70-year-old friend at her church in Camden, where Posey had set up a private practice. A native of Russellville, Mrs. Posey is a graduate of Baylor University in Waco, Texas. "We spent our first anniversary in Indonesia on a short-term mission trip," she said. "During that three weeks, the Lord impressed on us the preciousness of the people, even though we couldn't talk to them."

'The Lord worked it out'

The Poseys pointed out the Lord's intervention in getting them to the mission field. "Usually when people get out of med school, they're in debt and get deeper into debt setting up a practice," Posey explained. "Even though I was single and in debt when I went into practice in Camden, the Lord worked it out so I could get to the field within two years of our initial trip."

One of the "very human aspects" of being a missionary, Mrs. Posey explained, was finding out she was pregnant two weeks after being accepted for service by the Foreign Mission Board. After their appointment at the service held in Little Rock in Oct. 1989, they had to wait to leave until their daughter, Hannah, now 4, was born.

Posey serves at one of two Baptist hospitals in a province of six million people that also includes a government hospital and one or two other private hospitals. Posey works with one other American



CHANGE THE WORLD NOW!



David and Faith Posey

- Missionaries to Indonesia -
- Appointed in 1989
- David, a surgeon, is a native of Crossett, Ark.
- Faith is a native of Russellville, Ark.

missionary and six Indonesian physicians as a team. The two surgeons average about 125 cases a month.

Beyond the health care itself, Posey said the main goal is to see people come to know Jesus. "Physicians share Christ with patients after they've taken care of them," Posey said. "A lot of the witnessing work is also done by Indonesian chaplain/c evangelists on staff." The hospital staff sees about 20 to 30 professions of faith in Christ every month from patients and family members.

"Out biggest future challenge is discipleship," he explained. In the past the problem has been compounded by lack of personnel, Posey noted, but other missionaries are on their way to help with theological education.

There are two seasons in Indonesia, the Poseys note—hot and wet and hot and dry. The people are of Malay descent, with over 250 tribal groups contributing to the ethnic diversity. Each tribe has its own language, but all use the common trade language, Indonesian. "They're really friendly and open towards Westerners," Posey commented, "but officially, the government is not interested in foreigners on a long-term basis."

That government policy affects them directly, Posey pointed out. The couple is scheduled to return from furlough on Feb. 4, but their visas expire March 8. "I try to trust the Lord and not think about it," Posey said.

The government's policy is to maintain harmony which is absolutely essential in the overpopulated country. "Imagine taking everyone east of the Mississippi and putting them in Alabama," Posey said. "Indonesians have no concept of being alone—there isn't even a word for 'private' in their language."

Government officials sometimes perceive "harmony" as being disturbed by Christian witness in the predominantly Muslim country—even the hospital was not allowed to have "Baptist" in its name although it was started with Southern Baptist funds.

Government concerns aside, the name of the hospital itself—Rumahsakit Immanuel, literally the "God is with us sick house"—is a witnessing tool, Posey noted. "All you have to do is ask a patient if he knows what the name means and a door is opened."

The hospital is basically self-supporting; the Baptist subsidy consists of missionary salary support and an occasional capital supplement. The Poseys' second child, Caleb, was born at the hospital with the assistance of an American missionary pediatrician who was there on a mission trip.

Mrs. Posey recalled the "sweet, encouraging" Indonesian nurses. "We have a Christian family there, just like here," she said. "They don't look the same or speak the same language, but they believe the same," her husband agreed. "The Lord ministered to us through them."

Everyday Indonesian life usually starts at 4:30 a.m. when the first Islamic call to prayer sounds. "It's really loud; they use loudspeakers," Mrs. Posey said. "It's hard to sleep through it, but we try." Nationals, especially in rural areas, rise early and work during the cool part of the day. In the early afternoon, they rest and then work until dark.

In the States, where they now find Arkansas' 50 degree weather chilly, the Poseys await the renewal of their "shaky" visa, but mostly await the Lord's will. "We'll be there until the Lord is ready for us to come home," Posey declared.



Greenwiches follow God's call to Brazil

By Colleen Backus

Arkansas Baptist

Ron and Alana Greenwich have had strong Baptist ties from their childhoods—he grew up in the Arkansas Baptist Children's Home at Monticello and she is the daughter of Southern Baptist missionaries and grew up in Brazil. Still, the Greenwiches did not envision being missionaries, much less in her native Brazil.

The couple met at Ouachita Baptist University; Greenwich also is a graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and the University of Houston. But his degrees are in social work. He worked as a case worker in Texas and also at the Children's Home in Monticello. "I'm not a preacher," he said with a laugh.

After seminary, the Greenwiches took a trip to see her parents in Brazil. While in Rio, they saw a Baptist Friendship Center that did social ministry and were moved by the magnitude of the needs they saw there. Greenwich found it interesting that there was a place where missionaries with skills similar to his could serve, but it was two years later when he realized the strength of God's call.

"One morning we were all sick, and we stayed home, watching Charles Stanley on television," he explained. "He preached on missions and for the first time I suggested to Alana that we should think about missions....She started crying because she had missions on her heart for a couple of years, but we had never talked about it."

Once the lengthy appointment process was complete, the question arose concerning where to serve. "Brazil made sense because Alana already spoke Portuguese," Greenwich recalled. "At the time, there were only 30 appointed social workers in the world, and only 12 placements available on the field—and several of them were in Brazil."

The Greenwiches eventually went to Florianopolis, in the state of Santa Catarina in south Brazil, where they have been since 1983. The city is really an island, and is a tourist attraction to Argentines, Greenwich explained. "The climate is moderate—there is no fall and the trees don't lose their leaves."

The coldest it gets is 40 degrees, but, Mrs. Greenwich pointed out, "That is cold enough in unheated homes and churches."

The biggest problem Brazil is facing is runaway inflation, Greenwich emphasized, which directly impacts their work.



CHANGE THE WORLD NOW!



Ron and Alana Greenwich

- Missionaries to Brazil
- Appointed in 1983
- Ron, a social worker, is a native of Monticello, Ark.
- Alana is a native of Brazil, where her parents served as missionaries

With a seven-year inflation rate of over 8 million percent, more and more people are becoming poor. "More middle-class people are losing ground," he said. Government attempts to curb inflation have been ineffective and the people are losing confidence in the government, he added.

Hard economic times have made the need for the Baptist Friendship Center—the Casa Batista da Amizade—grow over the years the Greenwiches have been in Brazil. They work with lower income families, teaching classes like guitar, piano, typing, mechanics and hairdressing. The center also runs a preschool. Originally built with Lottie Moon Christmas Offering funds, the center has eight paid workers and dozens of volunteers. "Hundreds of folks come through here," he said. "And each class is begun with a Bible study."

Training combats hunger

The center's newest project is one Greenwich conceived and financed through world hunger funds—sewing classes on industrial machines. "He wasn't ready to come back to the States because it was just really getting going," Mrs. Greenwich commented. She explained the importance of the project is related to the economics of the area.

"Our state is the No. 1 exporter of clothing in Brazil; if women can get training, they can get a job or open a home-based shop," she noted. "That directly affects the welfare of her family—whether they can eat or not."

Greenwich further explained that in Brazil most workers make a single minimum wage—about \$50 a month. "Women who are trained to sew are in such high demand that they are paid two minimum wages," he said. While the

workers are training at the center, the goods they produce are also sold to defray costs.

"Our major goal is to be a self-supporting ministry," Greenwich emphasized. "But it is very difficult—people have very little money to pay for classes." Meeting expenses—such as the light bill and a few salaries—is a month-to-month struggle, he admitted. The sewing program might be the "glimmer of hope" the center needs to become financially stable.

The Greenwiches have four children, the oldest a freshman at Ouachita Baptist University and the youngest born in Brazil. "He's kind of proud of that," said Mrs. Greenwich. "He's a dual citizen of Brazil and the United States."

The family will face many challenges when they return. In addition to the longstanding Catholic influence in Brazil, a spiritism movement is capturing the country, Greenwich said. A combination of religion, science and philosophy, spiritism encompasses beliefs in reincarnation, communicating with the dead and improving spiritual standing through charity.

"Wealthy, famous people have turned to spiritism because charity can be their salvation," Greenwich explained. The "street" or lower income version of spiritism involves the use of "mediums" to commune with the dead and other emotional appeals.

The Greenwiches look forward to going back to Brazil, evidenced by their concern for the center's progress while they are in the States and the calm but ever-present passion for their ministry. Their commitment helps personalize this year's Lottie Moon theme, "Change the World Now!"—pretty good for someone who isn't even a preacher.

Pageants proclaim the gospel message

By Millie Gill

Arkansas Baptist

The birth of Christ, the true meaning for observing the Christmas season, will be proclaimed in the coming days with music, drama, nativity scenes and cantatas by Arkansas Baptist churches. In addition to celebrating the Christmas season, the productions offer the opportunity for many people to come to know the "Christ Child" as their personal Savior and Lord.

Among the major productions throughout the state for which complimentary tickets are available will be:

■ "A Christmas Celebration" to be presented Dec. 12-13 at Park Hill Church in North Little Rock, beginning at 7 p.m. The double keyboard artistry of Stephen Nielson and Ovid Young will join forces with the sanctuary choir and orchestra to present two evenings of "Keyboards and Carols."

"We are eager to share the glory and splendor of Christ's birth through this year's presentation," explained minister of music Joe A. Fitzpatrick. "It is very important for us to use this dynamic worship and praise experience as an evangelistic outreach opportunity for our community. In addition, it will be our privilege to have this production broadcast statewide at noon on Christmas Day by KTHV, Arkansas 11."

■ First Church of Little Rock will incorporate new ideas for reaching the lost with its 10th annual Living Christmas Tree production Dec. 10-15 which will feature a 95-voice choir, an orchestra, a handbell choir, a drama team and a procession of 18 worship banners.

"We realize these performances open up an area of discussion for others and this year we are trying to strengthen our members for presenting the plan of salvation," said minister of music Tom Bolton. "In addition, we are formulating a different follow-up approach to those who write cards and letters expressing the impact performances had on their lives."

"Hearts Come Home for Christmas" is the theme for the productions which will be presented in 3 p.m. matinees Dec. 11-12 with other nightly performances at 8 p.m.

■ Central Church in Jonesboro will celebrate the "Majesty of Christmas" Dec. 19 at 6:30 p.m.

The production, coordinated by Ric Hunt, minister of music, and John Dresbach, associate minister of music, will feature music by the sanctuary choir and orchestra, a handbell choir and a banner procession. Observance of the Lord's



Choirs, orchestras, banners and more help tell the Christmas story each year during pageants presented by Arkansas Baptist churches throughout the state.

Supper will conclude the presentation.

■ Minister of music Morris Ratley has written the script for "Christmas Fantasy '93" which will be presented Dec. 12 in a 3:30 p.m. performance at First Church of Heber Springs.

"Reaching people for the Lord is the purpose for this service that will include our sanctuary, senior adult, youth and handbell choirs," Ratley said. "The program, beginning in an informal setting with contemporary music, will conclude with traditional Christmas music in a formal candlelight service."

■ "Christmas Memories," reflecting the holiday memories of choir, handbell and drama members, will be the theme for the Christmas musical to be presented Dec. 4 at 7 p.m. and Dec. 5 at 6 p.m. at Baring Cross Church, North Little Rock.

"We are seeking to present memories of Christmas '93 from God's perspective," emphasized minister of music Larry Grayson. He said the candlelight presentation also will include a multi-media slide show and a live nativity scene.

■ Crosslet First Church will present its third annual "Come Celebrate Jesus" pageant at 4:30 and 7 p.m. Dec. 4-5, featuring the sanctuary and youth choirs, a full orchestra and a 10-member drama team under the direction of minister of music Wayne Grothman, assisted by music associate Michael Peeler.

Grothman said he and pastor David

Newberry view the holiday performances as a means of reaching those who are unchurched. "A musical program is not as threatening to the unchurched as is an evangelistic meeting," he said. "However, the birth of Christ and His purpose for coming is being told."

■ Geyer Springs First Church in Little Rock's Celebration Choir, orchestra and handbells will present "Come Let Us Adore Him, Come! Let Us Adore!" as a Christmas worship experience Dec. 5.

Carlos Ichter, minister of music, will direct the 250 performers in 3:30 and 6:30 p.m. performances.

■ Jacksonville First Church's music ministry will present "Adoration in Search of a King" Dec. 4 at 7 p.m. and Dec. 5 at 6 p.m. Danny Branton, minister of music, said this musical drama is the story of the three wise men, their journey to Bethlehem, their second thoughts about going and their exuberance upon arrival at the manger scene.

"These performances will include banners that bring emphases to the name of Jesus and they will conclude with altar calls which bring an intense focus on the Christ Child," Branton noted. Wayne Hargis is serving as drama director.

■ The music ministry of First Church in Rogers will present the Christmas musical "The Night the Angels Sang" Dec. 12-13 at 7 p.m. The musical is a dramatic portrayal of the Christmas story related by a large

drama cast and the church's 120-member Exaltation Choir, accompanied by a 25-piece orchestra.

Tim Logan, minister of music, said the event will likely be "the most unusual Christmas musical you will ever see." While the story remains true to the biblical account, the setting of the story has been altered dramatically to point out that Christ came to an ugly, hurting world rather than the quaint, sentimental setting in which the Christmas story is usually portrayed.

■ The sights and sound of Christmas will come alive with the sixth annual production of *The Living Christmas Tree* at First Church of Springdale Dec. 11-14 at 7 p.m. with a matinee performance Dec. 12 at 3:30 p.m. The 1993 production will feature a new computerized tree lighting system, as well as new set, tree decorations, costumes and music.

The program will include music of the season by the 300-member adult choir and orchestra, children's choirs, drama cast and crew.

■ The eighth annual presentation of the "Glory of Christmas" will be presented Dec. 5 at 4 and 7 p.m. at Immanuel Church in Little Rock. "Christmas Is Calling You Home" is the theme for the 1993 edition.

Associate pastor of music and media Lynn Madden will direct the performances, featuring the sanctuary choir, Immanuel orchestra and additional music ministry choirs and ensembles.

"Each person who attends will be given the unique opportunity to allow the real reason for this season to bring them to the point of hearing, seeing, touching and responding to this individual call upon their life," Madden declared.

■ Robed as members of the "heavenly celestial choir," the adult choirs and the senior adult choir of Beech Street First Church in Texarkana will present "From Heaven's Throne" Dec. 12 at 3 and 7 p.m. The production will take place in a setting representative of heaven and will include orchestral accompaniment and drama.

Charles Vance, minister of music, noted the commissioning of Jesus to come to earth so that the world might be changed will be the opening charge given by the celestial choirs. "Laurie Dean, portraying Mary, will be the soloist charging Jesus at His birth to change the world," Vance said. "The witnessing effort of this production will come as the final charge is sung to the congregation, challenging them to change the world."

Kelley Cobb will be the storyteller for the two presentations.

■ "The Many Moods of Christmas" will be performed Dec. 5 at 7 p.m. by the chorus and orchestra of First Church in El Dorado.

Minister of music Wilson Borowski will direct the production that will conclude with a message by pastor Floyd Lewis.

The church's Celebration Ringers handbell choir will present its Christmas concert Dec. 12 at 7 p.m.

■ Staged in the "Old West" and using popular and traditional musical selections in a western motif, the music ministry of First Church in Benton will present its ninth annual Christmas pageant Dec. 10 at 7 p.m. and Dec. 11-12 at 5 and 8 p.m.

The 150 performers, including the choir, drama team members and auxiliary groups, will be directed by minister of music David Pierce. He said cowboys will help make the musical transitions as they sit under the stars reflecting on the grace of God.

"Through the years, the Benton pageant has been a great source of outreach for First Baptist Church," Pierce explained. "It has inspired persons to receive Jesus as their personal Savior and has influenced many to make First Baptist Church their church home."

■ Dick and Mel Tunney, well known Christian contemporary music artists, will join the 70-voice choir of Calvary Church at 7 p.m. Dec. 13 in a Christmas musical production at Robinson Auditorium in Little Rock.

"The Splendor of Christmas" will be directed by minister of music Jeff Bennett who said one of the important aspects of the program will be the audience's response. "We are enclosing invitation forms in our printed programs, expecting those attending to fill them out so that the church can respond through personal contacts," Bennett said.

■ Walnut Street Church in Jonesboro is staging its 10th annual Living Christmas Tree Dec. 9-12 with 7 p.m. performances Dec. 9, 10 and 12 and a 2 p.m. matinee Dec. 11. Two small trees, in addition to the traditional large tree, are added features.

"A Festive Christmas," featuring favorite musical selections from past years, as well as new ones, is the title for the program to be presented by all church choirs, directed by minister of music Curtis Shatley.

Cooperative Program giving leaders

ABN photo / Mike Gill



Jimmie Sheffield (right), associate executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, recognized several churches during the recent ABCS annual meeting for leadership in Cooperative Program support. Among those receiving certificates were (left to right) Gregg Greenway, pastor of First Church, Almyra, top CP percentage among churches with a membership of 300 to 1,000; Tim Reddin, pastor of Barcelona Road Church, Hot Springs, No. 1 in per capita giving; Darren Mechling, minister of youth and evangelism at First Church, Crossett, top percentage giving among churches with more than 1,000 members; and David Napier, associate pastor of Immanuel Church, Little Rock, leader in total CP gifts. Also honored for top percentage giving were Cassville Church in Deer, churches under 50 members, and Park Street Church, Bentonville, churches with 50 to 300 members.

Arkansas All Over

MILLIE GILL

Church news

Norphlet First Church held a revival Oct. 17-20 that resulted in 25 professions of faith and 35 other decisions, according to pastor Lawrence W. Harrison. William Blackburn of Fort Smith was the evangelist and James Nash directed music.

State Line Church at Winthrop held a revival Oct. 17-21 with Don Jones, director of missions for Little River Association, as evangelist. The revival resulted in three commitments and the organization of a women's fellowship, according to pastor John D. Davey. In addition, the church observed an "October Faith-Fest" that increased attendance by 28 percent. Events included a testimony service, a mini gospel concert, the revival, a Billy Graham movie and a fifth Sunday night singing under the direction of church music director Judy Farley.

Marion First Church held a fall revival Oct. 31-Nov. 3. R. Wilbur Herring of Jonesboro, pastor emeritus of Central Church in Jonesboro and a former interim pastor of the Marion church, was the evangelist. Kevin Reese, minister of music at First Church of West Memphis, directed music. The revival resulted in three professions of faith. Mark Baber is pastor.

Pinson Park Church of Texarkana celebrated "Harvest Round-Up" Nov. 21 as an enlistment effort to reach the community's unchurched. Lt. Gov. Mike Huckabee was the guest speaker.

Baring Cross Church in North Little Rock observed R.H. Dorris Day Nov. 21 by dedicating an education/office space built in 1979 as the R.H. Dorris Complex. Dorris, who served the church as interim pastor and has been a member there for 14 years, previously served the Arkansas Baptist State Convention both as director of the missions department and as interim executive director.

Tomahawk Church in St. Joe recently completed a two-year renovation and expansion program of the church's facilities. The \$60,000 project, which was dedicated debt-free, included the addition of 15 classrooms and renovation of the sanctuary and fellowship hall. Lehman Webb, director of theological education for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention missions department, preached during the Oct. 31 dedication service. Paul Huskey is pastor.

Lakeside Church in Hot Springs sponsored a "Hereafter House" Oct. 27-29, a dramatic presentation of the gospel featuring portrayals of heaven and hell. The event attracted more than 1,800 guests, a tenfold increase since the church's first "Hereafter House" in 1990. Ronnie Rogers is pastor of Lakeside Church.

People

J.D. and Beth Patterson, a father and daughter dental team from Searcy, recently accompanied a Tennessee dental and medical mission team to Santiago, Chile. The group was assisted in their volunteer efforts by missionaries David and Martha Miller, former Arkansans.

Mary Frances Speakes was honored Nov. 14 by First Church of Siloam Springs in recognition of 50 years of service in the church's music ministry. Speakes, currently church organist, also has been associated with the Siloam Springs School District and been a private music teacher. Rob Hewell, director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention church music department, was present in the Nov. 14 morning worship hour, presenting a plaque to Speakes on behalf of his department. Special guests in the service were Greg Greenway, Phil Hardin and

Willis Crosby, former ministers of music with whom Speakes had worked. Allen Cade, minister of music, presented a plaque and love offering from the church to the honoree at an evening reception.

Bobby Pennington, pastor of First Church of Hamburg for seven years, was chosen as the vocational pastor of the year when Ashley Association presented its second annual "Pastor of the Year" awards Oct. 18. Pennington has led the Hamburg church to increase its mission giving by 300 percent and while there has participated in mission trips to Guatemala and the Dominican Republic. He and his wife, Sadie, have three children, Kelley, Max and Lexie.

Elvin McDill, pastor of Mount Zion Church of Hamburg for four years, was recognized as Ashley Association's bivocational pastor of the year during its second annual "Pastor of the Year" awards service Oct. 18. Mount Zion Church, organized in 1989, has an average Sunday School attendance of more than 40 and gives 6 percent of its undesignated receipts through the Cooperative Program and 4 percent to associational missions. McDill and his wife, Nancy, have three adult children, Curtis McDill, Tammy Oliver and Stephanie Pearson.

Dan and Lillie Webb were honored Oct. 31 by Meridian Church, Crossett, when the church hosted a "surprise" celebration



Owensville Church, located west of Benton on Highway 5, recently completed the construction of a parsonage in which pastor Larry D. White and his family are residing. The home was built on property adjacent to the church that was donated by church member Hugh Davis. Valued at \$125,000, the parsonage was constructed at a cost of \$67,000 by volunteers from Arkansas, Oklahoma, Missouri and Kansas.

day in recognition of their 22 years of service. Alan Jackson, chairman of deacons, presented the couple with an engraved family Bible. They also received a money tree and personal gifts. Billy Kite, director of missions for Ashley Association, was the guest speaker. Young children of the church presented special music.

Elaine Barte was honored Nov. 16 as Jonesboro Teacher of the Year. Barte is a member of Central Church in Jonesboro where she works with the Young Musicians choir.

Charles and Lavelle Barfield were honored Nov. 21 by Immanuel Church in Little Rock. Barfield, who will retire Dec. 31, following 18 years of service as a church staff member, received special recognition in the morning worship services. A 4 p.m. reception was given by the church in their honor.

Obituaries

Walter Henry Watts Sr. of Fort Smith died Nov. 7 at age 79. A member of South Side Church of Fort Smith, he was an active Baptist minister for 62 years. He also was a contributing feature writer for the *Southwest Times Record* in Fort Smith. Survivors are his wife, Wanda Moore Watts; a daughter, Grace Fletcher; two sons, Bob Watts and Walter H. Watts Jr.; a sister; a brother; and six grandchildren.

Staff changes

Edward L. "Ed" Smith was named director of missions for Harmony Association Oct. 21 in a special called business session of the association's executive board. He began his ministry among the association's 41 churches Nov. 8, coming there from Star City where he had been pastor since 1989. While in Star City, Smith was active in associational work, serving as moderator in 1992-93. Smith is a native of DeQueen and a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Charlene, served 17 years as Southern Baptist foreign missionaries in Botswana, East Africa. Prior to that he was pastor of churches in Vandervoort, Dierks, Beebe, Gravel Ridge and Alma.

Johnny Green began serving Oct. 24 as pastor of First Church of Yorktown. He and his wife, Frances, moved there from Crawfordsville where he was at First Church. They are parents of four adult children.

Bill Griffith began serving Nov. 1 as pastor of First Church of Green Forest. He previously was at Southside Church in Damascus. He and his wife, Sherry, have three children, Shane, Jamie and Sarah.

Billy White announced his resignation Nov. 14 as pastor of Second Church in Little Rock, following more than nine years of service. He has accepted the call to become pastor of University Baptist Church in Coral Gables, Fla. White, a graduate of William Jewell College, Liberty, Mo., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, previously served rural churches in Texas and was a staff member of churches in Missouri and Oklahoma. He has served as a member of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Executive Board. He and his wife, Lisa, have two daughters, Corrie and Jessica.

Elton Ballentine resigned Oct. 31 as pastor of Caney Creek Church near Lonoke. He will be available to serve as either a supply, interim or bivocational pastor. Ballentine may be contacted at 945-4946.

Michael S. Nichols joined the staff of Harlan Park Church in Conway Oct. 17 as minister to youth. He previously served as minister of youth and education for First Church of Hackett and as minister to youth for New Hope Church of Greenwood. Nichols is married to the former Resha Ward.

Howard Huddle resigned as pastor of Biggers Church, effective Nov. 7. He and his wife, Sherry, and their family will move to Oak Ridge, Mo., where he will serve First Church.

James Mills began serving Nov. 7 as pastor of First Church of Cotton Plant, coming there from Immanuel Church in Biloxi, Miss. He previously was at First Church of Hunter.

John Green is serving as part-time minister of music for Spradling Church, Fort Smith, having previously been there from 1982-91. Greer returned to Fort Smith from Eastside Church in Sallisaw, Okla.

Dale Wooten is serving as pastor of Pinson Park Church, Texarkana. He previously was associate pastor of Beech Street First Church, Texarkana. Wooten and his wife, Genoa, reside in Texarkana.

Michael Farren has joined the staff of Pinson Park Church in Texarkana as music director. He is lead singer and song writer for Shekinah Ministries. Farren and his wife, Alisa, live in Nash, Texas.

Steve Pelz began serving Oct. 31 as pastor of Union Church, El Dorado. He previously was interim pastor of Faith Church, Sandusky, Okla. Pelz is a graduate of the

University of Texas at Tyler and attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Kay, have two children, Amy and Trey.

Pat Titsworth is serving as interim pastor of New Life Church, Alexander. He is retired from Third Church in Malvern.

Stephen Gaines is serving as pastor of Temple Church in north Waldron. He and his wife, Sonya, moved there from Parks Church where they had been serving as youth directors. Gaines was ordained to the ministry Nov. 14 at Temple Church.

Floyd Vineyard has resigned as pastor of Rock Creek Church, Mansfield, because of health problems.

Bryan Tullos is serving as bivocational music director at First Church of Carlisle. He previously was music and youth director for Oak Grove Church, Austin. Tullos is a graduate student in secondary education at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

Harold Davis has accepted the call to serve as pastor of First Church in Hoxie. He previously was pastor of First Church of Scranton.

Christopher Stocklin is serving as pastor of Calvary Church, Timbo, coming there from Miller City Church in Illinois. He and his wife, Martha, have one son, Jordan.

Pat Ivy is serving as secretary of Greene County Association, Paragould. She previously served for eight years in a local medical office.

Dean Smith resigned Nov. 10 as pastor of Alpena Church, following 21 years of service.

Ordinations

Marion First Church ordained Elmer West to the deacon ministry Oct. 10.

London First Church ordained Bo Parker to the deacon ministry Oct. 24.

South Highland Church in Little Rock ordained Keith Stankevitz to the deacon ministry Oct. 24.

Markham Street Church of Little Rock ordained Dennis Strom and Mark Watterson to the deacon ministry Nov. 7.

Sherwood First Church ordained Randall Castiberry, Charles Flynn, Mike Gimes and Larry Whitson to the deacon ministry Nov. 7.

Prescott First Church ordained Philip Formby to the deacon ministry Nov. 7.

Rogers First Church ordained Kevin Phillips to the gospel ministry Nov. 28.

Woman pastor, CP, CBF among state Baptist issues

By Art Toalston

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—A woman pastor, the Cooperative Program and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship were among issues addressed in the 39 Baptist state convention and fellowship meetings this fall.

The California Southern Baptist Convention refused to seat messengers from a San Francisco church with a woman pastor by a 213-204 vote; the president of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma took aim at the CBF, labeling it the "Uncooperative Non-Southern Baptist Division"; and the Kentucky Baptist Convention rescinded plans by a 39-vote margin to channel funds to the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

The Cooperative Program also received increased attention, with numerous pioneer-area conventions upping the percentage of their budgets for Southern Baptist causes and two states authorizing CP-related studies.

In California, the vote against seating messengers from San Francisco's 19th Avenue Baptist Church overturned decisions by the convention's credentials committee and parliamentarians that 19th Avenue had met all requirements as a "cooperating" church.

"The practice of this church is their business," said Dan Nelson, the pastor who brought the challenge, "but when we seat these messengers it does reflect what our churches believe."

19th Avenue pastor Julie Pennington-Russell unsuccessfully urged messengers "to leave the tent big enough to accommodate us because you may find one of these days it won't be big enough to accommodate you."

In Oklahoma, Keith Russell, a pastor who was re-elected to a second one-year term as president, used part of his presidential address to take issue with the CBF. With only a few negative votes, a motion was passed targeting a key CBF supporter in Oklahoma, Joe Ingram, the convention's retired executive director. The motion called for Russell and four other men to meet with Ingram, who said he would turn down such a meeting.

In Tennessee, a resolution affirming the CP became the springboard for heated debate over a proposed amendment urging that cooperation be curtailed with such groups as the CBF. Messengers defeated the amendment on a voice vote.

In Kentucky, the Baptist Joint Committee lost funding from the Kentucky Baptist Convention, reversing a 331-195

vote two years before to establish a \$200,000 investment fund with unused year-end money from the executive board over a two-year period, which would have yielded the religious liberty lobby about \$17,000 annually.

The executive board placed \$98,000 in the fund in November 1992. However, no interest payments had been made to the BJCPA and the executive board now must decide how to use the monies, said Barry Allen, convention business division director.

Texas Baptists for the second year in a row decisively rejected attempts to defund Baylor University and the BJCPA. Baylor, which now elects three-fourths of its trustees, will receive \$4.05 million from the state convention, which elects one-fourth. The convention will give the BJCPA \$63,000 in 1994.

North Carolina Baptists turned back an effort to reduce funding for the *Biblical Recorder* newsjournal.

South Carolina Baptists accepted an agreement to sever legal ties with their hospital, after an August vote by hospital trustees for a self-appointed rather than convention-appointed board. Under the agreement, the hospital will contribute \$3 million over a three-year period to assist ministers and will continue its present policy of performing abortions only "when medically necessary."

On the issue of homosexuality Florida messengers voted to urge Baptists in the

state to participate in a petition effort to amend a state constitution provision protecting homosexuals from discrimination.

Colorado Baptists adopted an amendment to the convention's constitution similar to a constitutional change enacted by the Southern Baptist Convention that churches which "affirm, approve or endorse" homosexual behavior are "not in cooperation" with the state convention.

In other news:

■ The "True Love Waits" sexual purity campaign of the Baptist Sunday School Board was affirmed by resolutions adopted in Arkansas, Missouri, Kansas-Nebraska, Illinois, Utah-Idaho and the Northwest (Oregon/Washington).

■ North Carolina Baptists voted May 1, 1994, as the "Great American TV Turnoff Day" and urged other state conventions to join in the protest. May 1 is the start of Christian Home Week in Southern Baptist churches.

■ Messengers in both Arkansas and Mississippi voted to commend TV stations that refused to air ABC's controversial "NYPD Blue" series.

■ Missouri Baptists voted to deny the state chapter of Americans United for Separation of Church and State exhibition space at future annual meetings.

■ North Carolina Baptists scheduled their 1994 meeting for a Friday and Saturday in an experiment to increase attendance by laypersons.

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ARKANSAS BAPTIST YOUTH

Joy Explo scheduled for Dec. 30-31

Joy Explo, Arkansas Baptists' annual Youth Evangelism Conference, will feature a format change this year to give young people more time to hear Christian performing artists, according to Randy Brantley, associate in the state evangelism department. Joy Explo will be Dec. 30-31 at the Hot Springs Convention Center.

The Thursday afternoon session will be more traditional, but Thursday evening will feature a full concert by Word Records' Christian humorist, Mark Lowry. Friday morning will start with another full concert by Phillips, Craig and Dean, Christian recording artists for Star Song Records.

An added feature this year will be a focus on "True Love Waits," the Southern Baptist sexual purity campaign.

"This will be a time for information, not commitment," Brantley pointed out. "Commitment belongs to the local church. We want to fan the flame of awareness."

This is the second year the conference will be offering Christian Club Seminars for students, pastors and youth ministers interested in more information about the Christian Club movement.

Youth communicator Rick Caldwell, youth evangelist Dave Edwards and praise

and worship leader Dave Roberts also will be featured during the sessions.

Pre-registration by Dec. 17, at a cost of \$3 per person, is advised. However, tickets will be available at the door. For more information, contact Randy Brantley at 476-4791, ext. 5222.

MK prayer calendar

Missionary kids attending college in Arkansas with birthdays in December:

■ Dec. 1, Dan Pinkston, OBU, Box 3217, Arkadelphia, AR 71998; junior from Ivory Coast.

■ Dec. 6, Tim Akins, OBU, Box 4360, Arkadelphia, AR 71998; freshman from Brazil.

■ Dec. 12, Deb Packwood, OBU, Box 3245, Arkadelphia, AR 71998; junior from Ecuador.

■ Dec. 24, Derek Erwin, OBU, Box 3499, Arkadelphia, AR 71998; freshman from Mal.

■ Dec. 30, Jonathan Darley, OBU, Box 4079, Arkadelphia, AR 71998; senior from Japan.

■ Dec. 30, James Scarbrough, OBU, Box 4469, Arkadelphia, AR 71998; junior from Belize.

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Caughron assumes Harrison BSU post

Donna Caughron recently began serving as part-time Baptist Student Union director at North Arkansas Community Technical College in Harrison. She had been serving as Interim director since Sept. 15, and assumed her permanent duties Nov. 12.

George Sims, state BSU associate, noted that Caughron "is excited about God's leadership in bringing her to the BSU at the community college."

Caughron agreed, "I think God has some good plans for the students in our area and I'm glad to be a part of it."

Caughron is a graduate of Independence Community College in Independence, Kan. She and her husband, Bob, an employee of Union Pacific Railroad, have two children. Caughron is a member of Harrison First Church, where she is a seventh grade Sunday School teacher. She formerly has been secretary for South Highland Church in Little Rock.



Caughron

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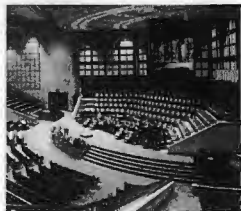
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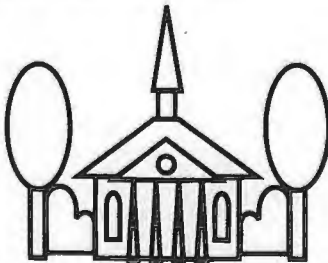
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Pike resigns Sunday School post

Freddie Pike, director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Sunday School department, has announced his resignation effective Dec. 3. Pike, who has served as department director since 1983, has worked in the Sunday School department more than 17 years.

"Freddie Pike has some unusual skills that will be missed at the Baptist Building," noted ABS Executive director Don Moore. "His analytical, organizational and planning skills have helped not only the Sunday School department, but the collective efforts of the Baptist Building staff."

Pike, who is seeking a ministry opportunity which will require less time away from home, said he "feels like it's time to quit traveling and put a priority on being a father." He said he has "been in conversation with several possibilities but have not yet accepted a position."



Freddie Pike

Reflecting on his years of service among Arkansas Baptists, Pike said, "It's been very rewarding, very fulfilling. It has been a very productive time for me personally."

In addition to his responsibilities as Sunday School department director, Pike has served as director of the Arkansas Baptist Assembly at Siloam Springs. He said the renovation of the Siloam Springs property, the addition of a new worship center in 1991 and plans to complete a new conference center auditorium in 1995 are among highlights of his ministry. "The association with the kids and seeing 400 or so professions of faith every summer also is a highlight of my years," he remarked. "That makes all the buildings worthwhile."

Pike, a native of Conway, also has been director of missions for Harmony Association, minister of education/administration for Watson Chapel Church in Pine Bluff and minister of education and youth at First Church of North Little Rock. He is a graduate of University of Central Arkansas and Southwestern Seminary.

He and his wife, Linda, are the parents of two children, Melodie and Stephen.



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Sunday School Board announces women's enrichment ministry

NASHVILLE (BP/ABP)—Baptist Sunday School Board officials have announced the beginning of a women's enrichment ministry.

The board plans "to help churches meet the obvious needs of various ministries relating directly to women," said Roy Edgemon, director of the discipleship and family development division where administration of the ministry will be housed.

To lead the new ministry, Edgemon said the Sunday School Board has employed popular speaker and author, Denise George of Birmingham, Ala., to act as the women's enrichment ministry specialist. She will continue to live in Birmingham.

George, author of 10 books and more than 800 articles for various denominations, said, "Women are crying out for enrichment resources and the Sunday School Board is the natural place to come for such resources.

"My vision for women's enrichment ministry is every woman in church walking intimately with the Lord, becoming women of prayer absorbed in Bible study, then reaching out to a hurting world of women," she said.

"We all share common hurts and it is just natural for us to support each other in times of crisis," she added, noting that she sees Woman's Missionary Union and woman's enrichment "working side-by-side to reach people for Christ."

While reserving formal comment, WMU executive director Dellanna O'Brien voiced some concern that the new ministry could be perceived as competing with WMU.

"Since we have not discussed this with the Sunday School Board nor seen any plans, we really would be premature to make any comment on it," O'Brien said.

However, she noted, based on the ministry's description as enriching women through Bible study, prayer, worship, fellowship and evangelism, "there would be some overlap with what we are trying to do."

O'Brien questioned the desirability of encouraging women's enrichment ministries which could in some cases be construed as an alternative to WMU organizations. Such competition for the commitment of Baptist women could have a net effect of undermining missions education, she warned.

BSSB president Jimmy Draper said the new ministry will not compete with WMU. "We have no intention of having a competing organization with WMU," he said. "We view WMU as an ally and not as a competitor."

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to crack a smile as memories God pro-
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glasses. After that we cherish are
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first time. Then we that's why there's
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Annuity Board trustees approve benefit increases

By Thomas E. Miller Jr.

SBC Annuity Board

DALLAS (BP)—Trustees of the Southern Baptist Annuity Board recently approved an increase in retirement benefits, lowered the deductibles and out-of-pocket maximums in its Comprehensive Medical Plan for church ministers and employees, increased maternity benefits and raised maximum relief payments in a series of sweeping changes.

Effective Jan. 1, 1994, a permanent increase of 5 percent in benefits will be added to life annuities and fixed period benefits established for a duration of five years or longer. The increase will apply to all such annuities that were funded from defined contribution accumulations, as well as Plan A retired and deferred benefits.

"When we entered 1993," said Annuity Board president Paul W. Powell, "nobody was predicting the kind of earnings that would permit a permanent increase in retirement benefits. We had raised benefits 10 percent on Jan. 1, 1992, for most annuitants. July 1 of that year we increased

them 5 percent more for virtually all retirees. Now, despite reduced earnings in 1992, the experience in 1993 has been good enough to make this wonderful decision. I am thrilled the trustees have had this exciting opportunity."

In another action, trustees approved establishment of a minimum 6 percent funding rate for life annuities or fixed period benefits of five years or longer and made it retroactive to March 1, 1993. This action will result in recalculation of benefits for some 800 persons who have retired since March 1 when the indexed funding rate dropped below 6 percent for the first time since 1976.

"This extraordinary action will be warmly welcomed by the hundreds of our newly retired who watched interest rates plummet this year," Powell said. "Because the benefit fund is managed for long-term earnings, our experience allows us to make a more favorable earnings projection than current market conditions indicate."

Terry R. Wade, senior vice president for retirement services, said he expects all recalculations to be complete and, new,

higher monthly benefits paid by the end of December, along with a one-time "catch-up" benefit covering the retroactive increase from the effective date of each person's benefit. The rate will not apply to fixed period benefits established for less than five years' duration.

Hearing continuing reports of better claims experience in the church Comprehensive Medical Plan, the individual deductible has been lowered 20 percent, from \$500 to \$400, the family deductible from \$1,000 to \$800, individual out-of-pocket maximum from \$5,000 to \$4,000 and the family out-of-pocket maximum from \$10,000 to \$8,000. The cap on maternity benefits was removed, and maternity claims will be treated as any other covered expense after Dec. 31, 1993.

Participants who use preferred providers (Prudential PruNetwork, Health Choice and most Baptist hospitals) will see deductibles and out-of-pocket maximums reduced. Individual and family deductibles for "in-network" covered claims will be reduced to \$200 and \$400 respectively. Out-of-pocket maximums

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The Annuity Board's insurance programs and medical plans will be known as the Personal Security Program beginning Jan. 1, 1994. This program will include all life and health plans, accident and disability plans.

The Annuity Board announced earlier that rates in the Comprehensive Medical Plan would not increase until at least July

1, 1994, continuing rates set July 1, 1992.

Board treasurer Harold D. Richardson reported assets of the board increased 14.7 percent in the 12-month period ending Sept. 30, 1993, bringing the total to \$4.33 billion.

Contributions to retirement plans for the first nine months of 1993 were \$163 million.

Benefits paid in 1993 reached \$104 million, the first time total benefits passed

\$100 million by the third quarter of the year. There were 24,371 persons in annuity pay status on Sept. 30.

Earnings on retirement funds totaled \$165 million in nine months, with members choosing from among four investment funds with varying risk levels.

The Variable Fund of common stocks earned 8.7 percent in the first nine months, the Balanced Fund earned 11.7 percent, the Fixed Fund earned 5.7 percent and the Short-Term Fund earned 2.31 percent. All funds out-performed established benchmarks for the period.

The trustee's relief committee approved 165 persons for the board's Adopt An Annuity ministry, bringing to 1,351 the number who receive an extra \$50 each month to supplement inadequate retirement benefits.

Also approved by the relief committee was a recommendation to send a Christmas check of \$150 to each relief recipient.

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A promise to keep

By Lonnie W. Latham, DOM,

Bartholomew Association

Basic passage: Luke 1:26-26

Focal passage: Luke 1:26-25

Central truth: Promises must be kept.

"Espoused" means to promise, to take up a cause. That simple, seldom-used word introduces the relationship of Joseph and Mary.

They had promised themselves to each other. Both by promise had committed themselves to moral purity and a committed relationship. They had promised to marry each other in one year.

They lived in a time when marriage was the foundation of society. Men and women made a commitment that would not be easily broken. In preparation for marriage they were engaged, espoused for one year. They knew the value of a promise and the purpose of waiting.

To these two committed, patient people God revealed His promise. This promise would involve their trust, their commitment to Him and their patience. God spoke through an angel first to Mary and then to Joseph about His plan - a plan that contained the beginning of the fulfillment of God's promise. This was not a contemporary promise, but an ancient promise made not just to the prophets, not just to Moses, but a promise made to the first couple, Adam and Eve. God had promised the first family of the earth a Savior.

"And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus" (Luke 1:31). All the prophecies of the Old Testament, all the sacrifices of the priest, all the prayers ever prayed for deliverance melt into that precious name, Jesus. Jesus means "He will save His people."

Joseph did not select that name nor did Mary. God, His Father, keeping His promise, named Him a name above every name. He gave Him a name to herald through the ages: Jesus, the Savior of mankind.

Life and Work

God's plan, our hearts

By Martin Babb, minister of education/

youth, Pulaski Heights Church,

Little Rock

Basic passage: Luke 1:26-56

Focal passage: Luke 1:26-38

Central truth: God's plan requires our commitment.

Last week it was a birth to an elderly couple and this week there is a birth to a virgin. Can we ever put limitations on God? In today's lesson we learn from a teenage mother how to accept God's plan for our lives. Ever think you couldn't learn anything from a teenager? Hope you change your mind after today's lesson. Here are three important words we can learn from Mary:

(1) Discover—Mary was "highly favored" and the Lord was with her (v. 28). The beginning of discovery is accepting God's plan of salvation. Do not assume that each of your class members became a Christian as a child. One of them may not be at all. God has a plan for each of their lives regardless of age.

(2) Develop—Mary reacts naturally (v. 34) but then the angel explains the plan (vv. 35-37). The problem we have is when we try to plan out our lives and do not include God. God's plan for us does not end at the point of salvation. We must continually communicate with God to guide us as we seek to do His will.

(3) Deliver—Mary accepts God's plan for her life with one simple statement (v. 38). Once we realize what God expects of us we need to act on it. God always delivers on what He promises to us. Can we say that we always deliver on what we promise to Him? We seem to make a real effort to try and keep our word to other people but our word to God is sometimes taken lightly. Help your class members see the importance of acting on what we already know to do.

We are in the Christmas season. Some of us have been there since the middle of September. It is the season where it is only natural to give a gift. Wouldn't it be great if we had something we could give to God? If we look closely at Mary's example, I believe we will discover that we do.

Bible Book

Leaders' responsibility

By Don Carter, pastor, First Church,

Eureka Springs

Basic Passage: Deuteronomy 31:1-

32-47

Focal passage: Deuteronomy 31:2-3,

7-8, 9-13, 32:3-4, 18, 39, 46-47

Central truth: Leaders must take to heart all that God is to effectively lead.

Moses' job as leader was coming to an end. The word of God came to him (Deut. 31:2-3) that he would not get to set foot inside the promised land. Moses had a choice to make. Be an encourager and equipper or be bitter.

Moses chose to encourage and equip Joshua for his new responsibilities as leader: Be strong, be courageous. God will never leave you or forsake you. You must go with the people to receive their promised inheritance (v. 8). Moses told Joshua that God would go before him and go with him. This passing on of treasured promises is just what the new leader needed to hear.

In verse 9 Moses gave a last testimony to who God is. A command to "remember" all that God has done by reading instruction from Moses at the prescribed time was a strategic gift from Moses to the children of Israel.

Moses' song to Israel is a proclamation of God as the stable Rock. His greatness is unchanging. God will always remain faithful, unlike the false gods of Canaan. The message of this passage (32:3-4) is that God will never fail you. He is the ultimate leader.

Verse 18 describes the unfaithfulness of the people toward God. The solid Rock will be turned against, again. God is the one who continues to be faithful to the covenant. There is no doubt to Moses that the people will turn from God.

All power solely rests with the Lord. He is the only God, there are no others. He is all that He is. Verse 39 is the ultimate declaration that God is God.

Moses sets Joshua apart as a leader. He is equipped, commissioned and challenged to serve. Joshua and the people are instructed to take to heart, to believe, to remember and carefully obey the words of God. "They are your Life."

Moses understood what was required of a leader. The leader must himself be a follower. Joshua's greatest challenge was to follow God fully in order to lead effectively.

Convention Uniform

Another purpose

By Lonnie W. Latham, DOM,
Bartholomew Association

Basic passage: Luke 2:1-20

Focal passage: Luke 2:1-20

Central truth: We are accountable to
know and tell the truth.

When Caius Octavius, the great-nephew of Julius Caesar, became the Emperor, the head of all the generals of Rome, he chose a new name. Courtesy to his family demanded that he call himself Caesar, but choosing a title was not as easy. He declined Dictator because it seemed to be temporary. King was not big enough, but Augustus summed up his past and pointed to his destiny. Augur, the root word, indicates a religious sanction and pointed toward his ultimate goal of becoming Rome's incarnate deity.

This man who would be god sent out a decree that affected the God who would be man, Jesus. He decreed a whole world tax and that every man return with his family to his hometown. As the world's population churned to accommodate the whim of Caesar, Mary and Joseph joined the ordered chaos and traveled to Bethlehem.

You know the rest of the story: heavy with child, no room, inn keeper, a stable, baby Jesus, swaddling clothes, shepherds, angels, animals. We all know these key words regarding the unusual birth of Jesus, but do not forget the tax they still owed.

One of the meanings of "taxation" is accountability. The whole world was in this sense accountable to Caius Octavius, Caesar Augustus. Joseph, Mary and baby Jesus were no exceptions. But a higher tax was levied, a greater accountability required of these people and of us by God.

Notice how Mary and Joseph were accountable for the truth of this event and all the facts related to it. Notice Luke 2:19 and remember that she stored up the facts. Why? To share them. Don't forget the shepherds. They were taxed too, not just by Rome, but also by God. They were accountable to testify of the glory of God. We too are thus taxed. We are all accountable to tell the truth about Jesus and to testify to the glory of God.

Life and Work

Joy to your world

By Martin Babb, minister of education/
youth, Pulaski Heights Church,
Little Rock

Basic passage: Luke 2:1-38

Focal passage: Luke 2:8-15, 25-32,
36-38

Central truth: Christ's joy is more than
seasonal.

Today's lesson comes one week before Christmas. How is your attitude? Are you still full of joy? Have you fallen in one too many shopping lines to feel joyful? We will learn from several people in our Scripture today what it means to have real joy because of Jesus.

(1) Joy in your community. The birth of Jesus was not announced on the front page of a Bethlehem tabloid. It was first told to shepherds, ordinary members of the community (vv. 8-15). Does the community around your church know of the joy of Jesus? Or is it only at Christmas that you do something positive for the community?

(2) Joy in your church. Simeon was a devout man who experienced the good news of the baby Jesus in the temple in Jerusalem (vv. 25-29). How much joy is there in your church? Does everyone have a good attitude during and after committee meetings? Visitors to our churches need to see that we are different because of the joy of Jesus.

(3) Joy in your continued service. Our last example is Anna, a devout woman who lived a life of faithful service (vv. 36-38). Can people in your work place see the joy of Christ? If we have the real joy that we preach and sing about on Sunday, we will show it during the week.

The Christmas season is my favorite time of the year. One of the reasons is because I have always enjoyed the decorations that accompany the holidays. Too many times I'm afraid we put on spiritual decorations for the holidays and then return to our old ways in January. The joy given to us in that manger many years ago cannot be taken up and put away like so many decorations. When this Christmas season is over and we begin taking down the ornaments, let us not pack everything. Why not leave the joy up and spread it throughout the year!

Bible Book

The Savior is born

By Don Carter, pastor, First Church,
Eureka Springs

Basic Passage: Matthew 1:18 - 2:12

Focal passage: Matthew 1:18-25, 2:1-2,
9-12

Central truth: Salvation is a miracle
brought to us through God's Son.

The miracle of the incarnation, God becoming man, is that Christ was born for our salvation. This is not just a cute story about a baby, a stable and wise men. This is the story of life everlasting.

The birth announcement didn't begin in a very kingly fashion (Matt. 1:18-25). Joseph discovers Mary is pregnant during their betrothal period. He wants to annul the marriage and not bring Mary to public disgrace.

The Lord visits Joseph in his dreams and tells him of the great blessing that he and Mary are receiving - the son of God. Joseph takes Mary as his wife and they remain pure in their relations until after the birth. He names the child Jesus which is the Greek form of Joshua, the Lord saves.

The visit of the Magi (2:1-12) is a wonderful story of God's leading the world to know of His Son. These men were foreigners. They were most likely not a part of the nation of Israel. What we do know about them is that they were astronomers. They saw a supernatural star in the eastern sky. They were versed in the prophecy concerning the star. They knew the star was for the King of the Jews.

The actual number of wise men is as uncertain as their origin. We have often assumed that there were three Magi. However, the number of gifts they brought is the only thing we know for sure. They brought three gifts to the Christ child, gold, frankincense and myrrh.

The plot of Herod the Great was spoiled by a dream visitation. The Magi were warned not to return to Jerusalem. So, they took another route home.

From history, we can see that Herod was the kind of man who could order innocent children to be slain. He had already killed his wife, her grandfather, her brother, and some of his own children. He was very insecure of his throne.

Christ's birth proves the willingness of God to give up His divine rights to die for the sins of the world.

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Supreme Court lets consent law stand in Mississippi

WASHINGTON (ABP) — The U.S. Supreme Court has let stand a Mississippi law that requires an unmarried minor to obtain consent from both parents before having an abortion. The high court declined to review an appeals court decision that Mississippi's parental-consent law is constitutional.

In recent years, the Supreme Court has given more flexibility for states to regulate abortion. However, this is the first time the court has allowed a state to require the consent of both parents.

The Mississippi statute provides some exceptions. If the minor's parents are divorced or living apart, the consent of the primary care giver is enough. Minors also may have an abortion with the consent of only one parent if one parent is not available "in a reasonable time and manner" or if the pregnancy is the result of incest. The law also provides for a judicial bypass and provides an exemption for medical emergencies.

'True Love Waits' participation continues to spread

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—The two largest religious bodies in the United States are now actively involved in a nationwide campaign to encourage teenagers and college students to remain sexually pure until marriage.

At a press conference during the National Catholic Youth Conference in Philadelphia, officials with the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry announced plans for bringing the message of "True Love Waits" to Catholic teenagers.

NFCYM is a networking organization which serves youth ministry offices in the Catholic dioceses across the United States. These dioceses include 19,000 parishes with a combined membership of more than 10 million teenagers.

"True Love Waits," begun by the Baptist Sunday School Board, also was recently completed by students at Nyeri Baptist High School in Nyeri, Kenya. At a commitment service following three weeks of study, 130 students came forward to pledge their resolve to wait for true love — and marriage — before expressing their feelings sexually.

90-year-old evangelist urges return to two-week revivals

OKLAHOMA CITY (BP)—J.A. Pennington doesn't like four-day revivals. "The evangelist doesn't even have time to get to know the people," said Oklahoma's first director of evangelism. Pennington, who turned 90 in October, was director of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma's evangelism and Brotherhood department for 22 years.

"It was proven that decisions doubled during the second week of revival," Pennington said. "We used to spend the first week of the revival preaching to church members building up the spirit of revival and then, the second week, preaching to the lost."

In a four-day revival, there isn't time to build up the spirit of revival, Pennington reiterated, and "until you have revival, it's hard to bring lost people to Christ."

Adrian Rogers receives Liberty Bowl service award

MEMPHIS, TN (BP)—Adrian Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in suburban Memphis, Tenn., has been named the 1993 recipient of the St. Jude Liberty Bowl Distinguished Service Award.

The award has been presented annually since 1972 to individuals who have excelled in their professions. Previous winners include comedians Jerry Clower and Danny Thomas; former NFL player Alan Page; TV sports executive Roone Arledge; the late football coach Paul "Bear" Bryant; and singers Elvis Presley and Pearl Bailey.

Olin Morris, St. Jude Liberty Bowl president, said Rogers "has worked hard to make Memphis, and the world, a better place for all people." Rogers, 62, has served three terms as president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Joel and Linda Gregory file for uncontested divorce

NASHVILLE, TN (BP/ABP)—Joel Gregory, former pastor of First Baptist Church of Dallas, and his wife, Linda, have reached a joint decision to file for divorce, according to a statement released by James T. Draper Jr., president of the Baptist Sunday School Board. Draper, a longtime friend of the Gregorlys, said Joel Gregory contacted him Nov. 10 and asked his help in releasing information to the press.

Mrs. Gregory filed for divorce in Tarrant County District Court Oct. 26. The following day her husband filed a document indicating he will not contest the proceedings.

Draper issued the statement describing the action as "a mutual, joint decision" based on "a long-term difference in expectations compounded by the stress of public events in recent years."

Draper urged "all Southern Baptists to pray for Joel and Linda and their sons," ages 19 and 16.