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### December 15, 1994

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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# ARKANSAS BAPTIST



SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL  
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES  
Historical Commission, SBC  
Nashville, Tennessee

Volume 93, Number 25

December 15, 1994

*Joy  
to the  
World!  
The  
Lord is  
come*



# Cuban couple celebrates gift of freedom this Christmas

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—For Christmas this year, Cuban refugees Omar and Aurelia Fernandez are celebrating the unique gift of freedom.

Fernandez, the resource production manager in the Baptist Sunday School Board's multicultural leadership department, saw his wife for the first time in nearly four years when she moved from Havana to Nashville, Tenn., this summer.

That's how long it took the Cuban government to grant Mrs. Fernandez a permanent exit visa. Fernandez, who is an archaeologist and anthropologist, defected to the United States in 1991. Since then, he and his wife have prayed for her freedom.

The Fernandezes plan to celebrate their first Christmas together in freedom with members of International Community Church in Albuquerque, N.M., a Southern Baptist church where Fernandez was pastor when he first defected to the United States.

"They prayed for my wife's freedom for four years, and they have never met her yet," he said. "So we are going there so she can meet them and they can meet her."

Fernandez was on a temporary work visa for the University of New Mexico when he asked for political asylum just four days after arriving in the United States.

This will be the first Christmas he and his wife have celebrated together in complete freedom since 1959 when the Christian holiday was banned in Cuba.

"On that year, Christmas stopped being a holiday," Fernandez said, "and became a normal workday." Christians would be reported to the government if they were found celebrating Christmas.

"The Cuban government is not friendly with Christians celebrating Christmas. We would be reported as having ideological problems."

However, the Fernandezes continued to celebrate Christmas in secret, he said. "We would put up a small tree — less than two feet tall and any kind we could find. We would decorate it with silver balls rolled from chocolate wrappings."

The Fernandezes would then paint pine cones in different colors for their tree. On the night of Christmas, the family would gather around the dinner table, sing Christmas carols and pray together.

"We might not have had enough food to put on the table, but celebrating Christmas was more important than eating," he said.

His wife has not wasted any time with her newfound freedom in Christianity, Fernandez said. Just after her arrival in July, she and Fernandez started a Bible study group in their small apartment where 12 people have made professions of faith. Since then, the Fernandezes have moved to LaVergne, Tenn., where they attend First Baptist Church, Smyrna. They have started a Hispanic Sunday School class.

Mrs. Fernandez spends her days practicing English and thinking of their family who remain in Cuba. The couple's son, daughter, grandson and granddaughter are still in Cuba, as is Fernandez's mother and Mrs. Fernandez's sister and brother.

This Christmas the Fernandezes are offering a special prayer for their family's release from Cuba.

"We are praying for a miracle for their freedom," he said.

## Cover Story

photos / Jim Vonneman



## Joy to the world

Andy Jenkins, 5-year-old son of Steve and Janet Jenkins, members of First Church, Fordyce, carefully arranges a nativity scene as his family prepares to celebrate the birth of Christ.

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# ARKANSAS BAPTIST

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Russell N. Dilday.....Associate Editor  
Colleen Backus.....Assistant Editor

Millie Gill.....Executive Assistant to the Editor  
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# 'Want ads' for new FMB missionaries top 700

By Erich Bridges

Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board

RICHMOND, VA (BP)—“Want ads” for new Southern Baptist foreign missionaries in 1995 have topped 700.

The list of new co-workers sought by missionaries around the world totaled 708, according to Southern Baptist Foreign Mission officials. Some of the requests call for or are likely to be filled by married couples, so the actual number of missionaries needed to fill all the assignments could be much higher.

Requests for church starters and developers once again lead the list, along with other church-related workers such as seminary teachers, musicians and student and youth workers.

But the mission fields also need general educators, physicians, dentists, nurses, media workers, engineers, agriculturists, veterinarians, social workers, business people, secretaries and others.

The Foreign Mission Board is seeking nearly 600 new missionary church starters and developers, evangelists, theological teachers and other church-related workers for 1995. Requests for other types of general educators and medical workers total 129.

Jobs also await 70 missionaries skilled in media ministries, business and other mission support services. Another 50 assignments call for missionaries trained in community development, social ministry, agriculture, veterinary medicine and related fields.

If you add up all these totals, you get more than 800. That's because some specific missionary job requests appear in more than one category.

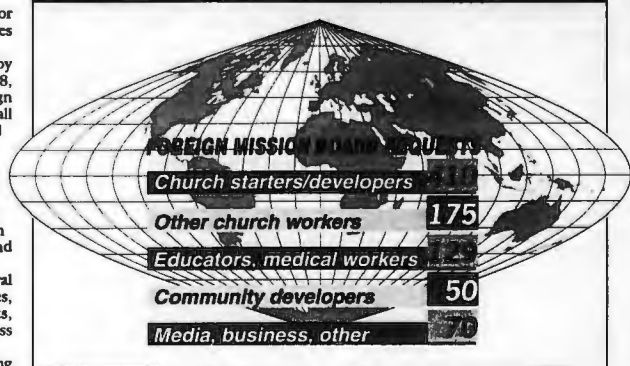
Church planting remains “the key request, because it's the major part of what we do,” said Jim Riddell, FMB associate director for mission personnel. “But we have a wider array of job options available,” he said, not only because of the wide variety of mission needs and ministries worldwide, but because “in many places we can't get someone in the country strictly as a church planter. So we must have other roles for people to fill.”

The board's 10 area directors — assigned to different world regions — have highlighted 15 key assignments each from the overall list for a global “top 150” priority list.

While no single region dominates the priority list, the board is looking hard for missionaries to help it meet a major commitment to expand missions in Eastern Europe over the next few years.

“We are facing great challenges in

## 1995 FMB priority personnel requests



Eastern Europe,” said Europe area director John Floyd. He said one of several challenges “is the fact that present openness may not remain long. Indeed, in some areas former communist political leaders have now been re-elected to positions of national leadership. And subtle oppression and even open hostility from the Orthodox Church and others continues.”

Riddell also pointed to continuing “tremendous needs” in the Middle East, North Africa, Central Asia and “World A” — a term for the many places and peoples virtually untouched by the gospel.

***“Church planting remains the key request, because it's the major part of what we do.”***

— Jim Riddell

Associate personnel director, FMB

A sample from the priority missionary “want ads” includes:

■ Missionaries to develop evangelism and Sunday School ministries in Russia and Ukraine.

■ A missionary to start a church in a city of at least 50,000 people in Lithuania.

■ Church planters for Albania, Poland and Romania, and a missionary to strengthen existing congregations in Croatia and Bosnia.

■ A surgeon, an obstetrician-gynecologist, a hospital administrator, a family practice doctor and a community developer for Yemen.

■ A church developer and an outreach specialist for Gaza, and a student minister for Morocco.

■ Strategy coordinators to design ways to evangelize large unreached people groups in China, Africa, the Middle East, Indonesia and southwest Asia.

■ Church planters/developers for Hong Kong, Japan, Taiwan, South Korea, Malaysia, Indonesia, India and Thailand.

■ A combination church planter/physician for Nepal.

■ Evangelists, church planters and developers for Senegal, Togo, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Mozambique and Malawi.

■ A community developer/agriculturist for the Niger Republic, veterinarians for Guinea and Eritrea, and a community health worker for Uganda.

■ Church planters and developers for Bolivia, Colombia, Uruguay, Ecuador, Chile, Peru and Argentina, and a seminary teacher for Argentina.

■ Religious education consultants and church planters and developers for Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Guatemala, Panama, Honduras and Costa Rica.

■ A literature ministry business manager for Nicaragua.

■ A media producer for Christian radio and television programs in Brazil and the Caribbean.

■ A social worker to help expand ministries to slum dwellers in Brazil.

## YOU'LL BE GLAD TO KNOW



By DON MOORE  
ABS-C Executive Director

Those closest to the birth of Christ had no idea of the wider significance of His coming. Even after His resurrection, they had not seen the big picture of redemption. Now, after almost 2,000 years, we still operate with less than a full view of God's redemptive purposes.

I am privileged to see the effects of people's vision. The more narrow their sphere of knowledge and concern, the more dwarfed is their spirit, it seems. This shows up in littleness in relationships and stinginess in giving. Missions support, salaries and ministries all suffer when the leadership of our churches fail to see the big picture.

People who see world missions as an expression of the heart of "God so loving the world" are prepared to pay a price to go and give that others may know. They are ready to take steps of faith, make adjustments and pay the price to reach for the greater goals. The alternative is to think small, act little, and gradually wither away both in numbers and spirit.

The Lottie Moon Christmas Offering will be a good reflection of how well we see the big picture. May God deliver us from "I, my, me and mine" to think of a world so desperately in need that we are lost in the joy of meeting the greater need.

The big picture motivates the heart. My heart tells me I cannot do everything that needs to be done in reaching the world with the gospel, but I must do all that I can.

The big picture governs our priorities. Ambitions, schedules, goals and finances will reflect that we have the big picture.

The big picture enlarges our capacities. Expanded vision gives birth to enlarged compassion and commitments.

The big picture empowers creativity. More ingenious ideas have been found to make money that can be given to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering than we can imagine.

It would be a worthy prayer to ask God to help us see the big picture of His purposes in sending Christ into the world. We could reach our Lottie Moon goal and have our best Christmas ever.

LUKE 2:1-20 (NIV)

## The Birth of Jesus

### 'Glory to God in the highest'

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to his own town to register.

So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.

While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her first born, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the

town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told

them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things, and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.



## Personal perspectives

"We might not have had enough food to put on the table, but celebrating Christmas was more important than eating."

—Omar Fernandez, Cuban refugee  
now working at the Baptist Sunday School Board

"I don't believe we could stay here if it wasn't for so many people praying for us."

—Former Arkansas Baptist pastor James Duke,  
now pastor of International Baptist Church, Sofia, Bulgaria

"I don't think Webster has a word that can really describe it. The poverty here is just astounding."

—David Lyons, Southern Baptist disaster relief volunteer serving in Haiti

# Walking where Jesus walked

**Editor's Note:** Millie Gill, the executive assistant to the editor for the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*, recently made her first visit to the Holy Land as a guest of the Israel Ministry of Tourism. The following article and the photo essay on pages 6-7 reflect some of the sights — and insights — she experienced.

Christmas is a time when Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus, remembering it as the night when the angel appeared to the shepherds, proclaiming unto them that a Savior had been born in Bethlehem, the city of David, and of their journey to the manger to see the Christ Child.

This once again becomes an awesome wonder as one has the opportunity to see the shepherds watching their flocks on the hillsides of Israel, as you visit the place where Mary was told she would become the mother of Jesus and as you visit the site where He was born.

The Holy Land brings to reality things you have read and studied about in your personal Bible study time, as well as local church experiences. Israel is a land where you literally stand in awe as you realize you are walking where Jesus walked, fed the multitude, healed the sick, was crucified and then raised from the dead to become the Savior of the world.

The love of God is manifested many times as you journey down the Via Dolorosa (The Way of Sorrows), a route which leads you from the time Jesus appeared before Pilate and was condemned to Golgotha. On this journey, you witness the places He fell under the heavy load of His cross. Today it is a marketplace where merchants display fresh vegetables, olive wood products, clothing and many other items for people to buy.

Israel is a land where you see not only the beauty of lush green vineyards and vegetable farms, but also dry, barren desert areas where you wonder how the Bedouins survive in their nomadic lifestyle. Tourists also have the privilege of visiting the mountain fortress of Masada, the Dead Sea



By MILLIE GILL

and Qumran where in 1947 Bedouin shepherds found seven ancient scrolls in a local cave. At Bet She'an one can view the remains of some 20 layers of settlement going back to the 5th millennium.

As Southern Baptists observe the Lottie Moon Season of Prayer and the Christmas holiday season, we should rejoice over the work being accomplished in Israel as a result of our prayers and financial support. Tom Hocutt, administrator for the Baptist Convention in Israel and also chairman of the United Christian Council there, said, "As Southern Baptists visit the Holy Land we encourage them to contact our office here and arrange to visit some of the mission sites for which they pray and provide funding."

Hocutt also said that in Israel the 32 Southern Baptist career workers are known as representatives. "They are ministering to approximately 700 individuals in Arab, international and Hebrew churches," he noted, "as well as Baptist House where Arkansas native John Anthony serves as administrative coordinator."

"As we work here we try not to cause any conflict with the government, in our 23 different kinds of ministries," Hocutt continued. "We currently are looking for the proper vehicle that would give us a legal standing with the government, no matter which one is in power."

The Paul D. Rowden Baptist School and the Baptist Church in Nazareth are two other Southern Baptist works which are

growing. Suad Haddas, a deacon in the church, serves as school principal while Fuad Sakhnini, who has visited and preached at First Church in Conway, serves as church pastor.

Haddas explained that the school, with 860 children in grades K-12, received protective marks from the government in the mid '60s. "This way we have to keep standards high and therefore our students are graduating with high honors and are being accepted in the work force," he said.

Sakhnini said his congregation's attendance fluctuates from 150 to 300. "We minister mostly to Arabic- and English-speaking people, but also have people of other nationalities at various times," he said. "This Nazareth church was started in 1926 by an Arab young man who felt led to begin the work after hearing George W. Truett while attending First Church in Dallas, Texas."

S. Fahom, deputy mayor of Nazareth who attended both Ouachita Baptist University and Henderson State University, noted that peace is the dream of that city whose population is made up of approximately one-third Christians and two-thirds Muslims.

As we celebrate the birth of our Savior, may we follow His guidance as He instructed the disciples on the beautiful Sea of Galilee and "cast our nets" to become more committed to not only praying and giving to the mission work of our convention, but to reaching and ministering to our neighbors, those in our state, in our nation and around the world. When we do this, we will experience God in such a way that our lives will never again be the same.

As I rode in a replica of the type fishing boat used by the disciples and participated in sunset worship services both in the boat and on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, I was awakened anew to the fact that we must be joyful that Christ came as a child and gave His life that we might be saved — and that we must follow His command to "go and make disciples."

## Slaves of circumstances?

I spoke with the chairman of a pastor search committee recently in a large metropolis. He said, "We're having difficulty calling younger men to this area."

Why? "They are afraid of the school situation and the crime factor."

On that basis, the Apostle Paul should never have gone to Philippi. He ended up in the "slammer." Where is the promise that says it will be easy?

I know of one Baptist staff member



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

who stated he could not serve anywhere except in his area "because my wife has a very responsible position in the business world." Had Simon Peter's wife worked, would he have dared preach anywhere except in Capernaum? I know of another pastor whose wife earned a fine salary. She

told him, in effect, "You can go anywhere you wish, but the children and I are staying here." Pity! He took early retirement.

Have we become slaves of our system? I cannot imagine at any time in my ministry of over 50 years ever shrinking back on a God-called assignment because circumstances weren't right. The late evangelist Hyman Appelman used to say, "If God tells you to go through the wall, jump — it is up to Him to open the hole." Courage!

Andrew M. Hall  
Fayetteville, AR

# CHRISTMAS IN THE HOLY LAND

*Sheep and goats graze on a remote hillside in Israel, a common sight in the Holy Land for many centuries.*



*A small mosaic details the site of the nativity in Bethlehem.*



*The Church of the Annunciation in Nazareth honors the site where Mary was told she would be the mother of Jesus.*

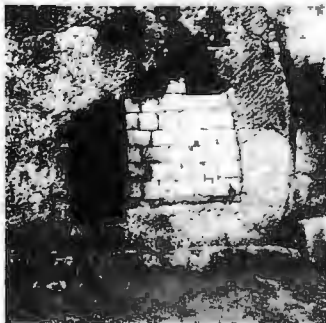


*The Church of St. Catherine is located in Bethlehem near the traditional site of Jesus' birth.*



*A fishing boat on the Sea of Galilee recreates a familiar scene from Jesus' ministry in the Holy Land.*

*The presence of Israeli soldiers is a constant reminder to visitors of the centuries-old conflicts throughout the land of Jesus' birth.*



*The garden tomb stands as a silent testimony to the resurrection of Jesus Christ following His crucifixion.*



*Nazareth Baptist Church provides a witness to residents of Jesus' hometown. Fuad H. Sakhimi (inset) is pastor of the Baptist congregation.*



# Grief survivors' pilgrimages offer hope, help for others

By Russell N. Dilday  
Associate Editor, Arkansas Baptist

*I can and I must go on*, wrote George Purvis in his journal following the death of his wife, Laura Belle.

"It was the most devastating thing that ever happened to me," he said of her death, caused by the effects of treatments for bone marrow cancer. "Half of me just went away."

"One thing I've learned about grief," he shared. "Grief is in direct proportion to the investment. If you have a lifetime of closeness, you have a greater loss."

That clearly means that Purvis' loss was great. "We dated since I was 16 and we had been married 46 years. Nobody ever thought of us as individuals. It was Laura Belle and George, George and Laura Belle."

"She died Oct. 19, 1993. At first I just walked around lost and talked to myself, the Lord and her," he said. "For some people, when they lose a spouse, they quit. I am not of that type."

Don Moore, executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, echoed Purvis' "lost" feeling. "A spouse is so interrelated with your being," he noted. "When a spouse is gone you have lost a part of your being. Some may even say a loss of identity."

Moore lost his wife, Shirley, in November 1993 following a battle with cancer. He said "simple" things may often cause the most pain for surviving spouses.

"Would you believe that some of things about the loss of a spouse are so simple that people who discuss grief wouldn't even identify them?" he asked. "Such things as having somebody listen to you. When you go home and there is no sight, no smell, no sound, no light or no smile. There is no one to listen to what has taken place in your life and it leaves you with an awful emptiness."

When Mrs. Purvis was diagnosed with bone marrow cancer in 1992, Purvis decided to keep a positive attitude about her illness. "I thought whatever the problem, I was going to be a part of the solution," he recalled. "I didn't say or do anything unkind to her or that I wish I had done differently. I don't have any regrets from that time."

"I've seen both sides of cancer (survival and dying)," said Moore. "The thing that makes dealing with cancer so hard is the helplessness you feel. When the cancer cannot be removed and anything they do is experimental and there is a long record of failure...you feel so helpless."



*George Purvis, whose wife died in 1993 from cancer complications, advocates hobbies and interests to deal with grief.*

According to Jan Pettigrew, an oncology nurse and grief counselor, fellow church members and friends also feel helpless, especially after the death of a loved one.

"One thing the Christian community doesn't understand is that it takes time," she explained. "There are lot of messages (from Christians) to be strong — not to grieve or you must bypass grief — that's real unspiritual. Grief is God's way of healing and it takes a long time."

Purvis, a member of Immanuel Church, Little Rock, since he was 13, has walked the long road of grief recovery "with lots of support from my family, church, friends and my pastor, Rex Horne."

Support also came from another special friend. "When Laura Belle was in intensive care, (fellow Immanuel Church member) President Clinton called me and told me he was praying for her and me. He wrote me and my three children letters and the Clintons sent flowers."

Moore said friends can be helpful, but they must follow some rules to be helpful. "You really never do know where you are. When you seem to be doing well, folks seem to think you ought to be doing worse and when you are bad, folks think you ought to be doing better. Nobody needs a commentary on their own grief."

"That's the most significant thing I have learned about grief," said Moore. "Everyone's is so distinct that no one else

is in a position to pass judgment on them." Moore also said there is "no reasonable time for you to deal with your grief. Culture would say that a year is a reasonable time for you to have processed your grief...For some people five to 10 years is not enough, and for others less than a year is enough."

Purvis, who retired as the chief of information/education from the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission seven years ago, also sought professional support. He attended a grief recovery group and he visited a professional counselor.

Like Purvis, Ray Higgins, pastor of Second Church in Little Rock, led his congregation to provide a grief recovery group.

"It was a personal issue with me," Higgins explained. "My mother lived with cancer for two years and died eight years ago. Since our family had not been associated with a church that offered a ministry like this, I thought there might be a need."

Higgins said Second Church recently completed its first seminar and "we plan to offer it at least once a year to other church members and the community before the Christmas season."

Higgins noted that well-meaning church members and friends of grievers may sometimes hurt more than help.

"I sense that most people are encouraged to bury their grief," he said. "They aren't given opportunities in the church to talk about it. They are expected to get over it in a month or so and part of that is due to fact that we are uncomfortable talking about grief to grievers."

He said ministries such as grief recovery groups can be one of the most effective "doctrinal study" formats churches can have. "Our conversations about theology ought to be linked to personal experience rather than abstract ideas," Higgins noted.

For Purvis, maintaining his normal interests also helps his continuing grief recovery. "I went on and taught my Sunday School class, put up the Christmas tree and kept on painting."

He said painting is "great therapy" that "consumes all of your thought processes. The world goes away when I paint."

Despite support and hobbies, Purvis said he "has his days" when grief heightens.

"There are parts of days you will enjoy, so enjoy them," Pettigrew suggested. "That's not being disloyal or disrespectful. That's honoring the fact that you continue to embrace life. But know that part of the day will be sad."

As part of his counseling process, Purvis began a journal. "I wrote down my feelings every day," he said. "It helped to put it down on paper and to express my thoughts, feelings and emotions and put it down at the end of a day. One of things I put down is, 'I can and I must go on.'"

## Counselors offer tips for aiding cancer patients

Individuals can help friends or family members who have been diagnosed with cancer, agree Jan Pettigrew and J. D. Stake.

"You let that person know that you are aware of the situation, that you will pray for them, then you offer to help in a practical way and you follow through with what you have said," suggested Stake, director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention's ministry of crisis support. "That validates your credibility."

Pettigrew, a registered oncology nurse and grief crisis counselor in Little Rock, added, "You have to earn the right to contact to a friend with cancer."

"Sometimes we think that because of our role as pastor, friend, nurse or relative that we have the right to come sit with another in the midst of pain and hear their words that come out of brokenness," she said. "Nothing gives us that right. It's holy ground. When people share out of brokenness, they are picky about who they share with. If the person chooses to open up, you tap lightly at the door of their heart."

Warning that avoiding friends with cancer is "a tragedy," Stake pointed out, "Frequently, one of our church members is diagnosed with cancer and lots of people don't know what to say so they don't say anything and withdraw from that person."

"It's a tragedy and a lot of times they feel like lepers," he emphasized. "You don't need to say anything. Just being there, a touch or a hug, to say I am thinking about you — just your presence is what means something."

Pettigrew urged family and friends of cancer patients to adopt a "coming alongside ministry" in assisting cancer patients, adding that "presencing" — "being there in a way that is meaningful to the other person" — is crucial.

### Don't avoid the holidays because of grief, experts advise

Everyone suffers after the death of a loved one, but for many, the feelings of pain and grief are heightened during the holiday season.

J.D. Stake, director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention's crisis support ministry, said statistics "point out that the incidence of depression and suicide increase during the holidays. That's borne out in police and hospital stats. Most counselors also will say their load increases during the holidays."

Grief counselor Jan Pettigrew said that the holiday season often "augments feelings of grief because of the traditions and the memories associated with the holidays."

"There are also expectations for it to be a perfect day," she added, "and it's not perfect anymore without that person. The traditions make it obvious who is not there, so most try to avoid the holidays and pretend they are not grieving."

Don't avoid the holidays, Pettigrew urged, "but deliberately plan for them."

Stake agreed, encouraging those who have faced loss to "anticipate it being difficult time and plan accordingly."

*When people share out of brokenness, they are picky about who they share with. If the person chooses to open up, you tap lightly at the door of their heart."*

— Jan Pettigrew

Oncology nurse and grief crisis counselor



"Coming alongside means actively giving yourself," she explained, "not withholding yourself or shielding yourself just because you feel vulnerable or intimidated by their vulnerability."

Pettigrew also offered friends of cancer patients a list of do's and don'ts when ministering to those with cancer:

■ Don't put your friend on a pedestal where they have to be an inspiration to everyone. Don't put that kind of pressure on them.

■ Don't try to "fix" them or cheer them up. You cut off the openness when you become a cheerleader.

■ Don't say you understand, even if you do. "All this does is switch the conversation from them to you."

■ Don't tell them other people's "war stories." They get barraged with these.

■ Don't take away their wrestling. "This is the process of thought they need. Grief takes as long as it takes."

■ Don't spiritualize their suffering or apply a spiritual band-aid. "God will get to that person and teach them what He wants them to know."

■ Do let the person "wrestle openly" without having to censor their thoughts and feelings.

■ Do remove the pressure from your friend to have to be a witness. "It's hard to be a witness when a person's throwing up or is depressed."

■ Do let your friend tell their story. "They need to tell their story over and over to try to make sense out of it. Be quiet. Allow the silence. Let them talk even if you have heard it 40 times plus."

■ Do enter their woundedness by invitation only, "with fear and trembling at the awesome privilege bestowed on you."

■ Do offer to sit and hold your friend and just let them cry. "Every time you reach to put your arms around your friend, the Lord Jesus reaches the rest of the way. He wants to use your arms to be His arms of comfort."

■ Do be specific in your offers to help. "People who are hurting can't reach out. They don't have the energy. For instance, tell them you will drop by their house, get their groceries or bring back dinner."

Offering specific planning tips for those who have recently lost relatives or friends, Stake said, "Make sure you have support during the holidays. You can help by planning activities where there is family and support around."

"For most people the holidays are not a time to be alone," Stake said. "Invite people over or make sure you are with family and friends. Don't spend the holidays by yourself."

Pettigrew cautioned that birthdays, vacation times and anniversaries can trigger grief similar to that experienced at Thanksgiving and Christmas. "Get in touch with past traditions that are special and decide whether or not that tradition is too painful to keep," she suggested.

Pettigrew warned grievers against overextending themselves during the holiday season. "As a griever, your energy levels are down and, when physical energy is down, emotions are down. You can overextend and it can absolutely blow a person away emotionally."

"As you make plans, make assignments and tasks and delegate," she said. "You can't do everything."

# 'This can't happen to me'

## Cancer survivor credits faith, prayer and support with recovery

By Russell N. Dilday

Associate Editor, Arkansas Baptist

*This can't happen to me. I take care of people. They don't take care of me, thought nurse Kathie Dalton as she heard the test report that indicated she had a malignant brain tumor.*

It was the summer of 1992. Just a few nights before, she had awakened on her bedroom floor staring up at her husband, two children and an emergency medical technician following a 20-minute seizure.

Dalton, an assistant professor of nursing at Arkansas State University in Jonesboro, went in for tests immediately. "The doctor told me, 'Kathie there's something in your head,'" she recalled. "Some sort of growth."

He admitted her to the hospital, where she underwent more extensive testing. The tests showed a brain tumor the size of a quarter. "Immediately I had a sense of denial," she said. "No, it can't happen to me. I take care of people. They don't take care of me. Maybe there's something on the films and the CAT scan, but it's not what they think it is."

Jan Pettigrew, a registered oncology nurse and grief crisis counselor in Little Rock, said a cancer diagnosis is especially shocking. "When a diagnosis of cancer comes, it's as if somebody comes up and rips off the whole front side of a person."

"It reveals a very naked, scared, vulnerable human being. Suddenly life is threatened. There are so many issues confronting them: the 'D' words—death, dying, dependency, disfigurement. And a great sense of loss of control."

More tests followed for Dalton. "Reality hit on the Friday following my tests," she recalled. "Dr. Pyle met with my mom, dad and husband, but they wouldn't talk to me about it."

"I wanted them to talk to me about it, not about the weather," Dalton said. "I wanted them to say, 'Kathie, we understand you have a brain tumor.' I tried to explain to them I wanted to talk. I wanted people to listen to me."

Finally, she said, her family and doctor met in her room. "This is what I remember. The blinds were pulled. I knew something was wrong. I asked them what was up."

"Kathie," replied Dr. Pyle, "it's a malignant tumor. We give you six months to a year to live."

*How can this be? What have I done, for God to let this happen to me? she thought. "I was so frightened."*

Karen McGrath, also an assistant professor of nursing at ASU, has worked

with cancer patients as a cancer clinical nurse and said Dalton's fears are normal.

"Cancer patients experience an extreme amount of fear and anxiety from the unknown," explained McGrath, a member of First Church, Clinton. "It is a fear maybe not of death, but of what comes before death: the physical mutilation of the body, pain, financial ruin, changes of family roles and the worry about being a burden to someone else."

Dalton was referred to a radiologist. "Chemotherapy is not effective for this type of tumor," she explained, "and I learned that if the tumor was removed, it would affect my motor skills, my speaking, even my life."

"Does Kathie Dalton want to live or die?" my radiologist asked me. 'I want to live,' I told him."

A member of Walnut Street Church in Jonesboro, Dalton began to cling to that hope, expectation and support from fellow church members.

***How do you pray? I learned you have to say, 'Dear Lord, just get me through this.' You don't have to have fancy words."***

— Kathie Dalton  
cancer patient

McGrath said support is essential to cancer patients. "They need to know other people are there. Be aware of those who don't have many friends and be supportive of those people. One of the greatest fears cancer patients have is being alone, abandoned."

"Vulnerability demands vulnerability," Pettigrew pointed out. She said friends and family members can help by being "willing to resist the urge to flee, to lean into your awkwardness and to exude a staying power that says I care enough about you that I don't care if I look funny or don't have the words to say, I'm going to be with you through this process. I'm willing to pay the price and have my vulnerability exposed."

"I learned so much about prayer during that time with other church members," Dalton said. "My friends told me that...God will help you get through it."

J.D. Stake, director of the ABSC crisis

support ministry, agreed that faith and support are essential ingredients. "From the time a person is diagnosed with cancer, it is important that they have an active faith in God and support from their family, medical staff, church and friends. It seems to help as much as medical help."

*How do you pray, though?* Dalton wondered. "I learned you have to say, 'Dear Lord, just get me through this.' You don't have to have fancy words. That's what I pray every morning."

The prayers of Dalton and her friends accompanied more than five weeks of radiation therapy. "We wanted to slow down growth and we all prayed for it to slow down."

"My prayer also was to teach me how to handle it and remove it," she added. "I was doing consultation for six hospitals plus my full-time job. God might have been telling me to slow down, so I quit all but two hospitals and focused on getting well."

"God used the experience to better our family," she said. "We've learned to be a closer family through this not because momma may die, but because of love."

After the radiation therapy, her radiologist presented some startling news. "He said the tumor was getting smaller and I told him it was God. The tumor started out about the size of a quarter and it's now the size of a black-eyed pea."

She credits prayer with her survival and positive medical prognosis. "Prayer worked and was important to me," she said. "I think it was God's way to help me know I am not dead. I see people give up. When you give up, that's it."

Of course, prayer and faith aren't a magic formula to ensure that God will bring healing. But even in the face of loss, hope can be strengthened through personal faith and support from family and friends.

Don Moore, executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, lost his wife, Shirley, to cancer in November 1993. Even when facing his wife's death, Moore confirmed that "most people have a pretty firm resolve that they are going to lick it. I think that grows out of the fact that it's almost impossible for the human spirit to acknowledge that it has no hope. So we fight from a position of hope and positive expectation."

And for Kathie Dalton, that hope is producing positive results. "Prayer was my way of keeping it at," she affirmed. "My walking stick was and is prayer. You've got to be determined by God's grace you will make it through it."

# Youth baptisms plunge over past 20 years

By Sarah Zimmerman

SBC Home Mission Board

ATLANTA (BP)—While baptism statistics in the Southern Baptist Convention have been on a roller coaster ride since 1972, baptisms among teenagers have taken the greatest plunge.

A lack of adult volunteers leads the list of reasons for the decline, say leaders of youth ministries.

In 1972, Southern Baptists set a record by baptizing 445,725 people. Almost 31 percent of that total were people ages 12 to 17, according to Home Mission Board research.

Of last year's 349,073 baptisms, 23 percent were youth. Since 1972, no other age group had a greater decline in the percentage of total baptisms.

Although the percentage of youth in the nation's population has declined, baptisms have not kept pace with the number of teenagers, said Dean Finley, HMB youth evangelism specialist. In 1971, Southern Baptists baptized one of every 191 teens. In 1990, they baptized one of every 253.

One reason that Southern Baptists are baptizing fewer teens is that when a church hires a youth director, adults tend to think they no longer need to be leaders in the youth ministry, Finley said.

"Church members think, 'That's the youth minister's job.' Adults have said, 'That's not my task.' But there's a direct relationship between the number of adults involved in ministry and the number of teenagers who get saved," Finley said.

Youth ministers at churches that consistently lead the Southern Baptist Convention in youth baptisms agree that adult volunteers are vital to their success.

First Church of Springdale led the SBC in youth baptisms last year with 272.

John Cope, pastor to students, said his job is to motivate and equip youth workers. "We want adults who love kids and love God. If you want to reach 1,000 kids, you've got to have 100 workers."

Last year Cascade Hills Baptist Church in Columbus, Ga., baptized 223 teens. While that was the second highest in the convention, the church did not have a paid youth minister last year.

"You don't have to have a youth director, but you do have to have a heart for youth," said pastor Bill Purvis. "I try to be real practical and communicate in their language." This year the church hired two youth ministers, one for senior high students and another for junior high students.

First Baptist Church in Jacksonville, Fla., ranked third in youth baptisms last year with 181. Nearly 200 laypeople work

## Evangelism is key to youth activities

ATLANTA (BP)—Youth ministers at churches that lead the Southern Baptist Convention in youth baptisms say they plan lots of fun activities, but evangelism is the bottom line in all their events.

John Cope, pastor to students at First Baptist Church, Springdale, Ark., said his strategy is to concentrate on doing the basics well. He described the basics as reaching youth, caring for them and reaching them.

"Build a hub and put a little glitter on that," Cope said. Sunday School is the base of the youth ministry at First Baptist, he noted. "We try to make it real exciting, real enthusiastic. If we make them enjoy it, maybe they'll eventually love God."

"Activities, fellowships and trips are all good and we do them, but we have to keep the main thing the main thing," said Calvin Carr, high school youth educational director at First Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Fla.

While planning activities, Carr said youth leaders discuss how to share Christ during the event. "Our young people know if they bring their friends to anything, they will hear the gospel."

The constant presentation of the gospel also helps train young people to witness, Carr said.

"Youth won't come to church if it's not interesting," said Jay Singleton, junior high youth minister at Cascade Hills Baptist Church, Columbus, Ga.

"They come to fellowship and have fun with their friends. That's when

they're comfortable, and that's when you can reach them," Singleton said. "No matter how much fun we have, if we get it all built down to Jesus and the Bible."

Some of the youth ministers' ideas for creative outreach include:

■ **Wiggle Wear Wednesday.** Youth wear T-shirts with a Christian message to school. The clothing facilitates the discussion about church and Christianity.

■ **Adventure on movie theater screens** before the show starts. "Our message is the same, but we're willing to change our methods to reach this generation," said Bill Purvis, pastor of Cascade Hills Baptist Church.

■ **Host a lock-in somewhere other than the church.**

■ **Constant contact.** "We're always on the phone writing cards, going to football games, letting them know we care," Singleton said.

■ **Prayer.** Each Thursday, nearly 70 students meet at First Church, Springdale, to pray for fellow students. In three years, Sunday morning youth attendance at the church has grown from 200 to 450, Cope said.

Students pray for youth who visited Sunday School the previous week and students on the Sunday School rolls. Each week students pray for 30 or 40 youth, Cope said. Students read up the list, put it in their sock and pray for people on the list during the day as they feel the paper in their sock.

in the church's youth ministry, said Calvin Carr, high school youth educational director. About 950 youth attend the church's Sunday School.

"We have trained, excited, evangelistic youth workers," Carr said. "With a host of leadership, we can touch a larger number of youth."

"We hold our youth workers to high standards, and they rise to the occasion," Carr said. Some expectations are that workers will visit youth every week, attend Wednesday night leaders meeting, be involved in ongoing training and attend youth activities.

Volunteers commit themselves to the youth ministry, Carr said, because they share the "excitement of influencing young people who have the chance to live their entire lives for Jesus Christ."

Other reasons for the decline in youth baptisms, according to Finley and Richard

Leach, HMB associate director of church growth and evangelism, are:

■ **No strategy for reaching youth.** "A church needs to be able to articulate its plan for reaching teenagers," Leach said.

■ **Attitude that youth need to determine their own religion.** Some parents say "religion is a deeply personal decision" so they do not share their religious convictions with their children.

■ **Pastors who do not support youth ministries.** Pastors should periodically use sermon illustrations designed for teens and participate in youth activities to let youth know they are an important part of the church.

■ **Peer pressure against religion.** However, Finley said that's changing. "It's becoming okay to be a Christian and to be morally pure. Society's giving teenagers permission to take a stand for the right thing."

# Thriving on the edge

## Former Arkansas pastor faces challenges of ministry in Bulgaria

By Trennis Henderson

Editor, Arkansas Baptist

James Duke doesn't just live on the edge; he thrives on it.

It's not that he goes out of his way searching for adventure. But as an American pastor of a Baptist congregation in Bulgaria, Duke and his wife, Audrey, face constant pressures.

High on their list of challenges is the Bulgarian government's refusal to grant them one-year business visas. That limitation greatly hampers their work since they are able to stay in the country only 30 days at a time. Each month, they must leave Bulgaria and reapply for a 30-day tourist visa, never knowing whether they will be allowed back into the country.

"I don't believe we could stay here if it wasn't for so many people praying for us," Duke acknowledged. "We're fighting the fight that nobody else wants to fight because they are afraid of the consequences."

"There are hardships here but we sense the mighty hand of God again and again," he added. "I've come to peace with being where God wants me to be."

Describing the current political climate in Bulgaria, Duke explained, "There was a shuffle rather than a change in ideas when communism collapsed. The wall came down but the wall was never their problem. They have a fatal heart condition because they don't know Jesus Christ."

"The authorities are not really against me; they're against the God I serve," he noted. "Christianity is a threat to national security because Christianity, as we understand it, impacts people's lives."

"We've accused of believing the Bible too much," he explained. "In that sense, we are a threat to national security. We teach brotherly love. We teach Christian values. We teach to discern for yourself what is true and what is right."

In addition to the political hurdles, the Dukes have their share of day-to-day challenges as well. Describing the frustration of having their car stolen or the hassle of spending hours in a visa renewal



James Duke (center), pastor of International Baptist Church in Sofia, Bulgaria, browses at an outdoor fruit stand a few blocks from his apartment.

line, Duke noted, "Not only do we pray for things like a visa, we pray for hot water, we pray for our phone to work... We wouldn't make it through the day without prayer."

Despite such challenges, "I'm going to work here as long as the government will allow me and as long as God wants me to stay," Duke insisted. "I know I can do no other than what He has called me to do."

Other sources readily confirm Duke's assessment of life in Bulgaria. Roger Capps, a Southern Baptist foreign missionary who recently accepted an assignment there, describes Bulgaria as "the most closed country in Eastern Europe" in

response to religious freedom. Explaining that numerous cults and sects invaded the country following the collapse of communism, he added, "We understand the reasons for their suspicion. They don't know who we are."

formerly were missionaries to Malaysia and Singapore, now serve at the Bulgarian Baptist Bible Institute in the capital city of Sofia. They also have been unable to gain business visas.

"This is a tough place," Capps noted, "but it's obvious people are hungry for something. Pray that somehow there will be a way for us to stay."

Frank Munsey is president of the American English Academy in Sofia where Mrs. Duke teaches. Duke serves on the academy's board of directors and coordinates the school's English-as-a-Second-Language classes for Bulgarians.

Noting that the nation is in political "upheaval," Munsey said, "It is a difficult place; there's no question.... We have to trust it's going to get better."

According to Theodor Angelov, pastor of Sofia Baptist Church and president of the Bulgarian Baptist Union, "Bulgaria is in a deep economical, political, religious crisis."

"The moral, religious crisis is maybe the main crisis," he added. "The Orthodox Church and communists are trying to stop evangelical churches because they are growing. But we have decided, in spite of all difficulties, to go on."

Even Bulgarian President Zhelyu Zhelev, who recently dissolved the Bulgarian Parliament and has called for new elections later this month, was quoted in the Reuters



Daily News as saying his nation faces "economy and social crisis, corruption in state authorities and beginnings of a mafia."

Amid such chaos, Duke is prepared to pursue legal means to gain a business visa. And he is not alone. Both the Bulgarian Baptist Union and the European Baptist Convention, a network of English-speaking congregations throughout Europe, have pledged support for the Dukes' visa battle.

The basis of the legal challenge, Duke explained, is the Bulgarian constitution's guarantee of religious freedom. The loophole, he added, is the government's "official position that only Bulgarians can pastor a church."

Duke insists, however, that "if people have a right to worship, a church should have the right to call and hire its own pastor."

Emphasizing the need to "allow an English-speaking church for the English-speaking community," he said, "If they make me leave, it's going to have to be for religious reasons. I want to keep the fight where the fight belongs."

"There's a good chance along the way I may be arrested or even beaten over this," Duke mused. "I don't like to talk about it or dwell on it but it's reality. We're praying that the prayers of the saints will keep us out of harm but what can I do if this is what God has called us to do?"

At first glance, Duke appears an unlikely candidate to be sitting in a communist-built apartment in the heart of Sofia, Bulgaria, outlining a legal battle that may reach the Bulgarian Supreme Court or even the European High Court.

A high school dropout who later earned a seminary degree, Duke was the pastor of small congregations in rural Arkansas and

Kansas before sensing God's call to become a church planter in Europe. But despite the rigors of life in an East European city of 1.5 million people, Duke's ministry efforts have flourished.

International Baptist Church was established in Sofia about a year before the Dukes arrived on the field from Kansas. "When we got here, the church was running in the low 20s," Duke said. "A year and a half later, we're averaging in the low 70s."

The congregation currently meets in Sofia's World Trade Center, a modern office complex where organizations from dozens of countries cultivate international trade. Duke said the congregation, which includes students, businessmen, missionaries and Bulgarian nationals, has attracted worshippers from as many as 15 different countries.

Second Church in Little Rock recently made a commitment to partner with the Sofia congregation as part of Arkansas Baptists' three-year partnership with the European Baptist Convention.

"God is blessing us in so many ways," Duke affirmed.

"The church is growing; people's lives are being impacted....It's a unique situation here. If the persecution were not so strong, I don't believe the people would stick together so good."



Street musicians perform in a park in Sofia, Bulgaria.

James Murphy, a Peace Corps volunteer who is coordinating trade and investment efforts on behalf of the American Business Incubator, began attending International Baptist Church earlier this year. He said the English-language congregation "is a blessing that can't be counted in dollars. It's been really great. I'm very excited about it."

Assessing the ministry efforts of his pastor, Murphy added, "Pastor Duke has a tough row to hoe. I greatly admire him for that. Not many people would take the kind of abuse you have to take to do a job like that."

Why would anyone stay amid such challenging conditions? For Duke, the answer is clear. "God has only one will—that mankind be saved," he declared. "I know this is what God has called me to do and He is there to empower me and enable me to stand in the gap....As long as the truth gets out, I can live with the consequences."

*James Duke (right) visits with James Murphy, an American businessman who attends International Baptist Church in Sofia, Bulgaria.*



## Church news



## ARKANSAS ALL OVER

By MILLIE GILL

**Fayetteville First Church** held a reception Nov. 13 to honor pastor Jere Mitchell and his wife, Royce Ann, in recognition of his 15th anniversary of ministry to the congregation. Mitchell currently is president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Executive Board.

**Crosspoint Church** in North Little Rock recently held a leadership banquet for all volunteers. Bill Sult and Jim Kenrick were recipients of Volunteer of the Year awards and Vernon Abbott was presented the Abbott Lifetime Service Award which has been named in his honor. Also receiving special recognition was B.R. Morgan who has retired from the position of church clerk after serving for 42 consecutive years. Presentations were made by pastor Michael Seabaugh.

**Ashley County Association** recently recognized Ricky Lee as vocational pastor of the year and Jimmie Lewis as bivocational pastor of the year. Lee began serving as pastor of Mount Olive Church in Crossett in March of 1991 and has served the association as moderator, director of evangelism, co-organized a mission trip to Iowa and currently chairs the associational building committee. He also serves on the Arkansas Baptist State Convention's long-range planning committee. He and his wife, Vickie, have two children, Stephen and Bryan. Lewis is pastor of South Main Church in Crossett, the newest Southern Baptist church in the association. He currently serves on the associational finance and building committees and was moderator in 1991-92. He is a full-time employee of Georgia-Pacific Paper Division. He and his wife, Joan, have three children, Barbie Harville and Steve Lewis of Crossett and Chuck Lewis of Little Rock. Director of missions Billy Kite presented each pastor with \$200 and a plaque.

**Grandview Church** near Berryville held a noteburning service Nov. 27 with Jack Ramsey, director of church extension for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, as guest speaker. The program also included a recognition service.

**Fellowship Church**, located on Highway 5 west of Cabot, which was organized as a church Oct. 16, is averaging 43 in attendance with a high attendance of 70. The new work has had 14 professions of faith and rededications. The congregation currently is meeting in the Cabot Fitness Center, but has just purchased 10 acres on which a temporary mobile chapel will be placed prior to a building program. The Arkansas Baptist State Convention's

missions department is providing the chapel under the supervision of Jack Ramsey, church extension director. Larry James, formerly associate pastor of Crystal Valley Church in North Little Rock, is pastor.

## Staff changes

**William D. Harris** is the new pastor of First Church in Gravel Ridge, coming there from Antioch Church at Royal where he had served since 1985. He previously was pastor of Morton Church at McCrory and Shady Grove Church in Kennett, Mo. In addition, he served as associate pastor of First Church in Bogata, Texas, where he was ordained to the gospel ministry. Harris is a graduate of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Phoebe, have four children, Joy, Marie, David and Ryan.

**Roland Reitz** is serving as pastor of First Church in Midland. He is a graduate of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Reitz and his wife, Pattie, moved to Midland from Gentry, Mo.

**Jimmy Vinson** began serving Nov. 20 as pastor of Gamaliet Church, a mission of Eastside Church of Mountain Home. He previously was at Campbell Station Church in Diaz. A graduate of Williams Baptist College, he was ordained to the gospel ministry by Knobel Church. Vinson, a bivocational pastor, has a managerial position with Wal Mart in Flippin. He and his wife, Mary Alice, have six adult children and five grandchildren.

**Ken Shaddox** began serving Dec. 4 as pastor of First Church in Fordyce, going there from Grace Church in Camden where he has been pastor for six years. He previously was associate staff pastoral intern for Travis Avenue Church in Fort Worth, Texas, and pastor of Chidester Church. Shaddox, a member of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* board of directors, is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Shaddox is married to the former Judy Waigant, also a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University. They have one daughter, Laura Grace.

**Norman Lewis** is retiring Dec. 23 as director of missions for Black River Baptist Association, following more than six years of service. He and his wife, Pauline, previously served as Southern Baptist home missionaries in Nevada. In addition, Lewis has served as director of missions for Ashley County Association and as a staff member of churches throughout Arkansas. Following retirement, Lewis will be available as a conference leader, for revivals, as an interim pastor or for pulpit supply. The couple will reside at 114 Cherry in Sherwood; phone 834-5181.

**John Hough** joined the staff of First Church in Crossett Dec. 1 as minister of education, coming there from Second Church in Hot Springs where he also was minister of education. He previously served as associate pastor of education at Beech Street First Church in Texarkana and as minister of adults and education at First Church in Garland, Texas. Hough is a graduate of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Lynn, have two children, Chris and Nathan.

## Ordinations

**Morrilton First Church** ordained Jerry Ashby, Bill Hubbard, Nathan Jordan, Ronnie Mobley, Bill Thomas and Mark Turpin to the deacon ministry Dec. 4.

**Emmanuel Church** in Conway ordained pastor James Breeden to the gospel ministry Nov. 6.

## Obituaries

**P.C. "Pete" Church** of Sherwood died Dec. 4 at age 66. A retired Baptist minister, he was a member of Remount Church in North Little Rock where he taught the senior men's Bible class. He previously served as pastor of churches in Arkansas and Kentucky. Survivors are his wife, Beth Moore Church; one son, Tim Church of Conway; one daughter, Janet Gaddis of Troy, Ala.; three sisters; a brother; and two grandchildren. Memorials may be made to Remount Church or Ouachita Baptist University.

**Hal Wendell Gallop Jr.** of Paragould died Nov. 30 at age 62. He was a retired Baptist minister and teacher, having served churches in Greene County Association. Survivors are his wife, June Gallop; a son, Hal Bradley Gallop; and his parents, Rev. and Mrs. Hal W. Gallop Sr.

# Conference highlights 'Here's Hope' theme

The 1995 Arkansas Baptist Evangelism Conference will highlight the national "Here's Hope" evangelism emphasis. The conference, to be held Jan. 30-31 at Park Hill Church in North Little Rock, is a joint meeting held with three National Baptist conventions and the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

"This is a critical conference," said ABCS evangelism director Clarence Shell, "because of the motivation for Here's Hope for all four conventions."

Shell said that 1995 "is the first time that the four conventions have held back-to-back joint conferences. They are usually once every five years."

He said that Arkansas is the "only state convention in the Southern Baptist Convention that has involved the National Baptist Convention in Here's Hope from the beginning. I hope this speaks to Arkansans that there is cooperation between white and black Baptists in the state."

Shell said the conference will not serve as Here's Hope instruction, but as a "motivating factor."

"The basic Here's Hope process has been given to every pastor in the state," he explained. "This process should have already been developed in local churches by this time. The Evangelism Conference will be the motivating factor for the Spirit of God to use for Here's Hope."



Blackaby



Dunn



Hill



Jones



Olford



Watson

Emphasizing the need for inspiration in the conference, he said that "all of our plans and programs are useless unless God breathes His dynamic power upon men. The only hope for real spiritual awakening rests in the hands and heart of God."

Highlighting the overall theme of "Here's Hope: Share Jesus Now," Shell said each of the five conference sessions will develop various aspects of the Here's Hope emphasis. "We wanted to develop and build the theme not only with each session but each message," he explained. "There's nothing in the conference that is

accidental." The sessions will emphasize salvation, spiritual awakening, spiritual strength of churches, families and the nation.

Speakers from both the National Baptist and Southern Baptist conventions will be featured. Highlighting salvation in the Monday afternoon session will be: Junior Hill, an evangelist from Hartselle, Ala.; E. Edward Jones, president of the NBC in Shreveport, La.; Ronnie Rogers, pastor of Lakeside Church in Hot Springs and ABCS president; and Ron Dunn, an evangelist from Irving, Texas.

Emphasizing spiritual awakening in what Shell called "a special session I hope that many laypeople can attend," the Monday evening session will feature: Stephen Olford, founder of

Encounter Ministries of Memphis, Tenn.; Maurice Watson, pastor of Salem Baptist Church in Omaha, Neb.; and Henry Blackaby, director of prayer and spiritual awakening for the Home Mission Board.

Speaking on the spiritual strength of churches Tuesday morning will be: Olford; Robert Jenkins, pastor of Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church in North Little Rock; J.W. Hutchens, director of the HMB evangelism and church growth department; Roy Edgemont, director of the discipleship and family development division of the Baptist Sunday School Board; and Claude Thomas, pastor of First Baptist Church in Buless, Texas.

The Tuesday afternoon session will highlight the family and feature Dunn; Gerald Parker, pastor of Pilgrim's Progress Baptist Church in North Little Rock; A.J. Cole, bivocational pastor of Salem Church in Mena; and Watson.

The stability of the nation will be the focus during the Tuesday evening session and will feature messages by Hutchens, Thomas and Jones.

Rob Hewell, director of the ABCS church music ministries department, will lead music during the conference and Dick Baker, minister of music at-large for Prestonwood Baptist Church in Dallas, will deliver special music throughout the conference.

For additional information, contact Shell at the ABCS evangelism department; phone 376-4791, ext. 5132.

## Bivocational ministers dinner set for Jan. 31

Arkansas Baptists' fourth annual Bivocational and Smaller Membership Churches' Ministers and Wives Fellowship dinner will be held Jan. 31 in the Gold Room of Park Hill Church in North Little Rock. The dinner, which begins at 5:30 p.m., will be held in conjunction with the Arkansas Baptist Evangelism Conference Jan. 30-31 at Park Hill.

"As always, our emphasis is on fellowship, making new friends and hearing from our president, Jerry Ray," said L.B. Jordan, director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention's Church Leadership Support department.

Ray, pastor of Oak Grove First Church in Austin and a mechanical engineer,

said the dinner is "for fellowship more than anything else. Bivocational staff are segregated from (full-time staff), to some extent, and they can't participate because of their secular jobs.

"We have unique circumstances, so it is good to get together and get to know one another," Ray said. He added that about half of the Southern Baptist pastors in Arkansas are bivocational.

The Fellowship was formed four years ago, Jordan noted. He said the dinner is an annual opportunity for bivocational and smaller-membership church ministers to meet together.

For additional information, contact Jordan at 376-4791, ext. 5148.



## Missionaries request prayer for Liberia

MONROVIA, LIBERIA (BP)—An urgent call to prayer for the battered and bloody nation of Liberia has been issued by Southern Baptist missionaries there.

Peace talks between the west African country's warring factions have been suspended indefinitely, according to a recent report from the British Broadcasting Corp. The collapse of negotiations dashes slim hopes for peace and raises the specter of intensified fighting in the country, which has been ravaged by civil war since 1989.

"This is a disappointing and ominous development," said Bradley Brown, one of 11 Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board missionaries still assigned to Liberia.

"The mood here is very somber. Everybody hoped the sides would hammer out a peace agreement because we knew this was the end of the road. Now we are doing the best we can day by day and waiting on the next word."

In 1990, 73 Southern Baptist missionaries were assigned to Liberia, and 248 churches reported 1,184 baptisms. Four years of civil war have driven many pastors and missionaries from the country, however. Currently only 11 Southern Baptist missionaries are assigned to the country, and the number of Baptist churches has been reduced to 226.

Yet suffering has opened people's hearts to the gospel, said Felix Greer, a missionary to Liberia currently on furlough in Mississippi. He said Liberian Baptists reported 1,750 baptisms over the past year, an increase of almost 50 percent over pre-civil war numbers.

While intensified fighting could jeopardize missionaries in the country, prayers should focus on Liberia's needs, Brown said.

"It would be a mistake to put missionaries above the human suffering of Liberians, whose last, best hope for peace has been dashed," he said. "Pray for us that we will glorify God in our lives and service as we face a very uncertain future."

## Naylor earns service award in India

FORT WORTH, TX (BP)—Rebekah Naylor recently received a community service award from the downtown Rotary Club of Bangalore, India. As the lone resident Southern Baptist missionary in a nation of over 900 million people, she is a surgeon, hospital administrator, fund-raiser, architect, contractor and counselor for the Bangalore Baptist Hospital in India.

The president of the downtown Rotary Club recently visited Naylor at the hospital to inform her she was to be the community service award recipient. "Any American doctor who has been serving in India for 20 years needs to receive a lot of commendation," he said.

The 143-bed Bangalore Baptist Hospital treats almost 7,000 inpatients and 70,000 outpatients annually. Almost 2,000 operations are performed and 1,200 babies are delivered every year.

Almost single-handedly, Naylor raised funds for a \$400,000 private patient wing and the expansion of the pharmacy at Bangalore Baptist Hospital. Her dream of a nursing school facility is close to becoming reality as the hospital nears a fund-raising goal of over \$250,000.

## Car ministry assists 600th missionary

HOUSTON (BP)—A Southern Baptist group organized to meet a pressing transportation need of furloughing missionaries has assisted its 600th family.

The Macedonian Call Foundation was organized in 1979 to provide automobiles for Southern Baptist foreign missionaries on furlough, according to one of the group's founders, Harvey Kneisel of Houston. Missionary Don Phelps became the group's

600th beneficiary when he recently accepted the keys to a 1981 Oldsmobile 98.

"We thank the Lord for Macedonian Call," said Phelps, who serves with his wife, Linda, and four daughters as a church planter in the Philippines. "On a short-term basis these cars meet a vital need for furloughing missionaries."

The group receives cars, repairs them and licenses them before turning them over to missionaries, who are responsible for insuring and maintaining them, said Kneisel, formerly a Southern Baptist missionary in Guyana and India. Missionaries return the cars to the group when they go back to their fields of service. Serviceable cars are reassigned to other furloughing missionaries.

Macedonian Call Foundation serves a five-state area—Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas—Kneisel said. A Baptist Men's group in Georgia operates a similar project under the same name. Kneisel hopes other groups will adopt the idea.

## World Changers targets senior adults in '95

MEMPHIS, TN (BP)—Since its beginning in 1990, World Changers has provided missions experiences for junior and senior high youth. Painting, roofing and minor renovation have been the framework for providing a "hands on" approach to missions education through the program sponsored by the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission.

In 1995, World Changers also will target older volunteers. During the week of April 22-29, a national work project for senior adults will be held in Savannah, Ga. The week will include work similar to that of youth projects during the day and worship services in the evenings.

"There's a job for everyone," said Andy Morris, World Changers director. "If they can lift a paint brush, clean a kitchen or hammer a nail, we can put them to work."

Adults 55 and older are welcome to register individually or by group. For more information, contact World Changers, 1548 Poplar Ave., Memphis, TN 38104; phone 901-272-2461.

## Pastor held for trying to convert Muslims

CAIRO, EGYPT (BP)—Assemblies of God pastor William Gayyid is being held in prison, accused of trying to convert Muslims to the Christian faith, according to church leaders in the Middle East.

Gayyid was arrested in late November as he prayed with three Muslim women who had come for prayer after a morning worship service at his church in the Wiley area of greater Cairo. Police at first released him after the Muslim women told police he was a godly man who had not tried to convert them. But they re-arrested him about half an hour later.

Gayyid is being held in Tora Prison in Cairo, where torture, starvation and other rough treatment reportedly are common. Gayyid's lawyer, who visited him last week, told church leaders that Gayyid's condition is "not good," but provided no further details.

Assemblies of God leaders in the United States, England and Sweden, and as far away as Australia and Korea, have called for Christians around the world to pray for Gayyid. "In the end it will be prayer as much as any legal maneuvering, that gets him out," said one leader.

Egyptian laws against sedition allow authorities to arrest any person for any reason and hold him for 45 days without any outside communication, according to Assemblies of God leaders in Cyprus. The detention period may be automatically renewed for another 45 days. During this three-month period, charges do not have to be filed nor anyone informed of the prisoner's whereabouts.

# Volunteers initiate Haiti feeding project

By Mary E. Speidel  
SBC Foreign Mission Board

PORT-AU-PRINCE, HAITI (BP)—They worked from dawn to dusk inside a walled-in compound, but that didn't insulate Southern Baptist volunteers from Haiti's human suffering.

"If you're sensitive at all you can see the desperation," said David Lyons, a volunteer from Barbourville, Ky. "I don't think Webster has a word that can really describe it. The poverty here is just astounding."

Lyons, dressed in blue coveralls, had just finished a sweaty day installing electrical wiring at the Baptist Convention of Haiti annex, in Port-au-Prince, Haiti's capital.

He and other volunteers spent 10 days helping remodel the building, the base of operations for a Southern Baptist feeding project. The project is part of a Haiti relief effort sponsored by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board and Brotherhood Commission. About 200 volunteers are expected to be involved before it's over.

The first of those volunteers — from Kentucky, North Carolina and Texas — built bunks and tables for future volunteers who will live at the convention annex during the project. They also screened windows, roofed a patio, put in floors, made a gate, rewired rooms and built a concrete wall to keep out looters.

Their labors don't look much like hunger relief work, but will play a big role in feeding hungry Haitians.

"Without our hands, the other hands couldn't work later," said Lyons, retired director of missions for Kentucky's Lynn Camp and North Concord associations.

"I've done a lot of hard work before, but I've never worked this hard in any 10 days in my life," confessed volunteer Harold Moore, 68, a retired steel worker from Ashland, Ky.

But he's not complaining. "I feel like God has given me these talents and if I don't use them, I'm not doing what the Bible says," he said.

Moore, like most of the men on the team, is a veteran of disaster relief work through his state Baptist convention's Brotherhood department. Besides that background, some of the team members have volunteered overseas through the Foreign Mission Board.

Milton Schmidt, the team's cook, has done both. He's a regular disaster relief volunteer with Texas Baptist Men, and recently he cooked for medical volunteers who cared for Rwandan refugees in Goma, Zaire.

In projects like these, "you really have



Mickey Caison (second from right), disaster relief director for the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission, visits with U.S. military personnel assessing damage in Haiti following Tropical Storm Gordon. Caison was already in Haiti leading the first team of Southern Baptist volunteers preparing for a feeding project there.

to be creative to get the job done," said Schmidt. "The missionaries say you have to be 'flexible' but that doesn't really cover it. You have to be more than that. You have to be bendable — pliable."

Mickey Caison prefers the term "fluid." "You have to be able to flow from one situation into another," explained Caison, national disaster relief director for the Brotherhood Commission.

Another group of volunteers learned that principle quickly when they met Caison in Port-au-Prince.

They thought they'd be packaging and distributing food to several thousand Haitian families through Haitian Baptist churches. But after arriving, they found they were needed immediately to install a water purification unit, build more tables and patch electrical wiring. The earlier construction team didn't complete all they'd planned because of unexpected delays — such as flooding caused when Tropical Storm Gordon hit Haiti Nov. 13.

But the newly arrived volunteers — from

Kentucky, California, Colorado, Missouri, Alabama and Georgia — had the right skills to hit the ground running.

"It seems like it's always that way in disaster relief work — when there's something that needs to be done, there's somebody there who can do it," said volunteer Jerry Spencer, a firefighter from Robards, Ky.

Spencer, Brotherhood director for Kentucky's Green Valley Association, has done relief work after several U.S. disasters. But the Haiti assignment was his first overseas relief experience.

"The last place I wanted to come was Haiti," said Spencer, who used savings to fund the trip. "But God said, 'Jerry, I want you to go.' If I ever received a personal call from the Lord, it was for this."

Other volunteers echoed his testimony. "It's unreal how things have fallen together and worked out," said Benny Rowe, a retired high school principal from Jasper, Ala. "Man has had very little to do with it. God has gotten all of us into this place at this particular time for His cause."

Rowe spent most of his time cooking meals for fellow volunteers. He and his colleagues didn't see much of Haiti outside the walls of the annex building. But what they glimpsed made a lasting impression.

"I really thought I had prepared myself for what I would see in terms of human misery," Rowe said, "but it's much worse than I ever imagined."

## Reader response

Disaster relief volunteers are needed immediately to serve on teams going to Haiti this month and early next year.

Interested individuals may call the Brotherhood Commission toll-free at 1-800-280-1891.

## Ouachita Baptist University

Jolley honored — Freddie Jolley, assistant professor of administrative services in the Frank D. Hickingbotham school of business at Ouachita, has been named as the Arkansas Business Education Association (ABEA) Post Secondary Business Educator of the Year.

The award for "outstanding and dedicated service" was presented at the ABEA luncheon held recently during the annual meeting of the Arkansas Education Association in Little Rock.

**OBU play cast honored** — Members of the OBU department of theatre arts recently were honored during the annual American College Theatre Festival.

Ouachita's performance of the Larry Shue play, "The Foreigner," earned the cast the Directors' Choice Award and the Festival Critics' Ensemble Award. The Excellence in Acting Award was earned by Mary Anne Haraway, a senior communications/theatre arts major from Hot Springs.

## Missionary notes

**Charles and Mary Barham**, missionaries to Japan, are on the field (address: 3-3-13 Obanoyama, Nada-ku, Kobe 657, Japan). He was born in Prescott. She is the former Mary Kveton of Texas. They began serving with the Foreign Mission Board in 1985.

**Darrel and Judy Garner**, missionaries to Malawi, are on the field (address: P.O. Box 224, Balaka, Malawi). He lived in Huntsville while growing up. The former Judy Brown, she was born in Independence Country and lived in Walnut Ridge and Fayetteville. They were appointed in 1969.

**Ouachita Sounds Concert** — The Ouachita Sounds, a select mixed voice show choir at OBU, will take center stage at OBU's Jones Performing Arts Center on Jan. 14 at 7:30 p.m. for their fourth annual winter concert. The Sounds are under the direction of Mary Shambarger, professor of music, and Sim Flora, assistant professor of music.

Reserve seat tickets for the concert will go on sale Jan. 6. Individuals interested in additional information may contact the School of Music office at Ouachita Baptist University, P.O. Box 3771, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001; phone 245-5129.

**Scholarship deadline** — New students planning to attend Ouachita during the 1995-96 academic year have until Feb. 15 to submit academic scholarship application forms, according to Susan Hurst, director of student financial aid. Individuals should contact Hurst at OBU, P.O. Box 3774, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001; phone 245-5570.

partnership agreement Dec. 5 to allow students holding an associate degree from Black River to transfer smoothly into WBC to complete their bachelor's degrees.

Williams president Gary Huckabaysaid the agreement "is a continuation of our historical agreement to reach out to Randolph County and Black River Technical College."

**Williams writes history** — *Rainbows Come When It Rains* is a new book by H.E. Williams, founder of Williams Baptist College. The book is an autobiographical account of how the school began as Southern Baptist College in 1941, and how it has developed in the years since.

Williams, president emeritus of Williams, served as president until 1973. The college's name was changed from Southern to Williams Baptist College in his honor in 1991.

The book is available to anyone who makes a donation of \$10 or more to the Williams Endowed International Student Fund, which provides scholarships for foreign students to attend WBC. Books can be ordered by mailing donations to: Williams Baptist College, P.O. Box 3662, Walnut Ridge, AR 72476-3662. One dollar should be included for shipping.

## Williams Baptist College

**WBC, Black River sign agreement** — Leaders of Williams Baptist College and Black River Technical College signed a



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# Convention messengers address diverse topics

In addition to state convention news published in the Dec. 1 issue of the Newsmagazine, the following reports highlight major business items from additional state convention annual meetings held throughout the nation.

■ **ALABAMA:** Alabama Baptist messengers asked Samford University to reconsider the recent decision taking away the right of the Alabama Baptist State Convention to elect the Birmingham school's trustees but chose—at least for now—to make their case by a referendum and not force.

A record 3,135 messengers delivered a mild rebuke to Samford trustees, who changed their charter in September to allow them to elect members to the university's governing board. Historically, the state convention has elected trustees to oversee Samford.

Messengers approved four recommendations of a Samford study committee appointed last month by state convention president Dewey Corder, brushing aside efforts to take Samford to court or withhold \$4 million in state convention funding.

The recommendation included a "request" that Samford trustees reconsider their Sept. 13 action. It also asked the convention to act on a slate of nominees to Samford's board, "affirming the legal right of the convention to do so."

Citing historical precedent, the committee then asked the convention to continue funding Samford until "final disposition" of the dispute by vote of the convention. Finally, the proposal authorized the study committee to seek "a satisfactory resolution" of the issue, subject to state convention approval.

Just before the convention meeting, however, the State Board of Missions adopted a legal agreement with Samford's trustees stating that the pledge not to sue immediately does not mean the convention waives its right to do so in the future.

■ **CALIFORNIA:** California Baptists honored their retiring executive director and welcomed his successor during the California Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting. In other action, messengers turned back a challenge against seating messengers from a church with a woman pastor.

C.B. Hogue, executive director-treasurer since 1985, was honored for his decade of service. Hogue will retire as CSBC executive Feb. 28, 1995, at age 67.

Fermin Whittaker was elected Nov. 3 to succeed Hogue beginning Feb. 1, 1995. Whittaker, a former California pastor and language missions worker, currently is a regional coordinator at the Home Mission Board.

For the second year in a row, messengers were asked not to seat messengers from a San Francisco church whose pastor is a woman. The challenge had been expected after controversy at the 1993 convention when messengers voted 213-204 not to seat messengers from 19th Avenue Baptist Church in San Francisco.

Citing the priesthood of the believer and the autonomy of the local church, messengers voted 357-340 in favor of seating the church's messengers.

Among four resolutions messengers approved was one declaring that the "California Southern Baptist Convention does not endorse women as senior pastors." It was approved by a vote of 266-125 following lengthy debate.

■ **FLORIDA:** The Florida Baptist State Convention was characterized by a spirit of cooperation, with little debate among the 1,668 messengers.

Tropical Storm Gordon put a damper on attendance at the convention's final session. Gordon spawned tornadoes which destroyed 500 mobile homes along Florida's east coast, claiming at least three lives. By Wednesday morning fewer than 300 messengers and visitors braved the 40 mph winds and torrential

rains to attend the final session of the Florida convention.

Messengers adopted a Cooperative Program basic budget of \$24,064,477, which is \$421,351 less than the 1994 budget. The portion going to Southern Baptist Convention causes was reduced from 42.2 percent to 41 percent. A second proposal on a three-year budget plan, which would reduce the SBC Cooperative Program allocation to 40 percent beginning in 1996, passed without comment.

■ **LOUISIANA:** Messengers to the Louisiana Baptist Convention upheld their plan in re-electing their denominational president while making history by electing their first-ever black officer.

Messengers granted a second term to president Mark Sutton without opposition. In making history, they elected Fred Luter of New Orleans as second vice president, also without opposition, making him the first black officer in state convention history. Luter is pastor of Franklin Avenue Baptist Church, New Orleans.

Among resolutions passed by messengers, one urged Louisiana political leaders to uphold and defend existing state laws regulating and restricting abortions and to work for passage of stronger laws related to the practice. Another resolution opposed the practice of using fetal tissue from aborted babies for medical research.

■ **MICHIGAN:** Messengers to the Baptist State Convention of Michigan annual meeting elected Michael Collins as the convention's new executive director. Collins, church services and business support director of the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio, will succeed Robert B. Wilson, effective Jan. 1, 1995. Wilson is retiring after 24 years as executive director.

Other business included the adoption of the 1995 budget. The total amount of the Cooperative Program portion of the budget is \$1,276,001, increasing to 32 percent the amount sent to world missions, reflecting a one-half percent increase.

■ **SOUTH CAROLINA:** Messengers to the 174th annual meeting of the South Carolina Baptist Convention approved changes in the convention constitution and bylaws that clarify relationships with convention agencies and institutions. Messengers also extended a missions partnership with Kenya through 1996.

Executive director B. Carlisle Driggers said changes occurring through the new structure include clarification of the convention's legal status, protection of convention messengers from liability for convention acts and debts, and clarification of the legal relationship between the convention and its seven institutions.

■ **TENNESSEE:** Messengers approved new missions partnerships and closed their 120th annual session with a dramatic missions/evangelism program. Despite a low messenger registration of 1,359, the Wednesday night missions program attracted an estimated 4,500 people.

The convention concludes a three-year partnership with Chile Dec. 31. On Jan. 1, three-year missions agreements begin with Poland and the four western provinces of Canada, and the current 15-year partnership with Michigan is renewed.

■ **UTAH-IDAHO:** Utah-Idaho Southern Baptists heard a farewell message from the convention's executive director and adopted a total budget about \$64,000 less than the previous year during their 1994 annual meeting.

The first session opened with the announcement of Clyde Billingsley's resignation as executive director. He has accepted a similar position with the Montana Baptist Fellowship. Jim Harding, director of religious education for Utah-Idaho, has been named interim executive.

# Broadman rejects book, cites doctrinal concerns

NASHVILLE, TN (BP/ABF)—A textbook on principles of biblical interpretation will not be published by the Baptist Sunday School Board's Broadman & Holman Publishers because the manuscript did not meet doctrinal guidelines of the Baptist Faith and Message, according to Charles Wilson, vice president for trade publishing.

*Hermeneutics and Theology: A Scriptural Approach* by Charles J. Scalise was scheduled for release in August 1995. Scalise, associate professor of church history at the Seattle extension center of Fuller Theological Seminary, formerly taught at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

The Baptist Faith and Message, a doctrinal statement adopted by Southern Baptist Convention messengers in 1963, is the editorial standard for all materials published by the board.

"When we contract with an author, we enter that relationship fully expecting to publish a book," Wilson said. "However, the publisher has the right to make a decision that a book should not be published. In this instance, we have exercised that right."

"While it is unusual for us not to go forward with a publishing project, it is not unprecedented," he added.

Scalise, in a prepared statement, said, "By breaking its contract to publish this book, Broadman & Holman Publishers has demonstrated that it is an untrustworthy partner in the ministry of serious evangelical Christian publishing."

Scalise said after contracting with Broadman & Holman in late 1992, he submitted the final chapters of the manuscript in July.

Wilson noted that, after receiving the final chapters, editorial work was completed and the conclusion reached in November that the manuscript would not be published.

John Landers, editor of academic books for the Sunday School Board, said after reading the full manuscript, "I simply concluded it was not in the parameters of the Baptist Faith and Message." Asked how the book violates the Baptist Faith and Message, Landers responded it was "more the tone of the book than any particular sentence, I think."

## 'Conservative perspective'

Scalise defended the book as "an attempt from a committed conservative evangelical perspective to offer an introduction to hermeneutics and theology to Baptists and other evangelical Christians."

A catalog containing information about the book was distributed earlier in the fall, a development Wilson called "unfortunate, but a necessary and routine process in the book publishing world."

"In the process of developing promotion pieces, including the catalog, we regularly include information about books that will be released in the next few months as well as those already available," he said.

In the catalog, the book is described as a "textbook for college and seminary courses" that "also makes an excellent resource for lay study groups and self-guided personal study."

"Before the Enlightenment," the catalog states, "Christian disagreements...were tempered by a core of agreement on foundational issues regarding the historical accuracy of Scripture. With the advent of modernity, however, even these foundational issues came into dispute as Christians began to question traditional definitions of history and debate the relationship between history and theology."

"In this volume, Charles Scalise introduces the hermeneutical problem that has divided Christians for two centuries and presents a canonical way for thinking Christians to reflect on the doctrine of God," the catalog continues.

Wilson said all rights to the manuscript now belong to Scalise and he is free to seek another publisher.

## Classifieds

**Accepting resumes** — For a pastor. Send to Search Committee, First Baptist Church, PO Box 328, Booneville, AR 72927.

**Church pianist needed** — Send resume to First Baptist Church, 120 Millwood Circle, Maumelle 72113 or call 851-3547.

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

**Accepting resumes** — For pastor. Send to Pastor Search Committee, FBC, 201 W. 7th, Smackover, AR 71762 by Dec. 31.

**Minister to Christian education and administration** — First Baptist Church, DeQueen, is seeking resumes for the position of minister to Christian education and administration. Resumes may be sent to: Search Committee, FBC 321 West Gilson, DeQueen, AR 71832.

**For sale** — 1982 Ford van, 15-passenger, good condition. FBC, Farmington. 267-3159, 8-11 a.m. only.

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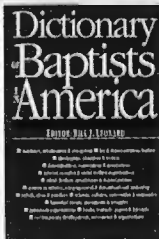
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## National CP gifts dip in November; up for year

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program gifts for November fell 3.83 percent below that month a year ago, according to Morris H. Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee. However, for the fiscal year-to-date, receipts were still above the previous year 1.85 percent.

For November 1994, receipts totaled \$10,571,736 compared to November 1993 of \$10,992,852 or a decrease of \$421,116. For the two months of the 1994-95 SBC fiscal year, the totals were \$22,276,134 for this year compared to \$21,872,550 last year which is an increase of \$403,583.

Designated gifts for the month surpassed the month for the previous year: \$1,792,440 compared to \$1,764,230 for a 1.6 percent increase. For the fiscal year-to-date, designated giving is up 14.04 percent over last year: \$3,758,661 compared to \$3,296,056.

However, the November CP figure fell below the required SBC program allocation budget monthly total of \$11,378,310 by almost 8 percent. For the year-to-date budget, the two months cumulative receipts are slightly more than 2 percent below the budget, or \$480,487 under.

The national CP total includes receipts from individuals, churches, state conventions and fellowships for distribution according to the 1994-95 program allocation budgets as well as restricted funds received from state conventions which identify them as Cooperative Program.

The 1995 Cooperative Program

challenge goal for the 150th anniversary of the Southern Baptist Convention is \$150 million which requires average monthly CP receipts of \$12.5 million.

## BSSB to delay changing quarterly release dates

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—The Baptist Sunday School Board has delayed plans to change the quarterly release dates for its Sunday School, Discipleship Training and church music dated curriculum.

The board had planned in September 1995 to switch to a seasonal release cycle: fall, September-November; winter, December-February; spring, March-May; and summer, June-August. However, due to several business-related factors, the change has been delayed, at least until the 1996-97 fiscal year.

Gene Mims, vice president of the board's church growth group, said delaying the change "is the right thing to do for our customers and the Sunday School Board." Instituting the change in fiscal year 1995-96, he said, could place a financial strain on the BSSB at a time when the agency is taking steps to improve its financial performance.

"We don't want to do too much too soon," Mims explained. "We invested heavily in major changes and improvements in our materials last year and they are being well-received by churches. But while we are succeeding in making our products more relevant by reducing production time, we've realized the need for a more efficient distribution system to get those materials into the hands of

our customers in a timely manner. We anticipate having such a system in place by fiscal year 1996-97."

Mims said a final decision about when the BSSB will change its release dates will be made early next year.

In a related move, the BSSB also has delayed changing the name of the Convention Uniform Series Sunday School curriculum to Family Bible Series. That change also had been set for September 1995 but now will be rescheduled.

## Texas editor Presnall Wood sets retirement

DALLAS (BP)—Presnall Wood, editor of the *Texas Baptist Standard* since July 1977, announced to the paper's board of directors Dec. 2 that he will retire Dec. 31, 1995.

"At the close of 1995 I will be only 16 months away from age 65, which the policy manual of the *Standard* says is the age of normal retirement. For many years I have felt age 63 should be the time for my retirement. It is transition time in Baptist life, and it is time for transition at the *Baptist Standard*."

Wood was pastor of Park Place Baptist Church, Houston, and a member of the board of directors of the *Standard* when he was elected editor, succeeding John J. Hurt, who had been editor from 1966-77. Wood's 17-year tenure is the longest of any *Standard* editor.

W. H. "Bill" Brian Jr. of Amarillo, chairman of the *Standard* directors, said he would appoint an editor search committee before the end of 1994 to begin work in early 1995.

The *Standard*, with 250,000 subscribers, is the largest of the 39 state Baptist papers. In addition to the *Standard*, other state Baptist papers seeking new editors include Alabama, Florida and Maryland/Delaware.

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A Dynamic 3-Day Conference Featuring Some of America's Best Preachers and Musicians—Presented by Bailey Smith Ministries

## Convention Uniform

### *The cradle and the cross*

By Ed Saucier, pastor, Grand Avenue Church, Fort Smith

Basic passage: Matthew 2

Focal passage: Matthew 2:1-12

Central truth: The timelessness and the changelessness of the Christmas message.

The little baby grew in strength, spirit and stature (Luke 2:40, 52), reaching the point of God's intended perfection. On that day His growth in strength was paralyzed, His growth in spirit was protested, and His growth in stature was preempted.

After He had journeyed across some 33 years of life, the "Cradled Christ" became the "Crucified Christ." At the zenith of His manhood, He chose to lay it all aside and become again as weak as on that first Christmas morning. Amazing!

Christmas reminds me to marvel at God; at the very thought of His weakness. Have you ever thought about this: that the two occasions of highest celebration for believers are the two instances of His greatest weakness - the days of His birth and death?

Why do you suppose an all-powerful God would choose to confront mankind in His weakness rather than with His strength? Could it be to show that God, at His very weakest, is more powerful than man at his most potent, and that man, at his strongest is no match for God at His weakest? At His birth the skies were filled with the songs of angels! At His death they turned black! It was God, not at His strongest, but at His weakest - a child in a cradle and a corpse on a cross.

God's ways have always befuddled us. Sometimes we get downright mad about the way He does things. When His people were slaves in Egypt, God sent a worn out, tongue-tied, geriatric general to fetch 'em. When Jericho's walls stood in God's way, He used an untrained army of Hebrew slaves without a single weapon between them to bring them down. When the Phillistine giant made God's men shake in their boots, God sent a freckle-faced teenager with a slingshot to take him on - and win!

Things haven't changed so much. He was pretty much ignored then. He still is. His own people didn't want Him. They still don't. But time won't change Him. This Christmas season, like all the ones that have come before, He still confronts us through His wonderful weakness.

## Life and Work

### *Guess what we got!*

By Rick Hyde, pastor, Malvern Third Church

Basic passage: John 7:40-43, Matthew 2:1-12

Focal passage: John 7:42-43, Matthew 2:2-3, 10

Central truth: The greatest Christmas joy is the joy of knowing and serving Christ.

"Guess what we saw!" "Guess what I heard!" "Guess what I got!" We've all heard and used these expressions to share good news. The prophets of old had been predicting the birth of the Messiah for generations. Generations have come and gone since the fulfillment of that promise. The generation that embodied that promise reminds us of the true meaning of Christmas.

There was no guessing in what the Scriptures meant concerning the birth of the Messiah. "Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the seed of David and from the town of Bethlehem?" (John 7:42, NKJV). Christmas can mean a lot of things to a lot of people, but it must mean one thing to all people: that Christ was born in Bethlehem. This Christ was not only the baby in the manger but the suffering Savior and triumphant Lord. Does your Christmas celebration include the story of Christ?

There was no guessing in what the wise men saw. "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him" (Matt. 2:2). Even though we were not privileged to see that star, the light of Christ still shines.

There was no guessing in what Herod the King heard. "When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him" (Matt. 2:3). We may not have heard the report of the wise men, but we can hear the testimony and songs of many choirs and preachers this Christmas season. To the unsaved, these words can bring the conviction of not sharing one's life with Christ. To the saved, these words can bring the joy of celebrating a life shared with Christ.

There was no guessing in what the wise men experienced. "When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy" (Matt. 2:10). As you experience the many joys of Christmas, be sure to experience the greatest joy of all: the joy of knowing and serving Christ.

## Bible Book

### *A Savior's birth to share*

By W. David Moore, president, Arkansas Baptist Foundation

Basic passage: Luke 2:1-20

Focal passage: Luke 2:1-16

Central truth: Christ's birth as the Savior of the world is a blessed event to be shared with a lost world.

Southern Baptists made a strong commitment in 1976 to Bold Mission Thrust. We agreed to share Christ with the whole world by the year 2000 A.D. In those early days, we could afford to plan and strategize how we would fulfill this goal.

In 1994, however, the time has come for action. We are entering into a season of witness commitments when our church members are being asked to make strong commitments to share Christ personally. Many of our churches will be involved with simultaneous revival efforts. The time has come to implement our Bold Mission Thrust!

Christmas provides a wonderful opportunity for witness. If you have never shared your faith and told a lost person about your Savior's love, this Christmas can provide you such an opportunity.

Luke's account is the most famous story of Christ's birth. It is told from Mary's viewpoint, as opposed to Matthew's account which is told from Joseph's point of view. There is much emotion and tenderness as Luke explains Mary's experiences.

Christ's birth is clearly set into the historical context of the first century A.D. Old Testament prophecy is plainly fulfilled in the details of His birth. Various individuals (including Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, etc.) experienced personally this precious gift of God.

The glory of the Lord was evident in His incarnation. Christ came to a peasant girl and her husband. He came in a lowly setting illustrating His humility. God the eternal One condescended Himself and came as a human baby. Miracle of miracles!

Since He came to be our Savior, we have a glorious message to share! May our churches be filled this Christmas Day (after all, it is the celebration of His birthday - not just a family day)! May His birth give you occasion to share His saving mission!

## Convention Uniform

### *Demands of discipleship*

By Ed Saucier, pastor, Grand Avenue Church, Fort Smith

Basic passage: Matthew 8:1-9:8

Focal passage: Matthew 8:10-22

Central truth: Following Him means more than we might think.

Jesus: "Follow me."

Law Teacher: "Who, me? Yeah, I'll follow you. As a matter of fact I'll follow you anywhere you go. Count on it. Count on me! If following is what you're after, then I'm your man."

Disciple: "Me too! It's a fine thing you're doing, and I'm all for it. It's high time somebody made some changes around here, and I admire you for the stand you're taking. I'm ready, willing and able. I'm not one to cast favours in my own direction, but following is one of my better qualities. All you've gotta' do is ask."

Jesus: "All right...let's go."

Law Teacher: "What's that you say? You want us to go somewhere? You mean now?"

Jesus: "Yes, now! Get in the boat."

Law Teacher: "Wait a minute! I said all you had to do was ask, but you're not asking. Does that sound like asking to you?"

Disciple: "No, it doesn't sound like asking at all! Sounds to me like he's giving orders; like he's in charge or something."

Law Teacher: "I know I said I'd follow you, but don't let it go to your head. You're taking this thing way too seriously. I didn't mean right now, and I didn't think you expected me to literally follow you somewhere. I've got some important things that I have to take care of. Let me get them all taken care of first, then I'll follow you."

Disciple: "Surely you can appreciate where I'm coming from. I've got a lot of personal obligations and business affairs that demand my attention right now. You wouldn't want me to go belly up would you? Just as soon as I get everything under control and everyone lined out, I'll be the first one to follow you."

Jesus: "Thanks, but no thanks."

Even a strong profession doesn't necessarily reflect genuine commitment. Impressive words are easily spoken. To Jesus, commitment is total and unreserved or it isn't commitment at all.

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## Life and Work

### *Jesus is God's Son*

By Kenneth W. Overton, pastor, First Church, Marked Tree

Basic passage: Mark 1:1-13

Focal passage: Mark 1:9-11

Central truth: Jesus is the king and servant of all.

This is Mark's account of the beginning of Jesus' ministry. Jesus had come to John for baptism — an act of Jesus that was voluntary on His part. This was in keeping with the main purpose of John's appointment to introduce the Messiah to the world.

The mode of baptism that John used is not the central focus of this passage. It is the experience of Jesus. Why was Jesus baptized? Certainly He approved of John's baptism but that would not explain the reason for Jesus' need of baptism. There are three specifics evident about His baptism.

First, Jesus wished to identify Himself with the wilderness prophet. John's work for the people was a work from God. It prepared the people for the Messiah who would come very soon.

Also, Jesus identified Himself with the people He came to save. The life of Jesus was not focused on Himself but on the people. He sacrificed in ministry (as we shall see in this study of Mark), in life and by His death for all people.

But probably more important, because of the events that surrounded His baptism, Jesus was identified with God Himself. This set Jesus apart for work that only He could accomplish. With this, God had given His solemn approval of the work and ministry of Jesus.

"With you I am well pleased" is drawn from Isaiah 42:1. Here it is not a king that is mentioned but a servant; the Servant of the Lord. The suffering of this Servant will bring in a better day of peace, the very promise of God.

The close of this experience became an assurance for Jesus. He was anointed for His divinely appointed task. He was given power to accomplish the work. Even though all of this would mean the death of Jesus, He would obey God's will. Jesus had fully accepted His role.

The intent of Mark's gospel was to identify Jesus as the true King of the new Israel and the true Servant of the Lord. The baptism, the opening of heaven, and the voice of God giving approval moved Jesus on to accomplish these very things.

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## Bible Book

### *The triumph of faith*

By Stan Farris, pastor, First Church, Hope

Basic passage: Habakkuk 1:1-3:19

Focal passage: Habakkuk 2:4

Central truth: Those who live by faith will not be devastated by the circumstances of life.

The book of Habakkuk is the story of a believer's conflict of faith, and of the ultimate triumph of faith. The name, Habakkuk, seems to derive from a Hebrew root meaning "to embrace." Jerome stated that the prophet was called "The Embracer," either because of his love for God or because he wrestled with God. In his prophecy, Habakkuk is wrestling with the suffering of the righteous and the apparent prosperity of the wicked.

A comparison of 1:2 with 3:19 will give an indication of the true value of this book. It opens in a cry of despair, doubt and questioning. It closes with a song of certainty, affirmation and jubilation. The secret of that change is found in 2:4, our focal passage, which provides the answer to all the prophet's questions.

In that verse God responds to the prophet by declaring that the righteous shall live because of their faithfulness to the revealed will of God and the wicked shall perish. Faith is the principle of life in spite of all appearances. Pride, literally, the puffed-up, swollen one, will be destroyed in spite of all appearances.

There are many high, proud and "swollen" things in our day that seem to lift themselves against God and His purposes, but they, too, will pass and perish. Chapter 2:5-20 mentions five manifestations of this crooked, destructive lifestyle that is contrary to the life of faithfulness. Woes are pronounced against aggression, exploitation, violence, inhumanity to man and idolatry.

The life of faith does not operate on appearances, but by the Word of God. It is interesting that God's answer to Habakkuk came as he was "waiting" on the Lord to speak (2:1). When he looked at circumstances, he was perplexed and full of uncertainty; but when he waited and listened to God, his doubts were replaced with the confidence that God is enough (3:19). If we will listen, God will speak.

The life of faith does not always guarantee a change in circumstances, but God's grace enables the faithful to find strength and security in Him.

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## SBC president Henry hosts listening session with pastors

ORLANDO, FL (BP)—"I wanted to hear the heartbeat of some of the younger pastors in a face-to-face session," Southern Baptist Convention president Jim Henry said following a recent "input" session in Orlando.

"We had about 60 pastors, made up predominantly of those in their 30s and 40s, from across the country who came together to brainstorm and pray together about the future," Henry told Baptist Press. Arkansas pastors participating in the six-hour meeting were Bill Elliff of First Church, Little Rock; Ronnie Floyd of First Church, Springdale; Rex Horne of Immanuel Church, Little Rock; Del Medlin of First Church, Cabot and Greg Kirksey of First Church, Benton.

Henry said the input during the meeting was "excellent," the dialogue "honest" and the results "helpful as we build stronger lines of understanding and communication in our SBC family."

## Penrose St. Amant dies; leaves legacy in church history

NEW ORLEANS (BP)—C. Penrose St. Amant, 79, Southern Baptist church history professor for more than 50 years, died Nov. 19 at his home in Bay St. Louis, Miss.

A specialist in modern and American church history, St. Amant taught at four of the six Southern Baptist seminaries, as well as at the Baptist seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland, where he also served as president.

"Southern Baptists have lost their premier church historian," said Landrum P. Leavell II, president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and a former student of St. Amant. "Dr. St. Amant has influenced the lives of thousands of seminary students around the world. He will be sorely missed not only for his scholarship but also for his friendship."

## Mohler makes 'Time' list of 50 'promising' young leaders

NEW YORK (ABP)—Southern Baptist seminary president Albert Mohler is included in a *Time* magazine listing of 50 of "America's most promising leaders" age 40 and under.

Mohler, 35, joins the likes of Bill Gates, co-founder of Microsoft Corp., health care entrepreneur John F. Kennedy Jr., Indiana Gov. Evan Byah; and talk-show host Oprah Winfrey in the roll-call of 50 young men and women "who we think will make a difference," wrote David Van Biema in a special report for the Dec. 5 issue of *Time*.

"If clarity of purpose is a requisite for leadership, then Al Mohler has what it takes," the excerpt on Mohler begins. It describes how Mohler, "barely into his second year as president of the prestigious (seminary) ... forced the resignation of the seminary's first-ever female theology professor on the ground that her perceived liberal teachings were outside the boundaries of the institution's 136-year-old Abstract of Principles.

"In doing so, Mohler forcefully asserted his traditional values on the school and by inference on the entire 15-million-member Southern Baptist Convention," it continues.

The article also notes Mohler's launching of the seminary's Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism and Church Growth and raising \$7 million.

## BSSB cleans two church growth conferences for 1995

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—Two Great Commission 95 church growth conferences planned by the Baptist Sunday School Board for Feb. 20-23 and March 20-23, 1995, in San Diego and Atlanta have been cancelled due to low registration and budget adjustments.

Mike Miller, director of the church leadership services division, said registration for neither conference had reached 100 and a registration of 500 was needed to offer the variety of conferences planned related to church size and growth need. Even with 500 registrants, the conferences would have included a sizable financial investment by the board.

## Jeffrey Dahmer reportedly found religion behind bars

PORTAGE, WI (ABP)—Jeffrey Dahmer found religion behind bars before his murder Nov. 29, according to the minister who baptized him in May, Associated Press reported.

Dahmer, 34, was killed by a fellow prisoner while cleaning a bathroom at the Columbia Correctional Institution in Portage, Wis. He was serving 15 life terms for killing, dismembering and sometimes cannibalizing boys and men in Wisconsin.

Minister Roy Ratcliff, who baptized Dahmer in a prison infirmary whirlpool and visited him weekly since, said Dahmer did not talk much about what prompted him to commit his grisly crimes. "Mostly he talked about how deeply guilty and remorseful he was," Ratcliff said.

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