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December 3, 1992

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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ARKANSAS BAPTIST



Volume 91, Number 25

December 3, 1992



Foreign Mission Week of Prayer
November 29 - December 6



Lottie Moon Christmas Offering

National Goal: \$84 million • State Goal: \$2.8 million

HMB appoints Arkansas natives to missions service in Pennsylvania

ATLANTA (HMB) — El Dorado natives Doug and Gail Pilot recently were appointed to mission service by Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

The Pilots will serve in Johnston, Pa., where he will be director of missions for Conemaugh Baptist Valley Association, and she will work in family and church service.

Pilot is a graduate of John Brown University in Siloam Springs; Southwestern Baptists Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas; and Luther Rice Seminary. A former elementary school teacher, Pilot has served as a pastor of Wyoming Valley Baptist Church in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., for the last six years.

Mrs. Pilot is a graduate of Southern Arkansas University in Magnolia. She is a secondary teacher and has taught high school and junior high in Arkansas, Okla-



Doug and Gail Pilot

homa, Pennsylvania and Maryland.

The Pilots have a son and daughter, David and Andrea.

Baptist Building closed during holidays

The Arkansas Baptist State Convention headquarters in Little Rock will be closed Dec. 24 through Jan. 1 for the Christmas and New Year's holidays.

In addition to the Baptist Building, the offices of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* and the administrative offices of the Arkansas Baptist Children's Home and Family Ministries will be closed during those dates. The offices will re-open at 8 a.m. on Monday, Jan. 4.

Although the other offices will be closed during the holidays, the Arkansas Baptist Foundation office will remain open.

Harry Trulove, president of the Foundation, noted, "Often the last week of December is used by individuals to make year-end gifts. Therefore, it is imperative that the staff be present to assist the development officers in the vital area of stewardship. The time is also used to prepare the checks for the fourth quarter distribution, work on the annual audit, and prepare for the tax season."

The Foundation is located in Suite 402 of the Superior Federal Bank Building next door to the Baptist Building. The Foundation's phone number is 376-0732.

Cover Story



Arkansas Baptists Around the World 6-11

Approximately 140 Arkansas Baptists serve God on foreign mission fields throughout the world. They are among 3,900 Southern Baptist foreign missionaries serving in 126 countries.

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Next issue: Dec. 17

Arkansas Baptist

(USPS 008021)

Trenahs Henderson.....Editor
 Millie Gill.....Executive Assistant to the Editor
 Paige Cooper.....Operations Manager

Colleen Backus.....Production Manager
 Diane Fowler.....Production Artist (part-time)
 Erwin L. McDonald, Litt. D.Editor Emeritus

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

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Volume 91 • Number 25

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Greg Kirsey, Benton, president; Nelson Wilhelm, Fort Smith; Lane Strother, Mountain Home; Bert Thomas, Searcy; Rick Hyde, Murfreesboro; Curt Hodges, Jonesboro; Lucie C. Hagins, Fordyce; Cliff Palmer, Rogers; and Brenda Bruce, Newark.

Lola Mae Daniel: a modern day Lottie Moon

By Colleen Beckus

Arkansas Baptist

Each time she wandered out her front door in Texas as a young girl, her mother would ask where she was going. "To China," she consistently replied.

Born just past the turn of the century, Lola Mae Daniel had China in her heart. But she would not fulfill her vision until age 84. Daniel related her testimony recently during several speaking engagements to Arkansas Baptist groups.

A native Texan, Miss Daniel's father was a Baptist preacher. The love she has for her father, mother and sister is still vibrant even though all three have gone on to be with the Lord. Asked why she never married, Daniel quips, "I'd rather wait someone I didn't have than have someone I didn't want."

While attending high school at Oklahoma Baptist University Academy, Daniel volunteered for missions. Following graduation from Howard Payne University in Brownwood, Texas, in 1926, she applied to the SBC Foreign Mission Board. Times were tough, and with the Cooperative Program only one year old, all of that year's 302 missionary applicants were told that the board had no money to send them. They would have to provide their own funds if they wanted to serve; only a handful could afford to do so.

"I had to go to work," Daniel related. "I didn't have the money to go." She worked during the winter months as a teacher and did volunteer missions during the summer. The Lord already was preparing her for China even though she didn't realize it.

"I worked for Billy Graham during his 16-week crusade in New York City," Daniel recalled. She worked in the crusade office during the day and counseled every night. Nearly a third of those she counseled each evening were Chinese; it never occurred to her that all she was learning about their Oriental culture would be groundwork for her later experiences.

Daniel also did mission work in Alaska — as far north as Fort Yukon — as well as on the West Coast. She kept wondering when she would go to China. As her 35th birthday approached she grew worried since 35 was the age limit for missionaries at that time.

The crucial birthday passed and added another item to her list of disappointments. The young man she had been engaged to had died 18 days before the wedding, her mother died, and three years later her father died.

But still somehow, Daniel knew she would go to China because the Lord had

called her. "I've often said that the Lord was working on eternal standard time and

I was working on daylight savings time; we had a hard time getting together."

While teaching in Texas, one night Daniel felt like she just had to get ready to go to China. After her nightly devotion, she began to make lists of what to take, what to leave and what to give away.

The next morning, she came down out of the choir and told her pastor that she was going to China. Harry Trulove, at that time the pastor of Ozona First Church, currently heads the Arkansas Baptist Foundation. "She came down out of the choir in November 1961," he recalled. She was 59 years old. Trulove made a six-week prayer pact with Daniel to pray specifically about her calling to China.

Near the end of the six weeks, Daniel went to the post office and pulled out the *Texas Baptist Standard*. In it was an article proclaiming the need for teachers in the Orient; the age limit for that service had been changed to 60.

Daniel contacted the Foreign Mission Board, interviewed, got a physical and went to orientation. She also packed her things — in a casket box from a furniture store. "That way, I'd have a way back if anything happened," she chuckled.

Impatient with the lengthy confirmation process, Daniel shipped her things to a missionary acquaintance in Taiwan, since mainland China was closed to missionaries. She also bought a ticket to leave Aug. 19, 1962, at 9:45 a.m. The board called her on Aug. 18 and told her she had been appointed to Taiwan. "When can you go?" a board official asked. "Tomorrow at 9:45 in the morning," was her reply. Her step of faith had been rewarded. Daniel turned 60 the month after she arrived in Taiwan.

Once in Taiwan, Daniel taught school all day, went to language school for two hours, and taught Bible/language classes at night. She also sponsored a Chinese kindergarten; the songs and prayers the children took home helped win several parents to Christ.

Daniel also saw what she had learned from the Chinese in New York City confirmed: The Chinese are very hard to win to the Lord.

"The way to witness is to make friends," Daniel said. "You visit their homes, and

invite them to yours. Then they will want to know about Christianity."

Daniel left Taiwan after several years of service because she had reached the age limit. She went to San Antonio and taught in private school because she was too old to teach in public school. In 1986, China issued a call for 300 English teachers. "I knew I was past the age limit," Daniel said. But she applied to the board anyway, and Cooperative Services International was willing to give her a chance.

So at the age of 84, she finally put her feet on Chinese soil. "One of the couples on the plane said, 'Let Lola Mae off first, she's waited long enough.' It was the happiest day of my life," Daniel recalled.

Her post was not without its difficulties, however. The school she was assigned to was in an extremely cold area of China, her quarters had no heat and food was scarce.

At the end of the semester, Daniel went to a teachers' meeting in Hong Kong. While there, she went to the hospital and learned that her feet were severely frost-bitten and she was dehydrated. The doctor warned her that another semester in those conditions and her feet would have to be amputated.

After a sleepless night, Daniel attended worship services in Hong Kong, where a group of men met her. They had an opening at a school in Old Canton, now Guangzhou, and she had been recommended. The post was in an "open city," where food and other items were readily available, and had a moderate climate.

At the airport as she was leaving her first post, more than 300 faculty and students came to see her off. One lady stuck a note in Daniel's pocket and told her not to read it until she was away, and then destroy it. It was a thank you letter that listed 57 students' names who had accepted Christ.

The new school had better facilities and equipment, but she once again ran into government restrictions. Despite hardships and risk, students would come at night to visit her. Thirty-eight students were saved that semester.

Back in the States again because of her age, at 90, Daniel works full-time at a counselor at her alma mater, Howard Payne University. Still spry and intense, she is a living testament to faith in God's will.

She has several imperatives for American Christians. Live your faith, give more faithfully, and pray more sincerely, she urges. But most of all, "It's never to late for anybody to serve if the Lord is calling them."



Lola Mae Daniel

YOU'LL BE GLAD TO KNOW



By DON MOORE
ABCS Executive Director

How can I pass the date of my 10th anniversary, October 18, as Executive Director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, without expressing my profound gratitude for the privilege of serving our Arkansas Baptist family? The prayer support and cooperation I have had has been tremendous. These years have been filled with great challenges and great blessings. The hand of the Lord has been on our joint labors. He is to be praised for the progress made in so many areas.

The fellowship Shirley and I have enjoyed with so many people across the state has been wonderful. We would not take anything for the opportunities you have given us to be in your churches, homes and associations. Even the casual smiles, handshakes, calls and pats on the back have been more significant than you can know. With Paul we say, "What is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when He comes? Is it not you? Indeed you are our glory and joy" (1 Thess. 2:19-20).

I must pay special tribute to three groups of people who are so crucial to the work I try to lead us in doing. First, I mention our Executive Board staff. They are second to none. Their spirit, commitment and giftedness are outstanding. I could wish that every state convention had the benefit of such a staff.

Second, our directors of missions are pivotal persons to the work of the Executive Board programs. Only God knows the doors that are opened and the help that is provided by the directors of missions in our state. Without them and their magnanimous spirit of laboring together, our hands would be tied.

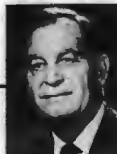
Finally, and of greatest significance, is the role of our pastors in leading our churches. Their love, friendship and confidence have made these 10 years an exciting adventure in the advance of the Kingdom of God.

My deepest gratitude to you all. I covet your prayers for the challenging years before us.

WILLIAM H. SUTTON

The President's Corner

Finding ultimate victory



No generation of Americans has been so thoroughly analyzed and judged as the "baby boomer" generation. One of the judgments passed on that still-developing group is that they adopted very high expectations for themselves and have not handled disappointments well. In that regard I'm not sure how different they are from most of us. Americans love winning. We like to quote Vince Lombardi: "Winning isn't the most important thing, it's the only thing."

Correspondingly, we are often devastated by defeat, failure and disappointment. All of us want to avoid the cruel expression of our day, "He's just a loser." Yet, it is given to none of us to walk the earth undefeated in all that we attempt, even for the Lord. Like the sun and the rain, disappointment, defeat and failure fall upon the just and the unjust alike, and the pain is as real for one as the other.

The issue for Christians, then, is how well we will handle failures and losses when these packages are addressed to us and delivered to our doors.

After the hurt has been measured and the anger handled, the mature Christian is invited to try the food that Paul has labeled for adults only.

"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!"

"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

"And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:4, 6-7, written by the Apostle Paul from prison about 62 A.D.).

Compare Paul's celebration of peace and joy with Daniel Webster's observations on politics and the law. Webster was the most successful lawyer of his time, and his career in the United States Senate brought him the acclaim of the world. Yet, at the close of his life he lamented that he had devoted his life to politics and the law only to learn that politics were vain and the law was uncertain.

Let us then encourage one another not to be defeated by defeat but to accept the certain path of ultimate success and victory as described again by the great apostle: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. 15:58).

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

Personal Perspectives

"The music of Christmas is one of the most uplifting things a church can give as an offering to the Lord and a gift to the community."

— Morris Ratley, minister of music, First Church, Heber Springs

"Don't let anybody tell you that Southern Baptists have lost their long-held vision for world missions."

— Morris Chapman, president, SBC Executive Committee

"I think I'm more Southern Baptist than the folks in control (of the SBC)."

— Keith Parks, retired Foreign Mission Board president

"The Lord was working on eternal standard time and I was working on daylight savings time; we had a hard time getting together."

— Lola Mae Daniel, retired missionary whose dream of serving in China was postponed until age 84

Foreign missions is personal

When you pray for Southern Baptist foreign missionaries, who specifically comes to mind?

I often think of Warren Rose, a long-time family friend who combines his pastoral and aviation skills as a pilot and evangelist in Brazil. David Smith, a seminary colleague who was appointed to service in Israel, also comes to mind. I occasionally find myself thinking about Troy Waldron, another seminary friend who served in Ethiopia until he was killed at age 34 in a helicopter crash five years ago. His widow, Jewell, had his body buried in Ethiopia as a symbol of his love for the Ethiopian people.

Foreign missions is personal for me. I hope it is for you as well. There are approximately 140 Arkansas Baptists currently ministering around the world as Southern Baptist foreign missionaries. They come from Bentonville and Crosssett, DeQueen and Piggott and most places in between. Perhaps you know a few of them personally or have heard them speak at a World Missions Conference or have prayed for them by name during a WMU or Brotherhood meeting.

In conjunction with Southern Baptists' 1992 Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions, the Newsmagazine is publish-

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



By TRENNIS HENDERSON

ing the names, photographs and brief biographical information about each Southern Baptist missionary who calls Arkansas home. Take a few moments to study pages 6 through 11 and rediscover the fact that Southern Baptist missionaries are real people with names and faces and individual needs.

Whether or not you know any foreign missionaries personally, our prayers for them should be personal and persistent. As they face daily challenges beyond our comprehension, we should provide consistent, heartfelt prayer support.

Despite controversy over Ruschlikon seminary and Keith Parks' retirement

and the future of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, Southern Baptists remain a missions-minded people. Regardless of one's views about recent FMB events, it remains appropriate and vital to pray for our missionaries who are on the front line of Christian ministry around the world.

I traveled to Russia earlier this year as part of Project Brotherhood. While I was there, I had the opportunity to interview a young Southern Baptist missionary named Mel Skinner who moved to Moscow in January with his wife and one-year-old daughter.

Visiting together in a damp, dark Russian warehouse half a world away from the comfort and security of home, Mel remarked, "We want to live in Russia the rest of our lives and tell people about God. There's no place else in the world we'd rather live and there's nothing else we'd rather be doing. There's so much work to be done here."

That's what Southern Baptist foreign missions is all about. Give generously to this year's Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and be an active participant during the week of prayer and beyond. Remember: Foreign missions is more than an annual emphasis; it's personal.

O'Hair petition is simply not true

It's simply not true. Madalyn Murray O'Hair has never filed a petition with the Federal Communications Commission seeking to keep religious broadcasting off the air.

Yet the rumors persist. In the past week, the Newsmagazine office has received at least half a dozen phone calls from people asking if petition RM 2493 is a cause for concern. The answer is no.

Here are the facts: RM 2493 was filed with the FCC in 1974 by Jeremy Lansman and Lorenzo Milam. The petition asked the FCC to "freeze" applications by religious institutions for access to available TV or FM channels. Eight months later, on Aug. 1, 1975, the FCC unanimously rejected the petition, citing the First Amendment as the basis for its ruling.

From that point, the facts grow blurry. Somewhere along the line, O'Hair's name was inaccurately linked to RM 2493. During the past 17 years, many good people with good intentions have kept that rumor alive, circulating peti-

tions that claim RM 2493 "would ultimately pave the way to stop the reading of the Gospel on the airways of America." Not true.

The FCC, state Baptist papers and other sources have sought to dispel the rumor for more than a decade.

The FCC currently had a recorded message available at 202-632-7000 which emphasizes that O'Hair "has never filed a petition with the FCC."

O'Hair's son, Bill Murray, a Christian evangelist, insists that the fake petitions distributed in many churches are being printed and kept in circulation by atheists to "make Christians look foolish."

What does O'Hair think about the confusion surrounding the petition? She once told the *New York Times*, "I think it's fabulous."

Florida Baptist editor Jack Brymer labeled the petition "a sad commentary on the church in general and Christians in particular for this rumor to still be alive."

Gene Puckett, editor of the North Carolina Baptist paper, posed the question: "If we cry 'wolf' when there is no wolf, can we expect to be heard when there is a legitimate cause?" His answer: "Probably not."

Allow me to add my voice to this chorus of concern. We as Arkansas Baptists have far too much kingdom work to accomplish to let ourselves become bogged down in outdated, inaccurate, meaningless petitions. Let's save our energy for real battles where we can make a difference in the world around us.

What can you do? Clip this editorial and post it on the church bulletin board or reprint it in your newsletter. Make a commitment to research any petition before signing it. Don't allow false rumors to water down our Christian reputation and witness.

Madalyn Murray O'Hair and petition RM 2493? The next time someone asks, confidently reply, "It's simply not true."

ARKANSAS MISSIONARIES



Approximately 140 Arkansas Baptists serve God on foreign mission fields throughout the world. They are among 3,900 Southern Baptist foreign missionaries actively in 128 countries.

The following pages of the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine contain photographs of Arkansas missionaries currently serving through the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. Biographical information provided by FMB officials includes the name, ministry, field of service and home town of each missionary.

In addition to the career missionaries included in this special report, Arkansas Baptists also serve around the world through the FMB-related Cooperative Services International organization. Others serve as journey-men and in other short-term or volunteer capacities.

WEST AFRICA



DALE ALLISON
Business Manager
Liberia
Siloam Springs



LOUISE BRILLHART
Church/Home Worker
Togo
Little Rock



DEBORAH MOORE
Women's Worker
Liberia
Hope



GARY NEPPER
Vocational Director
Senegal
Beabe



EDWIN PINKSTON
Evangelism Consultant
Ivory Coast
Crossett



CRAIG BIRD
Overseas Correspondent
Kenya
Camden



CAROL BOONE
Church/Home Worker
Zimbabwe
Little Rock



ROBERT CALVERT
General Evangelist
Kenya
Little Rock



LLOYD FARMER
General Evangelist
Malawi
Crossett



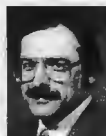
JUDY GARNER
Church/Home Worker
Malawi
Fayetteville



RHONDA HALL
Church/Home Worker
Botswana
Pine Bluff



EDITH JENKINS
Church/Home Worker
Kenya
Ethel



**ORVILLE BOYD
JENKINS**
Language Coordinator
Kenya
Conroy



JANICE LANGSTON
Church/Home Worker
Zimbabwe
Elawah



RON LANGSTON
General Evangelist
Zimbabwe
Jonesboro



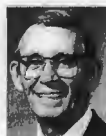
RENE MITCHELL
Church/Home Worker
Rwanda
Pine Bluff



ROBERT MOONEY
General Evangelism
Zambia
Marvell



AUDREY MORRIS
Church/Home Worker
Kenya
Earle



CHARLES MORRIS
Baptist Center Director
Kenya
Parlin



PENELOPE PULLEN
Outreach Minister
Kenya
Little Rock



GERALD SCHLEIF
Seminary Teacher
Zimbabwe
Fort Smith

ARKANSAS MISSIONARIES



BETTY CLOWER
Church/Home Worker
Sierra Leone
Ozark



STEVE FORD
Communications
Specialist
Burkina Faso
Magnolia



SHARON FORD
Church/Home Worker
Burkina Faso
Magnolia



DAVID FRIERSON
Agricultural Developer
Senegal
North Little Rock



JANET FRIERSON
Church/Home Worker
Senegal
Piggott



KAREN HODGES
Church/Home Worker
Zaire
Paragould



SHELLY IZZARD
Church/Home Worker
Togo
Marvell



GRETA PINKSTON
Church/Home Worker
Ivory Coast
Harrison



MARTHA PRITCHETT
Church/Home Worker
Togo
Texarkana



COY SAMPLE
General Evangelist
Nigeria
Hot Springs



VIVIAN SAMPLE
Church/Home Worker
Nigeria
Hot Springs



GERALD TAYLOR
English-Language Pastor
Senegal
El Dorado



CATHERINE TAYLOR
Church/Home Worker
Senegal
El Dorado

EASTERN
and
SOUTHERN
AFRICA



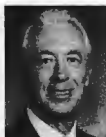
STEPHEN DEWBRE
Religious Educator
Tanzania
North Little Rock



JIM DILLARD
English Teacher
Kenya
Tyrone



JOHN LORD
General Evangelist
Tanzania
DeQueen



HAROLD MITCHELL
Dental Educator
Rwanda
Pine Bluff

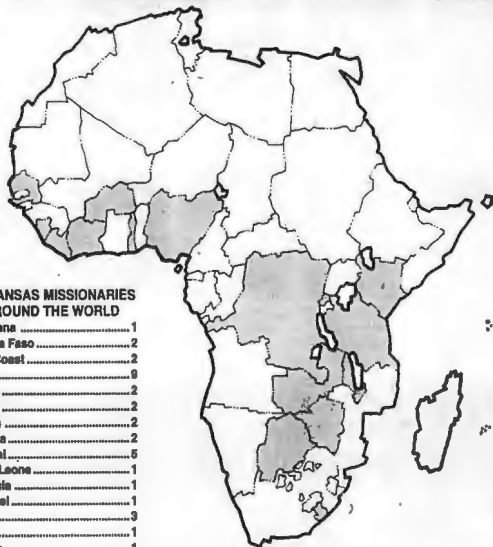


BARBARA SCHLEIFF
Church/Home Worker
Zimbabwe
Jonesboro



SAM TURNER
Mission Administrator
Kenya
Van Buren

Africa



ARKANSAS MISSIONARIES AROUND THE WORLD

Botswana	1
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Liberia	2
Malawi	2
Nigeria	2
Rwanda	2
Senegal	5
Sierra Leone	1
Tanzania	1
Tanzania	1
Togo	3
Zaire	1
Zambia	1
Zimbabwe	5

ARKANSAS MISSIONARIES

MIDDLE
AMERICA
and CANADA



BRENDA BAYER
Church/Home Worker
Panama
Clinton



JIMMY COBB
Seminary Administrator
Canada
McGehee



RUSSELL FOX
Camp Supervisor
Honduras
Little Rock



VICTORIA FOX
Camp Supervisor
Honduras
Stuttgart



RUTH GLADEN
Outreach Evangelist
Mexico
Lepanto



MARY HENDRICKS
Church/Home Worker
Costa Rica
Hartford



GREGORY SMITH
Religious Educator
Costa Rica
Hot Springs



IDA BUE SMITH
Church/Home Worker
Costa Rica
Carthage



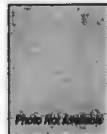
BARBARA ANN BURNETT
Church/Home Worker
Brazil
Hazelvalley



ANGELYN FINLEY
Church/Home Worker
Brazil
Hot Springs



H.V. "DUB" FITE, JR.
Agricultural Director
Brazil
Mena



RUBY FLEET
Church/Home Worker
Brazil
Foreman



CARLOS ICHTER
Music Promoter
Brazil
El Dorado



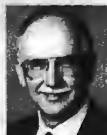
SHANNON ICHTER
Church/Home Worker
Brazil
El Dorado



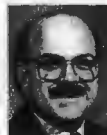
JOHN SEALE
Church Development
Director
Brazil
Hope



BETTYE SPANN
Church/Home Worker
Brazil
Colt



FREDERICK SPANN
Seminary Teacher
Brazil
North Little Rock



STEPHEN BOWERS
General Evangelist
Ecuador
Blytheville



JEFFERY GINN
Seminary Teacher
Colombia
West Memphis



JERRY HOGAN
General Evangelist
Ecuador
Little Rock



BENJAMIN KIRBY
General Evangelist
Venezuela
Little Rock



CHARLOTTE KIRBY
Church/Home Worker
Venezuela
Star City



JUDY LEAGANS
Church/Home Worker
Colombia
Star City



DAVID MILLER
Conference Director
Peru
Lizza Rock



MARTHA MILLER
Church/Home Worker
Peru
Walnut Ridge

Week of Prayer
November 29 - December 6



Foreign
Mission Board



MICHAEL SHARP
Music Teacher
Venezuela
Smectover



TED STANTON
Associate Area
Director
Venezuela
Little Rock



MARY STANTON
Church/Home Worker
Venezuela
Little Rock

ARKANSAS MISSIONARIES

The Americas



ARKANSAS MISSIONARIES AROUND THE WORLD

Argentina.....	2
Brazil.....	10
Canada.....	1
Chile.....	1
Colombia.....	3
Costa Rica.....	3
Ecuador.....	5
Honduras.....	3
Mexico.....	1
Panama.....	3
Paraguay.....	2
Peru.....	3
Suriname.....	2
Uruguay.....	1
Venezuela.....	7



GLENN NICHOLSON
Church Developer
Panama
Forest City



PAULINE NICHOLSON
Women's Worker
Panama
Cherry Valley



MICHAEL SIMPSON
General Evangelist
Honduras
Moran



CANDIE HOLMES
Church/Home Worker
Suriname
Fort Smith



MARK HOLMES
General Evangelist
Suriname
Fort Smith



BEN HOPE
General Evangelist
Brazil
North Little Rock



CAROL CHATMAN
Church/Home Worker
Uruguay
Imboden



ROBERT CROCKETT
General Evangelist
Argentina
Parkin



ANNETTE CROCKETT
Church/Home Worker
Argentina
Verandale



GILBERT NICHOLS
Seminary Administrator
Paraguay
Mountain View



DEANIE NICHOLS
Church/Home Worker
Paraguay
Cabot



STEWART PICKLE
General Evangelist
Ecuador
Siloam Springs



C.L. PICKLE
Church/Home Worker
Ecuador
Bentonsville



HUGH REDMON
Conference Director
Venezuela
Arkadelphia



DEBORAH REDMON
Church/Home Worker
Venezuela
Arkadelphia



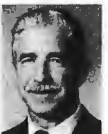
DOYLE ROBERTSON
English-Language
Pastor
Peru
Walnut Ridge



LEE WALKER
Music Professor
Chile
Little Rock



RICHARD YEAZEY
Religious Educator
Colombia
McGehee



ERNEST WHITTEN
General Evangelist
Ecuador
Hopa

**LOTTIE MOON
CHRISTMAS OFFERING**



**National Goal: \$84 million
State Goal: \$2.8 million**

ARKANSAS MISSIONARIES

EAST
ASIA



JUDITH FOLDS
Church Planter
Japan
Crossett



ANNE HOOVER
General Evangelist
Japan
Little Rock



HANNITTE LITES
Language Center
Director
Taiwan
Wilson



SHARON NOWLIN
Church/Home Worker
Japan
West Memphis



THOMAS NOWLIN
General Evangelist
Japan
Marion



GERMY ODUM
Elementary Teacher
Taiwan
El Dorado



BRANDT SMITH
General Evangelist
Taiwan
Walcott



ELINDA WEST
Church/Home Worker
Taiwan
Booneville



RONALD WEST
Student Worker
Taiwan
Booneville



JEANNE WRIGHT
Church/Home Worker
Korea
Little Rock



JOHN WRIGHT
English-Language
Pastor
Korea
Little Rock



MAX ALEXANDER
Church Planter
Thailand
Jonesboro



**BETTY IRENE
ALEXANDER**
Church/Home Worker
Thailand
Walcott



RONALD BAKER
Agricultural Evangelist
Indonesia
Brinkley



DEBBIE BAKER
Church/Home Worker
Indonesia
Van Buren



**KATHLEEN
BRALIGHTON**
Church/Home Worker
Philippines
Little Rock



CALVIN FOX
Extension Director
Philippines
Gentry

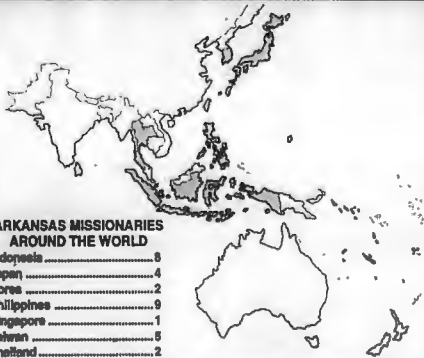


MARGARET FOX
Church/Home Worker
Philippines
Paris



DANNY JOHNSON
Church Planter
Philippines
Monticello

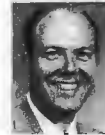
Asia and the Pacific



TWILA LEE
Church/Home Worker
Indonesia
Texarkana



DeVELLYH OLIVER
Outreach Worker
Philippines
Hampton



FRED PARKER
General Evangelist
Philippines
North Little Rock



GAYLA PARKER
Church/Home Worker
Philippines
Little Rock



DAVID POSEY
Surgeon
Indonesia
Crossett



FAITH POSEY
Church/Home Worker
Indonesia
Russellville

ARKANSAS MISSIONARIES

EUROPE,
MIDDLE EAST
and
NORTH AFRICA



JOHN ANTHONY
General Evangelist
Israel
Napa



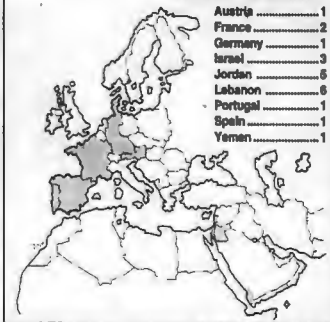
CONNIE ANTHONY
Church/Home Worker
Israel
Mount Ida



CYNTHIA ASHCRAFT
Physician
Yemen
White Hall

Europe, Middle East & N. Africa

ARKANSAS MISSIONARIES AROUND THE WORLD



LANELL BARNES
Church/Home Worker
Lebanon/Cyprus
Monette



DONALD BROWN
English-Language
Pastor
Israel
El Dorado



CHARLES BROWNING
Property Manager
Jordan
Judsonia



NANCY BROWNING
Church/Home Worker
Jordan
Lonoke



KATHERINE DAMMON
Church/Home Worker
Austria
Tazarkana



PATRICIA FROST
English Teacher
Jordan
Paris



FRANCES FULLER
Publications Director
Lebanon/Cyprus
Wynne



BETTY HARDSTER
Church/Home Worker
Jordan
Benton



GRAYDON HARDSTER
Business Manager
Jordan
Pine Bluff



KATHRYN INGRAM
Church/Home Worker
France
Searcy



**GREGORY
MCKENZIE**
General Evangelist
Spain
Demott



HUGH PROVOST
Bible Correspondence
Coordinator
Lebanon/Cyprus
West Memphis



BRENDA PROVOST
Church/Home Worker
Lebanon/Cyprus
Pine Bluff



REBECCA SMITH
Church/Home Worker
Eastern Europe
Arkadelphia



STEPHEN SMITH
Business Manager
Portugal
Camden



JOEL SUTTON
Church Developer
France
Magnolia



KARL WEATHERS
Business Manager
Lebanon/Cyprus
Earle



TJELMA WEATHERS
Church/Home Worker
Lebanon/Cyprus
Earle



MARGARET SMITH
Church/Home Worker
Philippines
Hickory Plains



THOMAS SMITH
General Evangelist
Philippines
Lonoke



MABEL E. TERRY
Church/Home Worker
Singapore
Fordyce



RONALD WHITE
Physician
Indonesia
Wynne



TERESA WHITE
Church/Home Worker
Indonesia
Little Rock



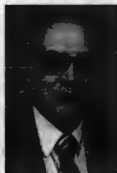
ELIZABETH WOLFE
Church/Home Worker
Indonesia
Rogers



Arkansas All Over

LILLIE GILL

People



Webb



Roberts

Dan Webb received Ashley Association's "Vocational Pastor of the Year" award Oct. 19. Webb has been pastor of Meridian Church, Crossett, for 21 years. He has served three times as associational moderator, as well as serving as chairman of the association's finance committee. Webb served six years on the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Executive Board and has led his church through four building programs. He was honored by the state convention in 1992 as Pastor of the Year for small membership churches. Webb and his wife, Lillie, reside in Crossett. They have two daughters, Mary Ann Scroggin, and Cindy Westerman.

Travis Roberts was recognized as Ashley Association's "Bivocational Pastor of the Year" Oct. 19. He is pastor of Corinth Church and former pastor of Eden Church. Roberts has served on the associational missions committee which led in the establishment of two new churches in the association within a four-year period. Roberts has been employed at Georgia-Pacific Corp. for 38 years. He and his wife, Peggy, live in Crossett. They have three sons, Howard, Steve and Danny. Steve and Danny also are bivocational pastors.

Howard Kisor is serving as pastor of Lake Hamilton Church. He formerly was pastor of Woodland Church in Little Rock.

William D. Thomason Jr. began serving Nov. 1 as pastor of First Church in Atkins. He and his wife, Vicki, have been serving as Southern Baptist missionaries to the Ivory Coast.

Jim Constable has resigned as minister to youth at Woodland Heights Church in Conway to move to another area of service in the Washington, D.C. area.

John and Alma Padgett of Osceola celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary Oct. 31. A reception was held for them at East Side Church in Osceola where they are charter members.

Jim Owen is serving as pastor of Rector Heights Church in Hot Springs. A former deacon of the church, he had been serving there as interim pastor.

Rick Morrow is serving as pastor of Pearcy Church, going there from East End Church in Hensley.

Margaret Howie of Crossett died Nov. 11. Memorials may be made to Martinville

Church where her husband, Eugene A. Howie, serves as pastor. Other survivors include a son, David Howie of Liberty, Mo.; three brothers; three sisters; and two grandchildren.

Bill Lynch is serving as pastor of Rock Creek Church in Buckner Association, coming there from Spiro, Okla.

Louise W. "Deezee" Edwards died Nov. 11 at her home in Paragould. She was the wife of John Edwards, a Southern Baptist minister. Other survivors are two sons, Whitney Edwards, of the home, and Trent Edwards, minister of music and youth at First Church of Harrisburg.

Victor Gore is serving as pastor of Piney Grove Church.

Robby Sherman has joined the staff of First Church at Murfreesboro as minister to youth. He is a student at Ouachita Baptist University.

Bill Baldridge will begin serving Nov. 29 as pastor of Shiloh Memorial Church in Texarkana. He will go there from First Church of Kingsland where he has served as pastor for more than three years.

Vicky B. Shults of Pine Bluff died Nov. 13 at age 67. She was the wife of J.M. "Jimmy" Shults who has served as a member of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Executive Board. Her funeral service was held Nov. 16 at Immanuel Church in Pine Bluff, where she was a member. Other survivors include a son, Jim Shults Jr. of Benton; three daughters, Sherry McCord of Pine Bluff, Donna Sisson of Arkadelphia and Vicky Morgan of Monticello; five sisters; two brothers; and eight grandchildren. Memorials may be made to Arkansas Baptist Student Union or Siloam Springs Baptist Assembly, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203.

Ernest W. Goodson of Ferndale died Nov. 12 at age 87. A retired Baptist minis-

ter, he had served as pastor of churches in both North Pulaski and Pulaski Associations, including Crystal Valley, Oakwood, Pleasant Grove and North Point. Survivors are his wife, Virginia Wine Goodson; three daughters, Peggy Wallace of Bryant, Mary Garlington of Rison and Ginny Blaylock of Morrilton; 12 grandchildren; and 13 great-grandchildren.

Roy E. Lee Jr., who was serving as pastor of Smyrna Church in Faulkner Association, died Nov. 14 at age 64. His funeral services were held Nov. 17 at Naylor Church where he had also served as pastor. Survivors are his wife, Kristin A. Lee; two sons, Robert E. Lee and Jim F. Lee, both of Mount Vernon; two daughters, Barbara A. Warren of Greenbrier and Joyce G. Sullivan of Holland; his mother, Mrs. S. Lea Hamby of Conway; two half-brothers; and two half-sisters.

Prince E. Turner, a native of Conway, died Nov. 8 in Corsicana, Texas, at the age of 95. A retired Southern Baptist pastor, he had served Arkansas churches in Faulkner, Lonoke, Van Buren and Pulaski counties. He was a member of Central Church in Jonesboro. Survivors are two daughters, Martha Lou Stueckey of Houston, Texas, and Esther Ann Bayless of Jonesboro; two sisters; six grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren.

Delton Cooper has resigned as pastor of First Church in Wilson to serve as pastor of an Oklahoma mission.

Paul King is serving as pastor of Bethany Church in Manila, coming there from Gaillee Church of El Dorado.

Carl Pelly is serving as pastor of North Main Church in Jonesboro, coming there from Burton, Mich.

Craig Miller, a native of Nettleton, is serving as pastor of Providence Church, Jonesboro.

Paul Brewster has resigned as pastor of First Church in Midland to serve as pastor of Immanuel Church, Clinton.

James Marcus Wilkinson of Jonesboro, age 75, died Nov. 11. A retired Southern Baptist minister, he had served as pastor of churches in Mount Zion Association. Survivors are his wife, Ethel L. Wilkinson; two sons, John Harold Wilkinson and Terry Gene Wilkinson, both of Jonesboro; his mother, Allie Ethel Wilkinson of Caraway; three brothers; three sisters; seven grandchildren; and a great-grandchild.

Laura Ebert Beach of Fordyce died Nov. 13 at age 83. She was a member of First Church in Fordyce. Survivors are her husband, Phil Beach, a retired Baptist minister; a son, Dale Beach of DeKalb, Miss.; three grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Briefly

Higginson First Church dedicated a fellowship hall and family ministry center Aug. 30. The Price Hall addition was dedicated as a memorial to C.W. "Bill" Price who, for many years, cared for the church's building and grounds. The 2,640-square-foot addition was completed at a cost of \$57,000. Pastor Dennis Smith preached the dedication message. Others taking part in the service were Alice Harris, Donna McMahan, Melissa Hill, Jim Wiley, Sonny McDonald, Ed Langford and Mark Holleman.

West Memphis Second Church pastor Tommy Stacy and minister of music Rick McKinney recently led worship services from the church's roof to fulfill attendance promises. Their Sunday School challenge goal of 300 was exceeded by 40.

Fort Smith Calvary Church celebrated its 83rd anniversary of service recently. A

program which included testimonies and singing, followed a potluck supper. Dale Bascue is pastor.

Desha First Church recently ordained Mark Fraser and Greg Mohlke to the deacon ministry. Keith Sandefur, pastor, served as moderator.

Heber Springs First Church ordained Kevin Hendrix, minister of education and youth, to the gospel ministry Nov. 8. A reception honoring Hendrix and his wife, Michelle, followed.

Oseola East Side Church held its fall revival Oct. 25-28. Johnny Green of Wynne was evangelist. Tom and Mary Doty served as the music team.

Antioch Church at Royal recently held a crusade that resulted in 75 professions of faith, 33 rededications and 12 other decisions. William Blackburn of Fort Smith was evangelist. Pastor Bill Harris said of the crusade, "We experienced record crowds, and this was probably the greatest revival in the church's 101-year history." The revival crusade was a part of Harris' doctor of ministry project through Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Sylverino Church and **Macedonia Church**, of Southwest Association, participated in an Oct. 19-24 mission trip to southern Louisiana. In their efforts to aid

hurricane victims, the volunteers distributed approximately 1,500 cans of donated food and participated in construction projects. Louisianians, to show their appreciation, will be assisting Sylverino Church with a building project.

East Side Church in Fort Smith ordained Danny Cross, Randy Feezell, Darrell Jones, Don Key, Sam Rhodes and Gene Rambo to the deacon ministry Nov. 15.

Park Hill Church in North Little Rock deaf ministry sponsored a "Love in Any Language" revival Oct. 9-11. Larry White, deaf pastor for First Southern Church in Del City, Okla., was leader. Special emphases included Bible study, a sign choir, a picnic, volleyball and canoeing.

Marked Tree church recovers from fire

An early morning fire at Marked Tree First Church was discovered Oct. 21 by pastor Ken Overton and his wife, Hope. Damage was limited primarily to smoke damage throughout the building. The congregation was scheduled to resume use of the facilities Wednesday, Dec. 2.

The Overtons found the building filled with smoke as they entered the church Oct. 21. Overton said the fire apparently was caused when some papers located near a water heater ignited. The fire had burned out by the time it was discovered, and firefighters removed a smoldering mass from the utility closet where the fire originated.

Overton said smoke penetrated the entire structure, including the sanctuary, fellowship hall and education building. The estimated cost of damage was \$50,000 and was fully covered by insurance. Despite the damage, no books, office equipment or furniture were destroyed.

Following the fire, leaders of the First United Methodist Church in Marked Tree invited First Baptist Church members to use their facilities. Since that time, members of First Baptist have held worship services while First Methodist had Sunday School and vice versa.

"The fire has also brought First Baptist members closer together," Overton noted. "The Sunday following the fire we had 110 in Sunday School out of an enrollment of 150.

"Most importantly," the pastor added, "First Baptist members took a positive outlook on this fire. It became a witness to the community of how God takes care of His children.... It was hard to classify the fire as a tragedy because we had so many immediate blessings."

Photo / Mrs. Gayle Vardaman



A successful five-month campaign provided the \$35,000 needed to retire indebtedness on Pine Bluff Central Church's youth house. An Oct. 10 noteburning service launched Phase I of a \$500,000 education/activity building program. The new building will be constructed on the property where the youth house currently stands. Participants in the service were (left to right) Ed Simpson, challenge to build consultant; Bill H. Lewis, director of missions for Harmony Association; Gary Akers, pastor; E. L. Herring, building committee chairman; and deacons Jonathan Baldwin, Doyle Vardaman, Luther McCampbell and Edward Waits.

Churches celebrate Christ's birth through song, drama

By Millie Gill
Arkansas Baptist

Arkansas Baptist churches in the coming weeks will celebrate the birthday of "The Christ Child, the Prince of Peace, the Wonderful Counselor, and the Almighty God" with special events.

A season when hearts can be touched, little children's eyes are aglow, and people are sensitive to the needs of others is a time when many churches seek to reach their communities with the gospel in a special way.

Arkansas churches will present cantatas, dramas and nativity scenes as tools to share the gospel of Christ this Christmas season. A sampling of the major productions being planned throughout the state includes:

■ Star City First Church's music ministry has begun rehearsal for its sixth presentation of the Singing Christmas Tree. Performances of "Wonderful Name," directed by Wilma Trout, are scheduled for Dec. 10-13 with all presentations to begin at 7 p.m. This year's programs will include a handbell choir, a children's choir, a drama cast and special lighting effects.

Complimentary tickets are available by providing the church with a self-addressed, stamped envelope, P.O. Box 368, Star City, AR 71667. Additional postage is needed for each order of 15 tickets.

■ Springdale First Church's music ministry will present its fifth annual production of The Living Christmas Tree Dec. 12-14 at 7 p.m., with a 3:30 p.m. matinee performance Dec. 13. More than 600 individuals, including an adult choir, orchestra, a children's choir and a drama cast and crew will take part in the performances.

"The reason for a living Christmas tree production is to reach people at a time of the year when hearts are soft and receptive to the gospel," noted Springdale minister of music Buster Pray. "It is a time of year when the church can reach out to the community, sharing the gospel of Christ. The 1991 performances attracted 12,000 with more than 100 making professions of faith."

■ Park Hill Church in North Little Rock will present "A Christmas Celebration" Dec. 13-14 at 7 p.m. The musical extravaganza will include the sanctuary, young musicians and handbell choirs, a 27-piece orchestra and a drama and pageantry cast.

During each performance, "The Word became flesh..." concept will be developed as biblical characters step out of an 8-

foot by 14-foot Bible. Complimentary tickets will be secured by calling the church's music office at 501-753-3413.

■ Benton First Church's annual pageant will be presented Dec. 11-13 with a 7 p.m. performance on Dec. 11. The Dec. 12 and 13 programs will be at 5 and 8 p.m.

"Come Home...It's Christmas," performed by 250 individuals, also will include an outdoor Bible marketplace. David Pierce, minister of music, has written segments of the pageant that not only will feature the life and ministry of Jesus, but also will feature a family emphasis.

"Pageantry gives us an opportunity to present the gospel to the community in a fresh and exciting way," Pierce said. "Many people will come to a program of this nature who will not come to a Sunday worship service."

■ Geyer Springs First Church in Little Rock will present its fifth annual "Little Rock Christmas Festival" Dec. 5 at 7 p.m. and Dec. 6 at 4 and 7 p.m.

The three-section program will feature the Joyful Sounds Handbells and the Sure Foundation Student Choir in section one. Christmas and the memories and the importance of home will be section two while section three will be led by the 200-voice Celebration Choir and orchestra, using video vignettes to dramatize the message of Christ.

Complimentary tickets may be obtained by calling the church at 501-565-3474.

■ A script written by Morris Ratley, minister of music for First Church of Heber Springs, will be performed Dec. 6 at 3:30 p.m.

The performance will begin before a dimly lighted snow scene that will be transformed into a glowing village as Christmas trees, decorated with 12,000 lights, are turned on. A worshipful scene, featuring the formally attired adult choir holding votive lights, will close the program.

"I think the music of Christmas is one of the most uplifting things a church can give as an offering to our Lord and a gift to the community," Ratley pointed out.

■ The seventh annual edition of the "Glory of Christmas" will be presented Dec. 6 at 4 and 7 p.m. at Immanuel Church in Little Rock, under the direction of Lynn Madden, minister of music.

The theme for the 1992 edition is "The Majesty and Glory of Christmas," and will feature the 192-member Sanctuary Choir and Immanuel Orchestra. Additional music ministry choirs and ensembles will be participating.

Madden said, "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."

Complimentary tickets may be obtained by calling the church's music office at 501-374-7464.

■ El Dorado First Church's living Christmas tree will perform the "Sights and Sounds of Christmas" Dec. 6-8 at 7 p.m. The South Arkansas Symphony will accompany the 120 voices.

Wilson Borosvskis, minister of music, said the pageant was written by Sarah Teague and directed by Nancy Werst, both church members.

■ Otter Creek Church in Little Rock will dramatize the "Nativity Scene" live Dec. 12. Church members will enact the event from 6 to 9 p.m. on the church lawn, 13000 Quail Run Drive.



Christmas cantatas and pageants have become a popular way for Arkansas Baptist churches to spread the gospel during the Christmas season.

Help children grasp the meaning of Christmas

By Chip Alford

Baptist Sunday School Board

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—Christmas is just around the corner and, once again, many parents are struggling with how to communicate the real "reason for the season" to children preoccupied with toys, Christmas trees and that white-bearded gentleman in a red suit.

"The key is to intentionally look for ways to bring up the birth of Christ during the year, to make it a part of your normal, everyday routine," said Morlee Maynard, manager of the preschool program section in the Baptist Sunday School Board church growth-Sunday School division.

Maynard said she takes time to talk about God with her 5-year-old son, Jonathan, during his bedtime prayers.

"This is something we do year-round. That way (when Christmas arrives) Jesus is not somebody new. He's somebody we've been talking about all year."

Rusty Gilbert, pastor of Rocky Springs Baptist Church in Lisbon, La., said another key is to tie Jesus' birth to concrete holiday traditions children already know and understand, such as the giving and receiving of presents.

"They need to understand the Christmas event we are celebrating is God's gift to us of His only Son, and that He loves us because of who we are," he said.

Involving children in special projects or ministries during the holidays also can communicate to them the true holiday spirit, said Gilbert, father of three children, ages 5, 7 and 9.

"Every Christmas morning I go out and visit shut-ins, the homebound and anyone who has had a significant loss in their family in the last year. I take my family with me and we spend time with these people. We've prayed with them and we've cried with them. I think it is important for families to touch the life of somebody that you don't have to touch," he said.

Gayle Haywood, minister of preschool and children at Brentwood (Tenn.) Baptist Church and mother of three young girls, suggests involving children in holiday traditions at an early age.

"Establish some family traditions and help your children understand these are special activities you do only at Christmas because it is a time to celebrate the Lord's birth," she said.

"For example, we take one whole night each year for Christmas decorating. We've done it so often the girls have learned where everything goes.

"We put the nativity scene in the focal point of our room, low enough so the girls can play with it. And as we unwrap the pieces of the nativity scene, we talk about each character. They've broken some of the pieces, but I think it's important for it to be a hands-on thing for them, something they can play with. That helps them to learn about the Christmas story."

Some of the best ideas for teaching children about why we celebrate Christmas come from parents' own creativity and imagination, Haywood said. But parents looking for a little help might try one of the following suggestions made by several Southern Baptist parents:

- Bake a birthday cake and have your children sing "Happy Birthday to Jesus."

- Place an Advent wreath of candles in your home and have children light each of the four candles as Christmas approaches. Explain that Advent is a time on the Christian calendar to give thanks for God's gift of Christ.

- Let children participate in selecting, purchasing and distributing gifts to the underprivileged. Use this as a chance to remind children God gave us Jesus, and Jesus was always giving to others.

- Let children design their own Christmas card based on the Christmas story.

- During the month of December, include your children in family devotions that focus on the Christmas story and the spirit of giving.

- Let children give a "Christmas gift to missions" through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

- Let children help with the Christmas baking and deliver cakes, cookies or breads



Christmas is more than Barbie dolls and toy stores. With a little planning and preparation, parents can help their children experience the true meaning of the Christmas season.

to family, friends and shut-ins.

- Sing Christmas carols together.

- Make a Christmas chain with links for each day in the month of December made of strips of paper. On each link, write a prayer request and a note about a special event that will happen on that day or during the Christmas season. Take off one link every day. This keeps children focused on Christ during the holidays and offers a concrete reminder of the days before the holiday's arrival.

- Visit a living nativity scene.

- Attend church Christmas cantatas, pageants or dramas. Involve children in these productions when possible.

- During family celebrations, let older children help read the Christmas story and younger children act out the event in a drama.

- Decorate a "Christmas book bag" to hold books about the Christmas story. Have books children can read on their own and books you can read to them.

Photo / Jim Vanaman

Baptists pledge prayer, voice concerns to Clinton, Gore

WASHINGTON (BP/ABP)—The Baptist World Alliance, representing a worldwide community of 80 million Baptists, congratulated fellow Baptists Bill Clinton and Al Gore on their victory Nov. 3 and promised to pray for them.

"Congratulations," BWA president Knud Wumpelmann said in a message to Clinton. "As president of the world's leading nation and as a fellow Baptist, you will in the years to come have the prayer support of Baptists around the world. God bless you with wisdom and courage."

BWA general secretary Denton Lotz wrote in an open letter to Clinton and Gore: "Your Baptist brothers and sisters around the world assure you of their prayers for God's wisdom and guidance in your significant world leadership position."

"We will pray for you," Lotz wrote, "but we will reserve our Christian right and duty to be a prophetic movement calling for government and humanity to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with God."

Clinton is a member of Immanuel Baptist Church in Little Rock. His wife, Hillary, is a member of First Methodist Church of Little Rock. Gore and his wife, Tipper, belong to Mount Vernon Baptist Church in Arlington, Va.

In his open letter, Lotz listed four Baptist distinctives: the democratic principle, separation of church and state, soul freedom, and justice. Remembering these, he said, would make the newly elected leaders "strong and reliable leaders of courage and conscience."

Calling Clinton and Gore "brothers," Lotz said his use of the term "emphasizes the democratic principle of our Baptist tradition." It was also a sign of "deep

respect," Lotz said, because "every person is equal before the altar of God."

Lotz told Clinton and Gore while there will be areas of disagreement, the letter was an assurance to them of worldwide Baptist prayer support "that you will be good examples of tolerance and at the same time faithful witnesses to your faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior."

SBC leaders share views

"Southern Baptists will be praying that God will give President-elect Clinton divine wisdom in leading this nation," said Morris Chapman, president of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee. "I am trusting both men (Clinton and Gore) will commit themselves to upholding in this nation high standards of morality and spirituality, and certainly I pray for that."

SBC president Ed Young said Southern Baptists will support Clinton "in every way possible, but by the same token as Baptist people we would disagree on many moral issues, and we must take the position we believe to be in accordance with the Word of God."

Chapman said he and many other Southern Baptists will pray specifically that Clinton will change his position on abortion and homosexual rights.

Richard Land, executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, noted, "The Bible commands us to

pray for all those in authority, so we certainly pledge to pray for President-elect Clinton and his administration. We already support some of the things he supports. We support Sen. Gore's alcohol advertising bill and the Religious Freedom Restoration Act."

Expressing concern about abortion and homosexual rights, Land added, "We will seek to work with President-elect Clinton in areas where there is agreement; we will attempt to make his administration aware of Southern Baptist convictions and concerns on a whole array of issues; and we will oppose him when his initiatives contradict those convictions and concerns just as we did President Bush."

Independent Baptist pastor Jerry Falwell said he will give Clinton 100 days to change his views on abortion and homosexuality before "declaring war" on his administration and perhaps reviving the Moral Majority.

In a message to Florida Baptist pastors Nov. 9, Falwell said America is on the verge of moral collapse. He cited Clinton's stances on abortion and homosexuality as evidence of his concern.

Richard Gephardt, majority leader for the U.S. House of Representatives and a member of Third Baptist Church in St. Louis, offered a different perspective.

Clinton has "a very strong religious background," Gephardt pointed out. "He's very compassionate. I think he cares about people and what happens in the lives of the people he works for...While some may not agree with him (about abortion), I don't think they'll question his basic religious outlook or his commitment to moral ethics."

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State conventions reflect diversity, unity

By Herb Hollinger

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—The diversity — and unity — of Southern Baptists were apparent at annual meetings of the various state conventions and fellowships as divergent approaches to mission giving were approved while most voiced opposition to homosexuality and abortion.

While most presidents of the 39 state conventions and fellowships are pastors, seven laymen were elected, one African-American, one Hispanic, one director of missions and one bivocational pastor.

Only Louisiana and Illinois reported action related to the AIDS/HIV issue while about half voted to pray for President-Clint Bill Clinton though at odds with his stance on homosexuals and abortion.

Perhaps the most complex issue addressed was how state conventions would receive and disburse mission monies. At least 23 conventions voted no change in their percentage of Cooperative Program receipts channeled to Southern Baptist Convention ministries. Nine conventions increased, slightly, their percentage forwarded to the SBC but most were pioneer or smaller states. Four conventions decreased their SBC percentages.

The most significant change came from Virginia where, for the first time, churches can choose one of three options for the state's "World Mission" causes including one which channels no funds to Southern

Baptist Convention-related causes. One of the options is the traditional SBC Cooperative Program method and a second option is a combination of SBC and other ministries. The third option would all go to the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, an organization of moderate Southern Baptists.

Economic hard times were cited by Oklahoma in dropping 2.25 percent to 44.25 percent channeled to the SBC.

Common thread of action

The most common thread of action among the conventions was opposition to abortion and the homosexual lifestyle, although several expressed concerns for the homosexual.

West Virginia voted to support action of the SBC last June in declaring churches sympathetic to homosexuality as "not in friendly cooperation" with the SBC. Louisiana messengers approved a change in the state constitution to make a church's position on homosexuality a test for convention participation.

California messengers referred a motion to their state executive board which called for the SBC Executive Committee to do business with another printer rather than the one which printed the Madonna Sex book.

Mississippi state paper editor Guy Henderson defended his paper's news coverage policy during a motion to deny the paper a half-million dollar Cooperative

Program subsidy. The proposal would have given a portion of the money to the SBC Cooperative Program and \$315,000 to the Baptist Children's Village, a Mississippi child-care agency. The proposal failed 342-449.

Maryland/Delaware Baptists turned back an attempt to amend the constitution to allow churches to be represented based on support of the convention through channels other than the Cooperative Program while Kentucky rejected a proposal which would have allowed churches to bypass national CP giving and still qualify for up to 10 KBC messengers.

Texas Baptists affirmed their continuing support for Baylor University and the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs despite appeals to discontinue their funding. Kentucky, likewise, turned back attempts to remove state funding of the BJCPA.

Missouri turned back attempts to identify the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and Baptist Fellowship of Missouri as "separate and distinctively different from the Southern Baptist and the Missouri Baptist conventions, autonomously governed and financed."

Florida's ethnic diversity was apparent when each convention session featured a period of intercessory prayer offered in English, Spanish, Crete (Indian), French-Creole (Haitian) and Chinese.

South Carolina signed an historic three-year partnership missions agreement with the predominantly black Baptist Educational and Missionary Convention. The partnership agreement concerns a three-year missions project with Baptists of Kenya, Africa.

In Alaska it was noted the state has recorded a 64 percent turnover in pastors the past two years.

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International students experience fellowship

By Danl Rhynes

BSU Outreach Coordinator, Arkansas Tech

More than 160 students from 33 nations participated in the recent International Student Conference held Nov. 6-8 at Camp Paron. The conference, sponsored by the Arkansas Baptist State Convention and Arkansas Baptist Student Unions, focused on the theme, "Changing Our World."

"The rising number of international students studying in Arkansas colleges has given place to new areas of ministry for Baptist churches and BSUs," said Elias Pantoja, associate director of the ABSC missions department. "In order to share our faith with these students, we must first be aware of their needs and be willing to take the time to meet those needs."

Students were encouraged by various speakers to build cultural bridges between North Americans and international students. The conference included seminars, share time and a student talent show presenting various cultural songs and talents.

"What impressed me most were people of different backgrounds, cultures, languages and religions coming together to get to know one another," noted state BSU president Nathan McLean. "The Christian students learned that our agenda is not to force change but to accept different people and build an influence."

Suggestions that international students

shared with Americans interested in reaching out to them include: Be a friend; make an effort to learn about other cultures; be patient as international students try to communicate and learn a new language; and learn how to enjoy one another's differences as well as similarities.

"This conference helped me realize that underneath it all we are all really the same," said Yan Yaguant, a Chinese student attending Southern Arkansas University in Magnolia. "We have the same concerns, hopes and feelings, and we can easily build friendships based on those similarities."

Reiko Sakamura, a Japanese student attending Ouachita Baptist University, said the conference helped her learn to respect and appreciate other cultures. "One of the best things American students can do is initiate relationships with international students," said Sakamura. "When I

came to America I was afraid to talk to anyone, but many people reached out to me and I decided the internationals should also initiate relationships. It should work both ways to build the bridge."

Jane Wery, a Kenyan studying at Williams Baptist College, said building a bridge cross-culturally is a mission anyone can pursue. "We can share our faith and our culture, and when you do each person can make a difference in any country and any life," she pointed out. "When you do this you realize it is really a small world and you can overcome your fears."



American and international college students had numerous opportunities for small-group interaction during the recent International Student Conference at Camp Paron.

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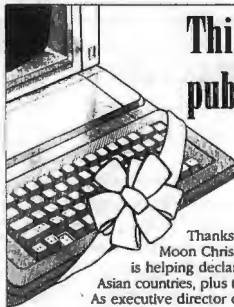
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Lottie Moon Christmas Offering
National Goal: \$84 million

Chapman: Fellowship should leave SBC

MOORE, OK (BP/ABF)—As a matter of integrity, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship should separate itself from the Southern Baptist Convention, said SBC Executive Committee president Morris H. Chapman Nov. 11.

"Their greatest integrity," Chapman said of the CBF, "would be openly declaring they no longer are cooperating Southern Baptists, rather than claiming to be Southern Baptists and trying to draw funds from good-hearted, grassroots Southern Baptists."

Chapman made the comment during an interview with *The Daily Oklahoman* of Oklahoma City.

CBF members and "mainstream" South-

ern Baptists seem unlikely to overcome their differences, Chapman remarked. "Every indication points to the fact that they are a denomination in the making."

By contrast, Foreign Mission Board interim president Don Kammerdiener said in an earlier statement that the FMB will continue to work with all evangelical Christians, including those in the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

"We've moved to work with all 'Great Commission Christians,'" Kammerdiener told the FMB's Richmond-based staff during a question-and-answer session. "It would be hollow to say we would not work with other Baptists."


Although he said he is not predicting any kind of "merger" with the Fellowship, he emphasized: "This board does not have time to do battle with other Christians. We'll work with anyone who shares our goal and does it in a Christ-honoring way."

Former FMB president Keith Parks, meeting last week with Fellowship officials, rejected Chapman's suggestion that the Fellowship should leave the SBC as a matter of integrity. "Because we do have integrity, we have to stay in the Southern Baptist Convention and continue to express Baptist beliefs in the context of missions," he said, adding that SBC conservatives did not pull out of the SBC when they formed their own seminaries.

The Fellowship's promotion of a "Global Missions Offering" has drawn criticism from both Chapman and Kammerdiener who see it as competition for the denomination's mission offerings. The CBF sent publicity packets for its first Global Missions Offering, which has a goal of \$2 million, to more than 700 Baptist churches. The offering would go to "undergird (the Fellowship's) mission work where others have broken that promise," Cecil Sherman, coordinator for the Atlanta-based CBF Coordinating Council, said in a cover letter included with the packets.

"Don't let anybody tell you that Southern Baptists have lost their long-held vision for world missions," Chapman responded. "We do need the help of every Southern Baptist church. I have great faith that our Southern Baptist churches, with a few exceptions, will not participate in anything which attempts to undermine our world missions efforts through the Cooperative Program and special mission offerings."

Concerning the timing of the CBF offering, which parallels Southern Baptists' annual Lottie Moon emphasis, Kammerdiener told Baptist Press: "I don't think (the CBF) had much choice. That's when Southern Baptists think about missions. If I were going to set up a new mission board I'd try to tap into the spirit of the season also. It is a divisive thing to do, but that's their privilege."




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Parks considers CBF post; FMB chairman criticizes action

NASHVILLE, TN (ABP/BP)—Keith Parks told leaders of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship he would be interested in leading their missions program if the Fellowship intends to remain Southern Baptist, recruit new missionaries and target the world's populations most isolated from the gospel.

Parks and his wife, Helen Jean, met for two hours with the Fellowship's missions committee Nov. 19 but did not respond to the group's offer to make him head of the Fellowship's 10-month-old missions program. He said he and Helen Jean will give them an answer "fairly soon."

Parks, 65, left the helm of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board Oct. 31 in a dispute with trustees over missions philosophy. He has complained that the 13-year controversy in the Southern Baptist Convention has infiltrated the FMB and excluded many loyal Southern Baptists from leadership in the denomination.

Parks advised Fellowship leaders to keep its missions program "under the broad

umbrella of identity as Southern Baptists."

"If this group decides it has to create a new identity to do this kind of work, you're going to limit it to a very, very small group of folks, because churches are not going to quit being Southern Baptist churches," he warned.

However, Parks said, many Southern Baptists of all theological stripes are doing foreign missions outside the framework of the FMB. People don't cease to be Southern Baptists because they work outside the denominational structure, he said, emphasizing that "the essence of being Southern Baptist is the local church."

"I don't plan—if I can avoid it—to allow those who have, in my estimation, turned the convention away from what I think is a genuine expression of Baptist convictions to also rob me of a Southern Baptist church identity," he said. "I think I'm more Southern Baptist than the folks in control of it."

John Jackson, Foreign Mission Board trustee chairman, issued a statement criticizing Parks for considering the CBF post and for a letter targeting FMB trustees that Parks mailed to missionaries prior to his recent retirement.

"The trustees have not desired to be in conflict with Dr. Parks but rather sought peace," Jackson wrote. "However, we can no longer hold our peace. A gauntlet has been thrown in the face of the FMB and Southern Baptists."

"We have great concern and feel that there is no justification for a letter written one week prior to retirement bashing trustees and now these statements by Dr. Parks (about the CBF position) one week prior to the Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions."

"It appears that these two events would indicate a conscious or unconscious attempt to destroy foreign missions as it is now known," Jackson wrote. "To think about, much less assume this new position, is to leave his great heritage and legacy. Consequently, his influence will diminish in the larger context of Southern Baptist life."

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Convention leaders discuss WMU's future role

BIRMINGHAM, AL (BP)—Leaders of the Southern Baptist Convention and Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union met Nov. 20 to discuss WMU's role within the convention.

The meeting at the national WMU office was held at the invitation of a 17-member committee of national and state WMU leaders.

Representing the SBC were Morris Chapman, SBC Executive Committee president; James T. Draper Jr., Baptist Sunday School Board president; Larry L. Lewis,

Home Mission Board president; Don Kammerdiener, Interim Foreign Mission Board president; and James Williams, Brotherhood Commission president.

During the one-hour dialogue, several convention leaders asked WMU to not alter its 104-year-old relationship with the SBC.

If WMU begins supporting any other entity or organization, the SBC Executive Committee might see such action as reason to create a competing women's organization which might be established as an

agency of the convention, they said.

Several convention leaders encouraged the WMU executive board to issue a statement regarding its relationship to the SBC. Particularly, they asked WMU to take a stand about its relationship with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

Some of the SBC leaders told WMU they would view any support of the CBF's missionaries or offering as being in direct competition with the SBC missions enterprise.

However, WMU leaders differed with convention leaders over the dilemma facing the auxiliary organization.

WMU leaders said they are struggling with how to be inclusive of all Southern Baptists. WMU leaders said they are grappling with how to best face the changes happening on the local, state and national levels regarding mission support.

The WMU 17-member committee is expected to bring a report and recommendations to the full WMU executive board in January.



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Extraordinary answer

By Jack Auten, First Church, Monette
Basic passage: Luke 1:1-25
Focal passage: Luke 1:13
Central truth: God always gives more than asked for in answered prayers.

Silence. Centuries of silence. Not a word from God. No angels, no prophets, nothing, just silence. Then it happened! Carefully and thoroughly, Luke gathered eyewitness accounts, read written reports, heard second-hand stories, and when sure everything was accurate, began to write, addressing it to his friend, Theophilus.

God broke His silence when He sent His angel, Gabriel, to grant a prayer to an old priest and his wife. For years they had been praying for a child and now God would answer their prayers. He had something in mind - a very special baby.

Making his appearance to Zachariah in the temple during the afternoon prayer service, behind curtains, Gabriel revealed his message to a very stunned Zachariah. The angel's appearance upset Zachariah, but hearing that he was going to be a father, that the child was to be called John, that John would be a great and powerful prophet of God, whose mission was to prepare the way for the Messiah, was just too much. Unsure of what he thought he had heard, he asked for some sort of proof.

Nine months of being unable to speak was not what Zachariah had in mind, but he had questioned the angel's message. He got proof.

Yes, God's silence was finally broken. No trumpets, fanfare or lights, not to kings or wealthy men, but to an old priest and his wife who had prayed for years for a son. A normal, ordinary prayer for a husband and wife, but what an extraordinary answer from God.

Every day God's people pray. Every day God answers prayers in His own time, in His own way, in a manner that benefits as many people as possible, and always more abundantly than what was asked for.

Consider the persistency of Zachariah and Elizabeth in their request. Consider the wisdom and timing of God in granting their prayer. Consider the far-reaching effects of their granted prayer.

God has not changed nor has His manner of answering His children's prayers. How wonderful it is to be a part of God's family and to be able to make requests of Him, knowing that He will answer those requests according to His wisdom.

Life and Work

Hope for the church

By C.A. Johnson, First Church, Paragould
Basic passage: Isaiah 59
Focal passage: Isaiah 59:1,2,9-11, 15b-16,20-21
Central truth: The church will stand, no matter how evil the world.

Isaiah 59 was written to God's people who thought God had forgotten them. The prophet explains in a vivid way why they are in such distress and promises glorious deliverance if they repent.

In our world today, sin and degradation seem to be as prevalent as in Isaiah's day and Christians are heard to say, "Why? God?" The same answer Isaiah gave them is applicable now.

God is not powerless or deaf! He can hear us when we call upon Him! But the lifestyle of society today reveals that the world is in rebellion against God's rule on earth. There is a universal corruption of morals. People are particularly guilty of social injustice. Our whole world is in discord. It is not from lack of power or willingness on the part of God that He has not come to the help of His people, the fault lies in our own sin.

To the Christian church today the picture is bleak. Few are willing to "stand in the gap" with prayers and action. What will become of the church in the future?

Fear not! God has provided His own "arm of salvation." What man would not and could not do, God has done through His Son, Jesus Christ. The Spirit that was promised to the church was first upon Christ. All believers are His seed. It is a promise of the continuance of the church in the world until the end of time.

Observe in verses 20-21: (1) How God's program shall be kept up—in a succession. As one generation passes, another shall come. (2) How long it will be kept up—henceforth and forever. As long as the world stands, God's work will go on. (3) How it will be kept up—by the constant residence of the Word and the Spirit in it.

God's Word shall never depart from the world. There will be some in every generation who, "believing with the heart unto righteousness, shall with the tongue make confession unto salvation."

On these foundations, the church is built, stands firmly, and will stand forever with Christ Himself as the cornerstone.

Bible Book

Civic responsibilities

By John D. Gerlach, Immanuel Church, Little Rock
Basic passage: Romans 13:1-14
Focal passage: Romans 13:1-14
Central truth: Christians have an important societal responsibility regarding government and evidencing love.

A Christian's responsibility is not limited to just the church. Scripture throughout the New Testament echoes the theme of obedience to the government and its laws. Believers are citizens of heaven, but are also citizens of this world and therefore given a dual responsibility.

Relationship to government (Rom. 13:1-7) - Jesus Himself made it very clear that we have responsibility to governmental authorities because they are ordained by God (Luke 20:25). Even though injustice and corruption may be evidenced by any government, God is still in control. The Jewish nation had never reconciled itself to the Roman rule and government. A current of rebellion and revolution ran continually through Palestine.

Paul exhorted his readers to good citizenship as Christians so as to give a witness to the world. Paul knew that whatever might be wrong with government was not because of government as an institution but due to the individuals in positions of power. In fact, in Paul's words, government officials are "God's ministers." They are God's tools to promote the welfare of society and are worthy of honor.

Relationship to neighbors (Rom. 13:8-14) - All Christians are to be in a debt that we pay every day and forever owe. We are to love each other as a debt that must be paid continually. When we operate in the sphere of love in our life then we truly fulfill the law.

Sin occurs when we love too little. Adultery, murder, hate, envy will not happen if we pay our debt of love. Someone once said, "Love God—and do what you like." If love is at the center of an individual's heart and if that heart is controlled by God and that love is expressed to others, the law becomes unnecessary in light of the supreme law of love.

Paul was acutely aware of the approach of Christ's second coming. Paul issued us a call to action and moral purity. Our awareness of the second coming should give us adequate motivation to relate to believers and unbelievers in love and to make spiritual provision to live righteously.

Convention Uniform

Seeing things God's way

By Jack Austen, First Church, Monette
 Basic passage: Luke 2:1-40
 Focal passage: Luke 2:1-40
 Central truth: To understand God's ways, one must see things God's way.

Nobody likes taxes, but riding a donkey for 85 miles in two weeks while nine months pregnant is asking just too much. Yet, that was the way God chose to bring Mary and Joseph to His chosen site for the birth of His Son. Bethlehem was their home town and the new tax law required everyone to go home and register for more taxation. Adding injury to insult, so it seems, God's Son was born in a stable.

God chose a small group of men to tell about the birth of the long awaited for Savior of Israel who weren't especially liked by all. Shepherds smelled like sheep and were unable to keep all the laws of the Pharisees because of their long periods of isolation in remote areas. God's method of gaining their attention and getting His news across was absolutely stunning. Dazzling, blinding lights pierced the night sky, heavenly visitors appeared and disappeared, leaving the shepherds stunned, awed and excited. Proof that all this was no dream lay just five miles away in the town of Bethlehem, in a stable, in a manger. They went, saw and left convinced of the angel's message. The Savior was here.

It took dazzling lights, angels and a "look for yourself" to convince the shepherds. But it took only a glance for two in the temple to know. A retirement-age priest, drawn to the temple by the Holy Spirit, knew immediately who the baby was and prophesied of the joys and sorrows that would come to both Israel and Mary through the tiny baby brought for dedication. Then an old widow who prayed daily in the temple also immediately recognized the infant as the redeemer of Israel. Both rejoiced that their prayers had been answered.

The Christmas Story. To many that's all it is, just a story. But to see it through the eyes of the priest and the old widow is to see the plan and purpose of God being unfolded. The new tax law sending the young couple to Bethlehem, the stable, the shepherds, the priest and the old widow were all in God's plan.

To know what God is doing one must be able to see things the way God sees them, and after all, isn't that what God's Son came to do in the first place?

Life and Work

'Fear Not!'

By C.A. Johnson, First Church,
 Paragould
 Basic passage: Luke 2
 Focal passage: Luke 2:6-17
 Central truth: Christians need not fear — Christ our Redeemer has come.

The birth of Christ is the hinge on which history hangs. This important event is unusual in three ways. It was an event of lowliness. In a manger was the beginning of a life of sorrow, poverty and rejection. But the "Word became flesh and dwelt among men." It was a quiet event—there was no pomp, no fireworks. Seemingly, it was an ordinary happening with no real significance. The birth of Christ appeared to be an event of weakness—a baby, a child! But He was a tiny ray of light to give "Light to them that sit in darkness."

The birth of Christ was acclaimed to a few people, shepherds, men on the bottom rung of the social scale. They were the first to hear the gospel—at night—yet they were awake and listening! They were the first believers of the gospel. Their faith led them to Bethlehem, the stable and the manger. They were the first preachers of the gospel—they "made known abroad" and they rejoiced.

The message of the angel to the shepherds quieted their fear by assuring them that God was about His business. It awakened joy in their hearts — "Good tidings of great joy." What an announcement! Third, the message revealed the universality of the event—"to all people." Last, the message revealed the threefold name of the child—"Savior"—"Redeemer," "Christ"—"Messiah," and "Lord"—God Himself.

The first message to mankind after Jesus' birth was that which the angel brought—"Fear Not!" The reason the shepherds were not to be afraid of His appearance from the invisible world is that the angel was bringing good news of the birth of the Redeemer, Christ the Lord. The incarnation of the Son of God is still the only foundation on which worship of the invisible, the divine may be based. With the coming of Christ, we have assurance that God really exists as a personal God, perfect in mercy and love. Thanks be to God that His Son gave Himself to the world in love and became man, revealing God as the holy and merciful Lord! Ever since Jesus' birth, all tidings from heaven are "good tidings of great joy" for those who are at peace with God through Jesus Christ.

Bible Book

A Savior is born!

By John D. Gerlach, Immanuel
 Church, Little Rock
 Basic passage: Luke 2; 1-40
 Focal passage: Luke 2:7-17; 20-21;
 39-40
 Central truth: The events surrounding the birth of Jesus remind us that he is the savior of all people.

In the midst of human history, in a backwater town in a troublesome corner of the vast Roman Empire, a baby was born. Many other babies would be born at the same time in much more auspicious circumstances. Some of the babies' birth would be widely anticipated, some would be born into lavish surroundings, and some would be born into humble means. It would have been easy for the world in general to overlook the birth of another Jewish boy in the small village of Bethlehem. However, this baby was no ordinary child. He was the Son of God.

Announcement to the shepherds (Luke 2:7-17, 20)—The events surrounding Jesus' birth were not what would be expected for God's Son. Jesus was born in a common stable in Bethlehem due to the crowded conditions resulting from the order of the imperial census. Then Jesus' birth announcement was made to lowly shepherds camping out in open fields. The choice of the shepherds to receive the wondrous announcement would have been a surprising one in those times. Shepherds were looked down upon because their work made them ceremonially unclean.

The initial reaction of the simple shepherds to the presence of the multitude of angels was stark fear. However, their next reaction was to leave their sheep and go to Bethlehem to see for themselves what had taken place. After finding Jesus, the shepherds began spreading the news of the birth of the Savior and the marvelous events that had happened.

The childhood of Jesus (Lk. 2:21, 39-40)—The act of circumcision identified Jesus as part of the covenant people and placed Him under the law. Jesus was to be His name which meant, "the One through whom Jehovah brings salvation." Doctor Luke summarized at this point the fact that every requirement of the law was fulfilled by Mary and Joseph regarding Jesus. The early years of Jesus' life were marked by growth and maturity — physically, spiritually and mentally.

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NEWS DIGEST

Southern Seminary will co-sponsor Moscow center

LOUISVILLE, KY (BP)—Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and Russian Baptists are launching a joint venture of ministerial training in Moscow.

"The Christian Training Center of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and the Union of Evangelical Christians-Baptists of Russia" will open its doors in May. It will train pastors to serve Russia's burgeoning Baptist population, said Southern Seminary president Roy L. Honeycutt.

About 40 pastors are expected to enroll in the first year of courses to be taught at the Russian Baptist union headquarters. At least six professors from Southern will travel to Russia over the next two years to teach during six three-week terms. Faculty from Russia will teach courses in Russian, English and Russian Baptist history.

Georgia Baptists unanimously elect executive director

MACON, GA (BP)—The Georgia Baptist Convention's executive committee voted unanimously Nov. 9 to elect Paducah, Ky., pastor J. Robert White as the GBC's new executive director-treasurer.

White, pastor of First Baptist Church in Paducah and a former pastor of Tabernacle Baptist Church in Carrollton, Ga., told the committee he was not looking for a job. "I have a wonderful church—we have had a marvelous 11 years," he said. "The only reason I would ever consider (the GBC position) is if God is in it. I feel God is in this."

The meeting came less than 60 days after the committee elected Home Mission Board administrator Gary S. Jones by a 69-34 vote after a heated and divisive debate. Jones subsequently declined to accept the position, citing the split vote.

Southern search committee to select nominee by mid-March

LOUISVILLE, KY (BP)—The presidential search committee at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary plans to select a potential president for the Louisville, Ky., school by mid-March, according to committee chairman Wayne Allen.

Allen, pastor of Briarwood Baptist Church in Cordova, Tenn., said the search committee is "prayerfully optimistic" a nominee will be presented to the 63-member trustee board at its April 19-21 meeting.

Committee members are seeking a successor to Roy L. Honeycutt who announced Oct. 12 he will retire from the seminary presidency at the end of 1993.

Nominations for the Southern presidency are being accepted through Dec. 18. All letters of recommendation should be accompanied by a complete resume and mailed to Presidential Search Committee, Box 7767, Louisville, KY 40257-0767.

Manuel Noriega baptized in Miami federal courthouse

MIAMI (BP)—Former Panamanian leader Gen. Manuel A. Noriega was baptized in Miami's federal courthouse Oct. 24, say Southern Baptists who performed the ordinance and then administered the Lord's Supper.

After his immersion, Noriega told the six Baptists attending that he felt the Lord's presence, said Tony Poncetti, a Baptist layman who has led the former dictator in weekly discipleship studies for more than two years.

Gaining permission to transport a fiberglass baptismal pool into the courthouse "was nothing short of a miracle," evangelist Clifton Brannon said. "You could just see God at work through everyone involved."

Noriega was found guilty earlier this year on eight counts of federal drug and racketeering charges, said Jon May, lead counsel on the general's appeal. Noriega was sentenced to 40 years and currently is housed in Miami's federal courthouse, May said.

Fight over homosexual B&B puts ministers in quandary

RUSSELLVILLE, KY (BP)—A bed-and-breakfast resort for homosexuals has stirred passions in Russellville, Ky., and put ministers in the middle of a volatile situation.

Anger and indignation swelled in the community in September when Russellville native Jimmy Cates and his homosexual partner, Jim Turner, announced they planned to open the resort in their home, Stone Mountain Estate, just outside of town.

"We're in the middle," reported Donald Zuberer, pastor of First Baptist Church in Russellville, who is concerned that antihomosexual forces might harm someone. "We're against what is taking place out there, but we do not want any bodily harm to come to those men. We also are concerned about their souls."

A large section of the religious community—particularly Baptists, Catholics, Pentecostals and members of the Church of Christ and Assembly of God—have organized to oppose the new resort but also to promote peaceful protest, Zuberer noted.