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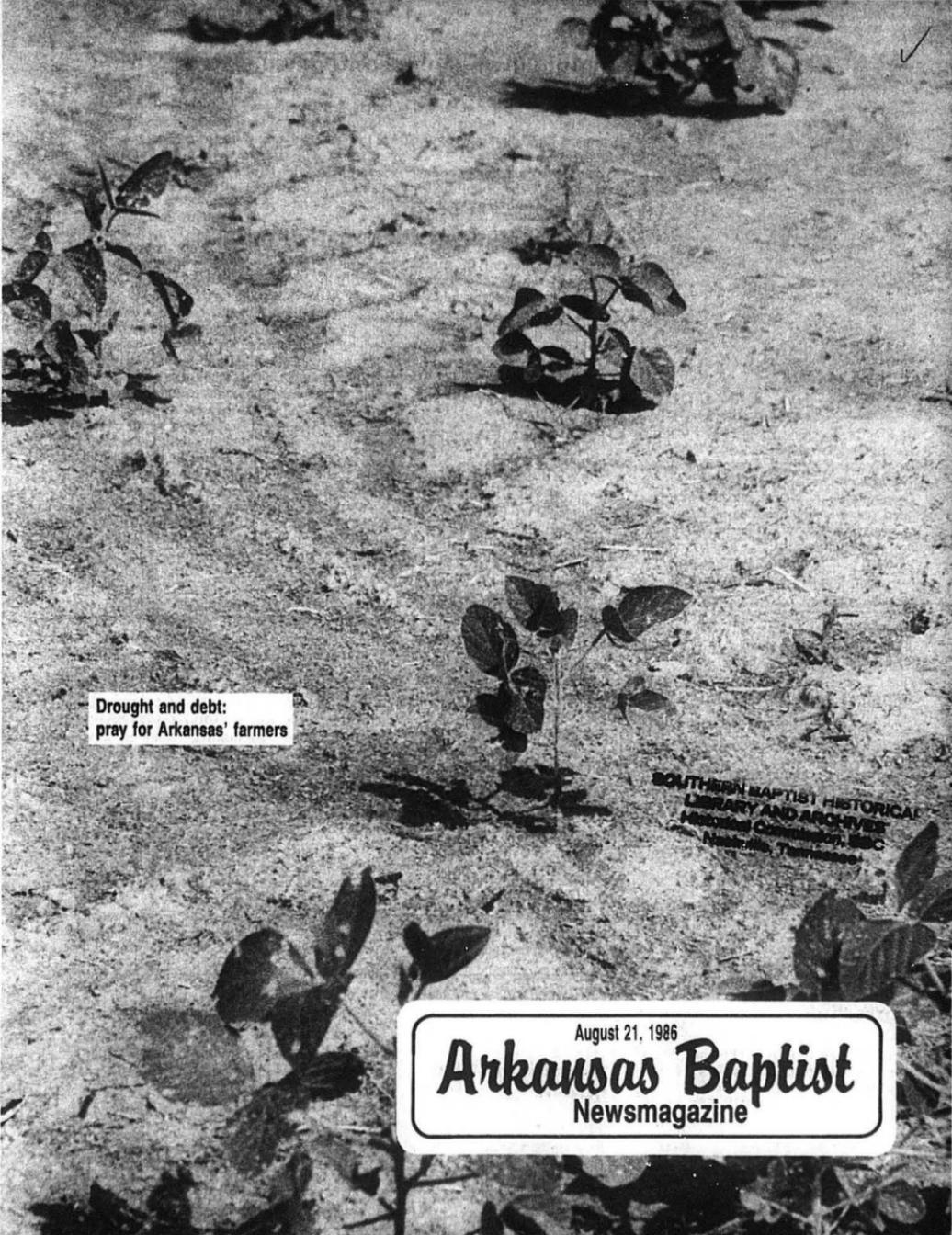
August 21, 1986

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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Drought and debt:
pray for Arkansas' farmers

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August 21, 1986

Arkansas Baptist
Newsmagazine

On the cover



ABN photo / Millie Gill

This summer's drought has deepened a crisis for already-troubled family farms in Arkansas. The lack of rain has stunted crops, like this one in northeast Arkansas. Arkansas Baptists need to pray for and be sensitive to the needs of struggling farmers in their midst. To see how one Southern Baptist Church is coping with the situation, read the article on p. 14.

Volunteer missions conference slated

An area Volunteer Missions Awareness Conference will be held at Park Hill Church, North Little Rock, Saturday, Aug. 23, from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in Room A-306 of the educational building.

The program will offer information for persons interested in opportunities available through the volunteer programs of the

Southern Baptist Convention. Highlighted will be home mission opportunities through such programs as Mission Service Corps and Christian Service Corps.

The program is being organized by Maurice Hurley, Arkansas state coordinator for Mission Service Corps. He may be contacted at 835-6814.

Petty recognized for creative ministry

Pete Petty, director of special mission ministries for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, was honored recently by being one of two persons to receive the first annual Ken Prickett Awards for creative approaches to ministry.

Petty received the award during Home Missions Week at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center. He was presented the award by Marilyn Prickett, widow of the late home missions leader after whom the award is named, and her son, Seth. Mrs. Prickett also received the award for her work



Petty

as director of the Johnening Baptist Center in Washington, D.C.

Petty was recognized for his use of innovative techniques to gain an entrance and hearing for the gospel where no opportunity might otherwise exist. He has used and taught others to use clowning and magic successfully in resort ministries and is known for creative approaches to summer missionary and volunteer training.

The award is named in honor of the late Ken Prickett, who served with the SBC Home Mission Board from 1970 until his death in 1983. Prickett was instrumental in developing various volunteer and experimental ministries, including Baptist ministries at the 1980 Olympics in Lake Placid, N.Y., and the 1982 World's Fair in Knoxville, Tenn.

Letter to the editor

Arkansas campers

Let me ask you three questions: (1) Do you and your family like to camp? (2) Do you own a camping (RV) rig? (3) Are you familiar with Campers On Mission?

Campers On Mission is a Christian organization sponsored by the SBC Home Mission Board, and in Arkansas by the State Missions Department. Arkansas recently hosted the National COM Rally at Wilderness Point Campground on Lake Norfolk near Mountain Home. You may have read about it in a recent issue of the ABN. There were about 500 in attendance, and we had a great time in the Lord.

The reason for this letter is mainly because of my third question above. I have talked with several Baptist campers who know nothing about Campers On Mission.

Campers on Mission membership is made up of Christian campers who not only have great camping fellowship, but many of the state organizations do projects such as helping erect church buildings, conducting surveys, revivals, VBS, etc. We have Bible studies, testimonies, worship services, potluck meals, and just good, clean Christian fellowship.

Let me encourage you to look into the Arkansas COM. I feel quite confident if you like to camp you will love COM. H. E. Williams is the state president; if you need information on COM write either Pete Petty at the State Missions Department, or H. E. Williams, Southern Baptist College, Walnut Ridge, AR 72476.

Our next rally is Sept. 5-7 at Greer's Ferry Lake. Hope to see you there.—Lendol Jackson, Hardy

In this issue

8-9 Amar update

Four reports from volunteer mission trips to Brazil this spring and summer remind us Arkansas Baptists are entering the last year of their three-year commitment to assist Baptist work in two Brazilian conventos.

11 Memphis mission

When Royal Ambassadors from across the nation gathered recently in Memphis for their "once-every-six-years" National Congress, they came to do more than listen and play.

Correction

A Life and Work Sunday School lesson commentary in the Aug. 7 ABN should have referred to Lot instead of Noah in the commentary on the dangers of alcohol.

Cooperative Program report: July

January-July gifts

	Year	Over (under) budget to date	% increase over previous year
Summary for July 1986			
Received	1981	\$ 78,565.38	11.70
Budget	1982	\$130,114.52	8.90
(Under)	1983	(\$ 55,680.44)	11.34
	1984	(\$395,530.96)	2.53
	1985	(\$225,106.43)	9.21
	1986	(\$343,189.83)	5.15



One of the most important ingredients in rearing children is discipline. Yet, it is one of the most difficult. There are many issues directly and indirectly connected with the discipline of children. Among these are how disciplined are the parents? How consistent are the parents in the discipline of their children? Do the children understand the purpose of the discipline? And do the children understand the logical consequence for wrong doing?

Children are often referred to as "a gift from God." When a parent first holds that tiny infant, there can be no doubt that the baby was heaven sent. I, like other parents, was completely filled with a sense of awe that God would entrust such a precious life into my hands as I held each of my own daughters. But a parent must recognize that a gift is something that is his or hers to keep. A child does not belong to the parent to keep. In reality a child is simply on loan and one day, according to God's plan, the child becomes an adult and is on his or her own.

Perhaps a gift the parent receives is being given opportunity to take part in the process of helping the child become the kind of adult God desired the infant to become. Parents have the responsibility of providing discipline and other influences that will assist the child to develop into a loving, caring, productive follower of Christ.

The parent must soon exercise wisdom. The small infant grows and develops and will soon be seeking to discover the boundaries in which he or she can function. The normal curiosity and intellectual pursuit of the child demands discipline and restraint in order to shape and mold the child as he or she grows and develops.

God has designed a plan in which discipline of his people is indispensable. He has placed in the fabric of every individual a desire for order. God himself is disciplined and well-ordered and has created mankind in his image. Consequently, if an individual lives an unorganized and undisciplined life, he will become restless and basically unhappy.

Discipline is a way of pointing individuals in the right direction. The Bible declares, "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him." (Pr. 22:15) Hence, the Scriptures clearly state the necessity of discipline for every child.

A corollary of discipline is love. Without love, discipline simply becomes child abuse. The opposite, however, also is

true. Love in the absence of instruction will not produce a child with self-control and respect for his fellow man. Even when discipline must be exercised, the child must know that he or she is loved. Both discipline and love are essentials for the proper mental and physical development of every child.

Much of the discipline a child requires is learned by observation. The old cliché, "Actions speak louder than words," is certainly true in the crucible of the home. When children observe disciplined parents who behave properly in their daily activities, they too are likely to be disciplined individuals. But when parents fail to exhibit discipline in their own lives, it is likely children also will fail to be disciplined.

Another vital aspect of teaching discipline to children is consistency. Most books on child rearing warn of the perils of inconsistency. Yet most parents, if totally honest, will admit that when circumstances are relaxed, pleasant and joyous they will allow their children to "get away with things" that the children cannot do in times of tension.

Perhaps inconsistency is inevitable. But parents must have decisions made on the boundaries of activities that are permitted for children and these should be enforced regardless of the parents' mood. Agreement by both parents on proper and improper activity will avoid, at least in part, a child pitting one parent against another. Frequently, a child will learn which parent is the more permissive of the two and will seek initial approval by the more lenient parent. Parents should never air disagreement over a child's activity in the presence of the children.

Children themselves understand the need for proper discipline. Sometime ago we were present when a small child misbehaved for several hours. The parents attempted to avoid any type of discipline. Finally, it became evident that discipline was absolutely essential. The small girl was placed in her chair facing the wall. When she was permitted to leave the corner, she climbed into her father's lap and said, "You are the best daddy in the world. I love you."

Most important, parents can take joy in their children when they have provided the proper ingredients to produce disciplined, mature Christian adults. The children also will be pleased that their parents provided a home with the proper balance of love and discipline to assist them in becoming proper disciplined individuals.

Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

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One layman's opinion

Daniel R. Grant

Are Chinese communists getting a new view of Christianity?

Are Chinese communists getting a new view of Christianity? One of the foundation stones of communist dogma is that religion, especially Christianity, is the "opiate of the people." Communist revolutionaries the world over delight in saying that Christians are not interested in the plight of the poor here on earth, that our message is "you'll get your pie in the sky by and by."

If we are honest we will admit that the role of the established Christian church in many countries of the world prior to communist revolutions was embarrassingly similar to that of an opiate of the people. The ornate gold and glitter of the cathedrals (and even of some Protestant churches) in the midst of abject poverty, hunger, and illiteracy, hardly testifies to Jesus' compassion for the people.

An exciting report from Chinese Christian leaders at a recent Baptist World Alliance Friendship Meeting in Nanjing, indicates that Chinese communists may be getting a new view of Christianity. Marxist scholars in China have begun to say that religion in China today may be an opiate of the people, but they admit grudgingly that it is more than opiate. Is it possible that this confession is a crack in the doorway that explains the willingness of the Chinese government to

permit the reopening of some 4,000 Christian churches since the overthrow of the "Gang of Four" and their "Cultural Revolution" some ten years ago?

Bishop Ting, leader of the Chinese Christian Council that has a strong voice in government policies toward Christian churches, told some 180 Baptists from around the world about the remarkable growth in membership of Christian churches in China. The official estimate is some 4 to 5 million members, but some estimates run as high as 20 million, and the growth is said to be primarily the result of individual testimonies through living the Christian life.

We heard story after story of factory workers wanting to know about Christ because of the consistent smiles and friendly spirit of fellow workers who were Christians and because of their dedication to hard and unselfish work. The new Christian churches are clearly Chinese churches with no taint of foreign influence. The old communist taunting comment, "Make a Christian and lose a Chinese," is no longer applicable in the booming Christian churches in China.

Bishop Ting made it clear that the Communist Party still has no high opinion of religion in general or of Christianity in par-

ticular. It is simply that they have decided that their first priority is not to propagate atheism; it is to unite the Chinese people. The present government apparently has decided to allow religion and non-religion to coexist.

Whatever the reason, new Christian churches in China are being permitted to open up at the rate of one or two per day. Crowds are commonly requiring more than one worship service on Sunday morning, with large numbers of people coming during the week for Bible study and prayer services.

I came away from this inspiring fellowship meeting with Chinese Christians, praying a prayer of thanksgiving for their new freedom, but confused about how I should pray for our spoiled and complacent church members in America. I really don't want to pray for persecution, such as experienced by our Chinese brothers and sisters in Christ, but we could use a healthy dose of the dedication and courage of Chinese Christians. I hope we can learn without the crucible.

Daniel R. Grant is president of Ouachita Baptist University.

Hinson celebrates 25th anniversary

First Church, West Memphis, will celebrate Thomas A. Hinson's 25th anniversary as pastor of that congregation with a special series of meetings Aug. 24-31.

The meetings will feature messages from B. Gray Allison, president of Mid-America Seminary in Memphis, Tenn.; John Wright, pastor of Little Rock First Church; David Miller, director of missions in Little Red River Association, Heber Springs; and Steven Olford, an evangelist and conference speaker from Memphis, Tenn.

The week of celebration will conclude Aug. 31 with a Sunday morning message from James Henry Stevens and an evening message by Steve Miller, both former church members who made commitments to full-time Christian service under Hinson's ministry. A reception is planned from 2 to

4 p.m., Sunday, Aug. 31, in Leir Hall.

Hinson came to First Church, West Memphis, as pastor on Aug. 27, 1961. During his tenure, the congregation has conducted a major renovation of existing buildings and constructed an 1,100-seat sanctuary, an educational building, and a family life center. Present property is valued at \$5.3 million.

During his ministry at First Church, Hinson has recorded 2,000 baptisms, and the church has received 2,534 additions. Present resident membership is 2,300. Overall missions gifts during Hinson's 25 years total \$2.5 million.

Hinson is a former president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, president of the ABSC Executive Board, and president of the board of trustees for Southern Baptist College. He has served as a member of the board of trustees for Baptist Memorial Hospital, Memphis, Tenn., as well as the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee. He currently is serving as vice-president of the SBC Pastor's Conference.



Hinson



Potato patch ministry—Woodland Heights Church in Harrison recently harvested 10,300 pounds for potatoes and delivered them to Arkansas Baptist Home for Children in Monticello. This is the ninth consecutive year for this mission action project, according to Pastor J.A. Hogan.

Don Moore

You'll be glad to know...

... Who does Baptist work? The obvious answer is "Baptists do." That is true, but it falls short of the ultimate answer. The ultimate answer is that "the work of Baptists is done in and by the local church. Evangelism, missions, Bible instruction and discipling: these all happen in the local church.

Sometimes convention personnel at the state or SBC level are blamed for what is or what is not done. Baptisms, mission dollars, nonresident and inactive members are areas where statistics may be quoted as reflecting that the convention is not doing its job. The conventions do not conduct revivals, vacation Bible schools, new member classes, or regular worship services. All of this is done by the local churches.

The record of Southern Baptists is not a record of state convention and Southern Baptist Convention leadership activities. It is the record of our churches and their activities. Poor records reflect upon what we do or do not do in the local church.

Those of us called of God and employed to work for the conventions do so with one goal in mind, that of helping the churches do a better job. We are so pleased when God uses us to help a church become more effective. We are grieved when we are not permitted to help, or when our help is not effective. It is at that point we feel responsible.

Article IV of our Constitution states, "this convention shall never exercise any authority whatever over any church, nor shall it in any way interfere with the constitution of any church, or with the exercise of its function as the only ecclesiastical body, but will cheerfully recognize and uphold the absolute independence of the churches." Article X, on "Amendments" states that Article IV, "shall remain forever unalterable in substance."

These statements do two things. First, they protect the church from interference and control of a hierarchy. Second, it places the burden of kingdom endeavors squarely on the local church. This is Baptist doctrine, because it is Bible doctrine.

You are glad you are responsible and free. We are glad you have chosen to voluntarily work with others to do things you never could do alone.

Don Moore is executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

August 21, 1986



Moore

Woman's viewpoint

Mary Maynard Sneed

An example worth following

Every one of us, as parents, teachers or pastors, have experienced the heartache and frustration of expressing our most serious and loving concerns for others, only to see them going on about their lives as though such words had never been spoken. Sometimes, we wonder what it will take to awaken them to their responsibilities as Christians.

If, as children of God, we are to live concerned and sacrificial lives for Christ, we must not be coerced, but we must be convicted by the Holy Spirit, our comforter and beseecher. It is as we live the lives Christ has set before us, cheerfully and loyally, that others begin to see the advantage of such a life.

Were we to call upon others to follow our example, as Paul did in I Corinthians 4:16, we would need to be very certain we were worthy to be imitated. Yet, should even the most consecrated Christian offer himself as a model for others to copy? What does that say about the individuality that God has given each of us for a birthright? Am I justified in expecting others to be what I am? Is that not a little presumptuous and

egotistical on my part and foolish on the part of the one who unthinkingly follows my imperfect example?

Paul certainly did not mean that fellow Christians were to copy precisely his every move and activity. For instance, that Paul may have chosen to remain single does not imply that we are bound by the same choice.

Obviously one must be careful not to set oneself, with all one's personal peculiarities, as the standard for others to follow. In saying "follow me," one must be certain he or she is not seeking fulfillment of a personal desire to be a little Christ or a little God.

What Paul meant to convey was that, though the humankind of himself was less than exemplary, to the extent that he imitated Christ, we might look to him as a personal example. So should we live that we might be true to those who look to us for an example.

Mary Sneed is the wife of the editor and mother of two daughters. She is an active member of the Park Hill Church in North Little Rock.

JEC schedules forums, performances

ARKADELPHIA—The Joint Educational Consortium of Arkadelphia has announced its schedule of public forums and performing arts series for the 1986-87 academic year. The Joint Educational Consortium is an association of Ouachita Baptist University, Henderson State University, and the Ross Foundation of Arkadelphia.

The general theme of the public forums will be "Avenues to Serving Humanity," and in honor of the state's sesquicentennial all speakers will be past or present Arkansans. The schedule includes former U. S. Senator J. William Fulbright (Dem., Ark.), Oct. 2 at Arkansas Hall at Henderson State University; Dee Brown, novelist and historian, Nov. 18 at Mabee Fine Arts Center at Ouachita Baptist University; Joe H. Stroud, editor and senior vice president, *The Detroit Free*

Press, Feb. 10 at the Mabee Center at OBU; and Lily Peter, farmer and philanthropist, April 7 at Russell Auditorium at HSU.

The performing arts series includes: the Albert McNeil Jubilee Singers, Oct. 27 at Mitchell Hall Auditorium, OBU; the Kodaly String Quartet from Budapest, Hungary, Nov. 3, Mabee Center, OBU; a performance of "Romeo and Juliet" by the National Shakespeare Company, Jan. 29, Arkansas Hall, HSU; Brazos Baroque, a Texas-based ensemble, Feb. 9, Russell Auditorium, HSU; and a concert by the Ravine Brass, April 20, Russell Auditorium, HSU.

All programs begin at 7:30 p.m. and are free to the public. For further information, contact Dolphus Whitten, P. O. Box 499, Arkadelphia, AR 71923, or call (501) 246-9283.

Theology conference slated for Sept. 25-27

Crescent Hill Church, Louisville, Ky., will host the fourth bi-annual Theology is a Verb conference September 25-27, featuring special guest Doug Marlette, nationally acclaimed political cartoonist and creator of the *Kudzu* comic strip, and James Dunn, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs. The conference will focus on church and state issues.

In addition to large-group gatherings for

the keynote speakers and special worship services, small-group workshops will discuss issues such as bioethics, arts and worship, storytelling and journaling, peacemaking in churches, and women in ministry. A round table discussion on the history of church and state relations also will be presented.

For more information, call or write Crescent Hill Baptist Church, 2800 Frankfort Ave., Louisville, KY 40206; (502) 896-4425.

Arkansas all over

by Millie Gill / ABN staff writer

people



Michael J. Bedford has joined the staff of Fayetteville University Church as pastor of worship and music. He is a graduate of Hardin-Simmons University, and also attended San Antonio College, Southwest Texas State and Incarnate Word College.

Bedford

He was president and founder of Morning Star Productions, a Springdale based Christian concert organization. He served two years as vice-president on the board of directors of Gospel Music Associations and also has served on the staff of several Texas churches. He and his wife, Barbara, have two children, Michelle and Christopher.

Danny L. Johnson began serving July 28 as pastor of Strong First Church. He is a graduate of the University of Arkansas at Monticello and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Jackie Meador is serving as a Mission Service Corps volunteer in Springfield, Mo. Meador, a member of Springdale First Church, is serve as one of the managers of the Agape House in Springfield, a ministry to the families of prisoners who are incarcerated in the U.S. Medical Center for federal prisoners and the Ozark Correctional Center at Fordland, Mo.

Richard L. Johnson began serving Aug. 3 as pastor of Knowles Church near Strong.

Johnny Long is serving as pastor of Brownsville Church at Heber Springs, moving there from Blytheville, where he served churches in northeast Arkansas and taught public.

A.D. Corder is serving as pastor of Pleasant Valley Church, Heber Springs. He is a retired director of missions from the Branson, Mo. He also has served as pastor of churches in Arkansas, Missouri and Illinois.

Earnest Whitten began serving Aug. 17 as pastor of Natural Steps Church, Roland.

Tom Fortner has resigned as pastor of Mary's Chapel near Blytheville to serve as pastor of Kinfolks Ridge Church in Kinfolks, Mo.



Johnson

Virgie McClure was honored Aug. 10 at Mountain Home First Church in honor of her 90th birthday. She was baptized into the church's fellowship in 1916 and is now the oldest member there.

Danny Franke has resigned as pastor of Viny Ridge Immanuel Church, effective Sept. 7 following three years of service to move to Princeton, N.J., to work on a master of theology degree at Princeton Theological Seminary. He is a graduate of Baylor University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

John Evans Jr. has been called to serve as a full-time pastor of Bee Branch Church, effective Sept. 1. He has been serving there with his father, John Evans Sr., while continuing his education.



Meador

briefly

Sugarloaf Chapel congregation used its new building for the first time Aug. 16 when a praise service was held.

Cabot First Church commissioned Don and Almeda Elliott Aug. 10 for a volunteer missions assignment in China where they will teach conversational English at Yellow River University. He recently retired as superintendent of schools in Cabot.

Marked Tree First Church is launching a Deacon Family Ministry plan in which the deacons are assigned to meet the needs of church family members.

Batesville West Church celebrated Anniversary Sunday Aug. 10 as Pastor Randy Maxwell observed seven years of service and David Tohlen, associate pastor, observed six years of service.

Hardy New Hope Church observed "Cecil Guthrie Day" July 20 in recognition of his more than 25 years of service as director of missions for Black River Association. Activities included a slide presentation, a potluck luncheon and afternoon service.



Fellowship Church near Batesville will dedicate a 6,500 square foot building with a weekend of activities Aug. 22-24. The church, organized in May 1981, has been meeting in a portable chapel and was able to construct its first building as a result of a \$15,000 loan from the Arkansas Baptist State Convention revolving loan fund. Pastor Doug Martin reported the new congregation now averages 60 in worship services and has organized a day care center as a ministry. Dedication speakers will include Tim Porter, Venoy Vaughn, Don Johnson, Joe Prather, S.D. Hacker and Jerry Mourer. Musicians will be the Porter/Covington Quartet, the Faith Trio and Carol Mitchum.

Park Place Church in Hot Springs will hold a Sunday School workers appreciation banquet Sept. 15. Don Moore, executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, will be speaker.

Galilee Church at El Dorado will observe its 74th anniversary Sept. 21 with services beginning at 10 a.m. and featuring former pastors as speakers. A fellowship luncheon will follow.

Cross Road Church in Little Rock recently purchased a 66-passenger bus to be used in the Children's Super Church and youth activities ministries. The purchase was made possible by a love offering taken during a Sunday evening service. The church is experiencing an attendance growth through the addition of 24 new members by baptism and 25 by letter.

Riverside Church at 7724 Landers Road North Little Rock will ordain associate pastor Amon Baker to the preaching ministry Aug. 24 at 3 p.m. Roy Nix will serve as moderator and Jerry Hogan, pastor of Baring Cross Church, North Little Rock, will preach the ordination message. The charge to both the candidate and church will be by Troy Prince of Conway. Others on program will include Ervin Keathley, Joy Baker, Angela Lu and Melody Baker. A reception will follow the service.

Missionary Russell Fox suffers heart attack

Russell Fox, missionary associate to Honduras, is recovering in good condition from a heart attack he suffered enroute to Glorietta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center.

Fox, who considers Little Rock his hometown, is at home in the University of Arkansas Baptist Student Union missionary house. He was hospitalized for 10 days at Presbyterian Hospital, Albuquerque, N.M.

Mrs. Fox is the former Vicki Hagan of Stuttgart. They were employed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1982 and will be on furlough in Fayetteville until mid-January.

They may be contacted at 516 Lindell St., Fayetteville, AR 72701; (501) 443-1387.

40 new churches begun

BANGALORE, India—Baptists in the Indian state of Karnataka added 40 new churches to their ranks last year. Spurred by a goal for each church to start at least one other, Karnataka Baptists began 166 churches in 1983 and 1984. They started out in 1983 with only 34 churches.



A new title—"Outreach coordinators" and contract workers for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Student Department during 1986-87 were at the Baptist Building in Little Rock recently for orientation to their new assignments. "Outreach coordinator" designates what formerly was called a "Student-to-student" (STS) worker. The new title is intended to more clearly identify who the workers are—recent college graduates, not students—and what they do—assist with outreach on various college campuses. Present for the orientation were (back row, left to right) Sherry Barr, Gary Demmitt, Laura Lyle, Hope Wilder, (seated) Betsy Atkins, Brenda White, LaWanda Smith, and Leigh Smith. Not pictured are Shobie Jones, Ann Cross, and Ken Walker.

Jacksonville pastor honored

Chapel Hill Church, Jacksonville, recognized Pastor and Mrs. Lee Lawson Sunday, Aug. 10, for 15 years of service to the church.

The afternoon program, led by Master of Ceremonies Rick Pruet, featured Jacksonville Mayor James Reid; Pulaski County School Superintendent Bobby Lester; Ervin Keathley, music secretary for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention; and Don Moore, ABSC executive director.

Deacon Chairman Ed Moran presented Lawson with a plaque honoring his service, and Anniversary Committee Chairman Gayle Paul presented the couple \$2,500 and one extra week's paid vacation for a trip to England (photo at right). The celebration concluded with a reception in the church's fellowship hall.



ABN photo / Mark Kelly

New hunger guide sent to churches

NASHVILLE—Southern Baptists, who in the last decade have given more than \$48 million to their denomination's program of world hunger relief, will soon receive an up-to-date report on how funds are being used.

The 1986-87 *Hunger Awareness / Action Guide* has been sent to pastors and other church staff, associational directors of missions, campus ministry directors and state Brotherhood and WMU leaders in preparation for convention-wide observance of World Hunger Day on Oct. 12.

The 24-page report, which was produced by the Christian Life Commission, contains reports on hunger-related ministries by the Foreign and Home Mission Boards, Brotherhood Commission and WMU.

The guide also includes: information on public policy and hunger, helps for preaching on hunger, Bible studies on hunger, practical suggestions for effective hunger response in local churches, associations and state Baptist conventions, and a list of resources.

Brazil mission trips make a difference

by Mark Kelly

Quietly, without a great deal of fanfare, a steady stream of volunteers has been flowing from Arkansas to Brazil's Amazon Basin.

Since fall 1984, when Arkansas Baptists forged their partnership with two Brazilian Baptist conventions, more than 300 volunteers have boarded flights for the Amazon jungles, their hearts filled with anticipation.

Almost without exception, they return to the States exhausted but filled with joy and enthusiasm for the real people and real needs they met during their firsthand encounter with foreign missions. Virtually every

volunteer testifies, "I'll never be the same again."

From time to time, persons feel led to share with the ABN brief accounts of their experiences. This week we would like to share several of them with you.

MARCH Tapara, Para

In late March, Larry Barton of Hope First Church and David Parker and Harry Kennedy of Hope Calvary Church helped build a new church building on the island of Tapara, more than two hours by boat from Santarem.

Working with SBC missionary Richard Walker, his son, Boyd, and a crew of Brazilians, the Arkansans helped build a 40x60-foot building situated on piers three feet above the ground.

The team also participated in worship services and evangelistic visitation which saw 10 professions of faith recorded. One who accepted Christ was a teenage boy who helped on the construction site.

"Our prayer is that many more from our

Arkansas churches will go," wrote Kennedy, pastor of Hope Calvary. "You can't go and return the same.

"Brazil is no longer a spot on a map or globe," he concluded. "It's an ever-present, living picture of trees and land that can never be forgotten."

APRIL Lago Grande, Para

In April, a four-man medical/dental team from Central Church, Magnolia, spent eight days in four locations—Igarape Acu, Lago Grande, Sale, and Curumucufi—providing medical and dental services in remote Brazilian villages. One village, Lago Grande, had never before been visited by a doctor or dentist.

The doctor, Tom Pullig, treated more than 800 people in eight days and gave away more than \$1,000 worth of medicine. The dentist, Jay Rotton, extracted more than 650 teeth from more than 350 patients. The two were assisted by Ken Willhoite and Greg Rich.

The team also joined in worship services



Jay Rotton, a dentist from Magnolia, extracted more than 650 teeth on an eight-day mission trip to the Brazilian interior.



The Sunday School report at Tapara on March 23 counted 153 in attendance for Bible study and an offering of 16,524 cruzeiros, about \$12 American.

each evening, after an already-exhausting day of treating patients. Despite the fact many of those in worship services still had gauze in their mouths from tooth extractions, missionaries Richard and Bea Walker reported, "They sang and sang and sang. They were happy. Somebody cared. Isn't it nice to be able to care and give?"

MAY

Maraba, Para

In May, three members of the Arkansas City Church spent seven days in Maraba, a city 430 miles south of Belem at the edge of the rain forest.

Maraba was a remote village until 1981, when gold and iron ore was discovered. Now it is a boom town of nearly 200,000 people, a mission field of tremendous potential, with six Baptist churches but only one pastor.

Pastor Ken Overton, Hope Overton, his wife, and layman James Kolb visited door-to-door during the day, sharing their testimonies through bilingual tracts and interpreters. In the evenings, they held worship services in the Nova Maraba church.

In five days of visitation, the three Arkansans recorded 52 professions of faith. Combined with their 14 other teammates, 193 decisions were made for Christ.

JULY

Blytheville, Arkansas

In July, one Brazil-Arkansas mission partnership came full circle.

A six-man construction team from Blytheville First Church had worked for 10 days in January in Cidade Nove-Coqueiro, an exploding suburban area outside Belem, Para.

As they worked on the new church building, team members were impressed by a young Brazilian man, Carlos Gomes, 28, an architectural engineering student who had drawn the plans from which the builders were working.

Don Childers, a building contractor, had been struck by the vast differences between U.S. and Brazilian construction techniques. When the team made their report back to the Baptist Men's group that had helped with their expenses, Childers commented what a blessing it would be if Brazilian Baptists could benefit from more modern construction techniques.

The idea began to jell: what if Carlos could come to the U.S. to learn about construction techniques here? Before the meeting was over, an impromptu offering took enough to cover the young man's round-trip transportation.

July 16 Gomes arrived in Blytheville. For three weeks, he watched and worked with

Childers on various construction sites. Aug. 2 he left with 16 men from Blytheville First for a construction missions trip to Columbus, Ohio, where the team finished out the interior of a new sanctuary for the Bartlett Road Church, pastored by Parkin native Tom Buchanan.

Since the Brazil trip, members of the construction team personally helped the mission purchase additional adjacent property. The Baptist Men's group assisted with the purchase of additional building materials.

"We saw pictures. We saw faces. And they became people, someone you might see on

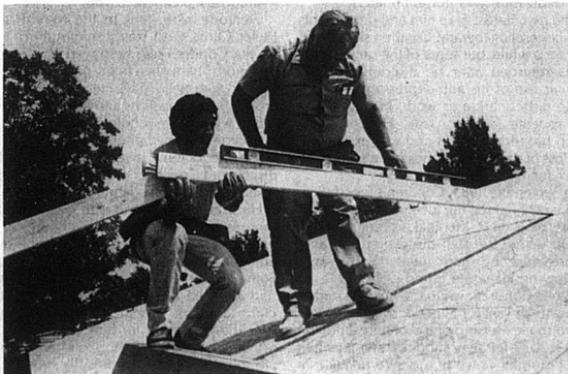
the next block here in town," recalled James Gardner, an attorney and member of the First Church Baptist Men's group. "It took away that abstract feeling you sometimes have about missions.

"We knew that, in the sight of God, they were people. Their report made missions come alive for us. The need could never have been communicated to us unless someone had been down there in the first place."

Mark Kelly is managing editor of the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine.



Above, Hope Overton was one member of a team from Arkansas City that witnessed 52 professions of faith in five days of visitation and worship in the boomtown of Maraba. Below, Carlos Gomes (left), a Brazilian engineering student, works on-site with Don Childers, a contractor who suggested the Blytheville First Church Baptist Men's group bring the young man to Arkansas to observe advanced U.S. construction techniques.



Former pastor recounts struggle to regain mental health

by J. Everett Sneed

Ron Condren, who has served a number of Arkansas Baptist churches, experienced serious depression approximately three years ago. He said, "I am sharing my experience with the hope it can help others both in overcoming depression and in avoiding it."

Condren feels his depression was produced by both internal and external factors. He believes his personality trait, an obsessive-compulsive with a desire for perfection, provided the soil for depression.

Condren observes that he was in his mid-life years. Those who study the psyche have discovered that individuals in their 40's and 50's are more prone than others to have depression. There is always normal adjustment during mid-life years even for an individual who is relatively successful.

He says his depression was precipitated in late 1982. He had just attended a Charles Solomon Seminar in Little Rock and took a test which showed he was depressed. He says, "The test indicated I was depressed, but I didn't feel that way at all."

In February of 1983, Condren went to Innsbruck, Austria, for a 13-day Bible Conference. While there, he contracted a viral infection. By the time he returned home, he had lost 15 pounds and was both sick and exceedingly weak.

Upon his return, he was shocked to learn a layman in the church where he was serving, a close personal friend, had cancer and was not expected to live very long. In addition, the medication he was taking was failing to clear up the viral infection. He was experiencing loss of appetite and low energy.

"All of these factors brought things to a kind of crisis," Condren observes. "So I called a Christian doctor friend in Memphis. He recommended I see a medical doctor and a psychiatrist."

Condren spent 17 days in a Memphis hospital. The viral infection was cured, but the depression was not eliminated.

The psychiatrist gave him anti-depressants and counseling therapy. Condren says he did fine for a while, but some of the same symptoms returned after he discontinued the regular use of his anti-depressant.

He did continue to work, but again lost his appetite and felt weak. He could not sleep properly at night and was experiencing loss of memory. He recalls it also was difficult for him to concentrate.

In September 1983, Condren's friend died, and he conducted the funeral. Afterward, he came to Baptist Medical Center in Little Rock, where the staff discovered the anti-depressants he had been taking were destroying his white blood cells.

While Condren was in the hospital undergoing treatment for depression, he received word the leadership of the congregation he was serving felt they should either give him a six months' leave of absence or ask him to resign.

Condren says, "I was very weak at the time and didn't feel they would ask me to resign. I told the church leaders to do whatever they felt was right, and it would be all right."

He soon learned the church had voted by a narrow majority to ask for his resignation. This plunged him into even deeper depression. He says, "I lost my place of service after pastoring for 23 years. I had no job. I had no income, and I had two children in college. It seemed God had gone silent on me."

The church, however, did vote to allow her and his family to live in the church parsonage for six months and to give him \$1,000 a month salary during this period. A group of men in the church also got together and promised to provide his total salary as long as he was in the hospital. Other churches where he had served, friends and relatives began to send money. Condren observes, "God proved faithful."

Condren continued his therapy with a Little Rock psychiatrist, but because of the unusual amount of time on his hands his problem grew worse. He says, "I learned what unemployed and retired individuals go through."

Because his medication was not working

When a pastor's emotional distress turns to depression, churches must dig deep within themselves to find the grace to help their pastor through his struggle for health.

properly, Condren was driven into deeper depression. By December 1983, his wife, Judy, suggested he call Dr. Frank B. Minirth, a Dallas, Texas, psychiatrist. Minirth said, "If you come to one of our hospitals, I will guarantee we can help you."

Everyone who goes to the Minirth and Meier Clinic must stay a minimum of two weeks. Condren says he stayed 30 days but had more liberty than many patients. He was able to jog every day. He participated in group therapy sessions and had one session a day with the psychologist.

Condren learned people from every walk of life encountered psychological illness. He discovered a number of preachers and missionaries had been patients in the clinic.

He says, "I was anxious to be cured, but there is no quick cure for psychological illness." He began to gain insight into his own emotions and discover how to handle anger. Some of the medications Condren had taken had attacked his immune system. But the clinic identified a medication that began to turn things around for him.

When he left the clinic, Condren was not completely cured. Periodically new problems would come up. When he returned

home in January 1984, he faced the need for him to be out of the church parsonage by March. He recalls, "When it came time for us to go, we didn't know where we could move. I talked with many people, but no one was able to give me a solution or quick answer to my problems. I felt totally alone."

Condren says the first light came when he had lunch with a Little Rock pastor who told him he would help find a house and a job.

The pastor did find a house for Condren, who then spent three months looking for a job. He had several part-time jobs during this period.

Condren recalls the first time he began to feel good about himself was in September 1985, when he took a position as a part-time chaplain at the suggestion of ABSC Executive Director Don Moore. He says, "Once again I was back doing what God had called me to do and what I was trained to do."

Condren, a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Southwest Baptist Theological Seminary, completed the chaplain's training program offered by the Baptist Medical Center in March 1986.

Condren feels being a chaplain at the V. A. hospitals has been therapeutic for him. He says, "I have started having opportunity to do supply work in the churches."

He believes there are several things churches and individuals can do to help pastors prevent depression. Condren feels churches need to lower their expectations of the amount of work a pastor should do. He observes a pastor not only serves a church, but he has a family and needs recreation.

Congregations should encourage pastors to take time off, he believes. A pastor must prepare three sermons a week, counsel individuals, and care for the administrative needs of the church. Maintaining emotional health requires time off from those duties.

Condren said it required approximately two and one-half years for him to work through all of the problems related to his depression. He said it was only three or four months ago that he felt he was completely cured of his problems. He says, "If I could have returned to the pastorate in 1984, I would have been able to clear up my problems much more quickly."

He has advice for those who feel depression beginning. He makes the following suggestions: (1) see a physician and have a complete check-up; (2) talk with an understanding friend or friends who have had similar experiences; (3) locate a support group with which you can be totally honest and not feel rejected; and (4) find a friend who will support you regardless of circumstances.

Condren's desire is to be a friend to others and to use his experience to strengthen the lives of others.

J. Everett Sneed is editor of the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine.

Royal Ambassador Congress responds to world needs

Hundreds of Baptist boys from around the nation were in Memphis, Tenn., Aug. 4-7 to learn about world missions and to fight world hunger. Athletic competition at the seventh National Pioneer Royal Ambassador Congress raised \$6,600 for hunger relief. The money was secured by Pioneer participants in a two-mile run and a canoe race on a tributary of the Mississippi River.

The races emphasized the "Dare to Care" theme of the four-day Congress sponsored by the Brotherhood Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Mission action projects were the highlight of another day for many of the 1,400 Royal Ambassadors who registered for the Congress. Needy and elderly people were helped in work projects conducted by teams of RAs at more than two dozen sites around Memphis. One team passed out Scripture portions in a Memphis neighborhood. The high school boys represented 192 SBC churches in 26 states. Royal Ambassadors is a missions education program for boys.

Eight missionaries representing SBC's Foreign and Home Mission Boards gave testimonies during daily plenary sessions. The worship leader for each of these sessions

was Franklin Pollard, pastor of First Church, Jackson, Miss.

The Royal Ambassadors were entertained by comedian Jerry Clower, world yo-yo champion Bunny Martin, and AAU champion power lifter Paul Wrenn.

The closing session Thursday morning featured challenges by Colonel James Irwin and James Smith. Irwin, the Apollo 15 astronaut who survived a serious heart attack earlier this summer, told his youthful audience, "I was dead, but now I'm alive because of another miracle of God." Irwin said, "My prayer for each of you is that you will have a strong heart for Jesus Christ to serve him."

Smith, president of the Brotherhood Commission, reported that Royal Ambassadors have raised \$70,000 so far to purchase goats for the hungry in Bangladesh. Smith then challenged the Pioneers to a new project: provide "friendship kits" as a witness to merchant sailors at U. S. seaports.

A National Pioneer Royal Ambassador Congress is conducted every six years by the SBC Brotherhood Commission.

The hunger relief races were co-sponsored by Baptist Memorial Hospital in Memphis.



David Watkins of Beckspar Church, Forrest City, summons the courage to back of a rappelling tower for the first time at the RA National Congress in Memphis Aug. 5.

Planning for disability: third of four

Cost effective and private: the durable power of attorney

by Larry Page

A power of attorney is a written instrument by which a principal appoints another to serve as his agent or "attorney-in-fact" and authorizes the agent to act on his behalf in matters specified in the document. A durable power of attorney is the popular name of such an agency relationship that, because of a statute authorizing it, becomes or remains valid and operative despite the principal's subsequent disability.



Page

The Arkansas General Assembly enacted the statute creating the durable power of attorney in 1981. As of this writing, all 50 states have adopted such legislation. The significance of the statutory durable power of attorney is realized when the traditional power of attorney is considered. Under the common law, a power of attorney was immediately revoked by operation of law upon the disability of the principal. This resulted in the power of attorney being useless at a time when it was most needed: during the mental disability of the principal.

Until enactment of legislation authorizing the durable power of attorney, when a person became mentally disabled, a probate court proceeding would be necessary seek-

ing the appointment of a guardian and the power by which the guardian could act for the disabled person in areas of his personal care and health and management of his property and assets. As indicated in the last article in this series on planning for disability, the guardianship proceeding can involve unreasonable expense, delay and embarrassment.

The durable power of attorney can, if drafted properly, provide as much protection and welfare as the guardianship proceeding, often at a fraction of the cost, since the only attorney fees are usually a one time expense for preparation of the document. No delay is typically experienced with a durable power of attorney, because by its terms it is automatically effective upon disability or, if the principal had given the agent authority before disability occurs, it remains effective upon the principal's disability. And since court proceedings are not necessary to invoke the agent's authority under a durable power of attorney, delays are avoided and the principal does not have to suffer the embarrassment often associated with the guardianship proceeding in which witnesses testify about the alleged disability.

Uses to which the durable power of attorney may be put are diverse and may include any or a combination of the following: management of the principal's property, that is, powers to buy and sell property, to make deposits and withdrawals from bank

accounts, to deal with life insurance, to take custody of wills, deeds, life insurance policies, contracts, securities, to institute or settle litigation, to reform estate planning documents (other than wills) if they prove defective, etc.; custody and management of the person of the principal, such as making decisions regarding type and location of residence, transportation, recreation, advance funeral and burial arrangements, nomination of guardians for the principal's minor children, and so forth; and health care management which can include not just selection and employment of health care personnel and the giving or withholding of consent to medical treatment, but also the withdrawal of life support systems. All of this can be accomplished without the transfer of ownership that occurs when one sets up a joint bank account, which is often done to reach many of these goals.

The durable power of attorney can be a significant feature of one's planning for disability. Its proper use can not only assure that important decisions for the mentally disabled person are in the hands of a trusted and personally chosen individual, but it can be cost effective and private.

For more information, contact your Arkansas Baptist Foundation, P. O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203, or call us at 376-0732.

Larry Page is vice-president of the Arkansas Baptist Foundation.

Trustees express disapproval of 'Facts and Trends' article

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Citing the Southern Baptist Convention-adopted request of the Peace Committee to avoid stirring the fires of controversy, trustees of the Baptist Sunday School Board expressed disapproval of an article appearing in the July/August issue of a board publication.

The article, an excerpt of an address given on the board's Anniversary Day in May by James L. Sullivan, a former president of the board and the Southern Baptist Convention, outlined his personal perspective on current controversy in the denomination. The publication, *Facts and Trends*, is a newsletter mailed monthly to approximately 57,000 church staff persons and state and SBC leaders.

A motion adopted by the trustees made by Bill Anderson, pastor of Calvary Church, Clearwater, Fla., noted the position taken in the article does not reflect the position of the trustees. It further requests that BSSB editorial personnel honor the Peace Committee's request for a moratorium on activities that could further fuel the current crisis in the denomination.

In other action, trustees adopted a 1986-87 budget of \$163.8 million and a recommendation allowing more time for trustee consideration of nominees for elected staff positions. Department directors, division directors, vice presidents and the president of the board are elected by the trustees.

The budget represents a six percent in-

crease over 1985-86 projected income of \$154 million. In a report on the first nine months of 1985-86, ending June 30, E.V. King, vice president for business and finance, said income of \$109.9 million was \$6.1 million below budget but above last year by \$3.2 million.

The recommendation on personnel search and election presented by the plans and policies committee states that trustee input, suggestions or recommendations will be sought concerning the elected staff position to be filled.

Also, when a candidate is to be considered at a trustee meeting, biographical information will be sent to the trustees 10 days before the meeting. At the meeting the candidate will be introduced with opportunity for questions by the trustees at the plenary session on the first day with the vote on the person coming on the second day.

The practice has been to provide biographical data, present the candidate and vote in the same session. Numerous trustees expressed frustration with the process, noting they felt pressure to vote in support of candidates they had just met and had only a brief time to question.

In other action, trustees adopted increases in 1987 summer conference center rates and

an average 4.5 percent increase in church literature prices, effective April 1987.

The conference center rate includes \$1 and \$2 increases in the children's and adult conference service fees and increases in housing and food.

Jerry Lee of Jackson, Miss., chairman of the finance committee, said a major factor in the need for the literature price increase is spiraling postal rates expected to increase approximately 20 percent next year.

Trustees approved four Sunday school products on cassette tape for the blind while deleting free distribution of braille materials. Tapes will include Bible Book Study for Adults, Bible Book Study for Youth, Adult Bible Study, and Sunday School Adults.

Trustees also elected directors of the music publishing and property management departments.

Festus G. Robertson, an employee of the board since 1967, was elected to head the newly created music publishing department which will begin operation Oct. 1. Richard Bell, who has owned a construction and development company in Houston will direct the property management department which oversees maintenance and construction projects in Nashville and at the 63 Baptist Book Stores and two conference centers.



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Annuity trustees add staff, respond to convention motion

DALLAS (BP)—Annuity Board trustees elected a vice-president of communications, authorized a new study of annuitants and requested the Board staff to research the possibility of changing the agency's name during their summer meeting.

Thomas E. Miller Jr. will become vice-president and director of communications effective Oct. 1. The post is new in the Annuity Board's organizational structure.

Miller, associate editor of the Richmond-based *Religious Herald*, a weekly newspaper

for Southern Baptists in Virginia, develop and direct internal and external communications plans.

In response to a motion made at the 1986 Southern Baptist Convention in Atlanta, the board authorized research to assess the conditions of Southern Baptist annuitants to recommend how more adequate provision for retirement income can be made.

Also, trustees requested the staff to study the possibility of changing the Annuity Board's name to more accurately reflect the

total scope of its ministry.

Board President Darold Morgan reported that net income for the first six months of 1986 was more than \$141.2 million, almost double that of the \$73.1 million income from the same period of 1985.

Total assets of the Annuity Board increased to more than \$1.86 billion, a gain of more than \$305 million during the last 12 months.

The board paid almost \$24.74 million in benefits to 16,145 annuitants during the first half of 1986.

Foreign board may end medical work in Jordan

AJLOUN, Jordan (BP)—Southern Baptist medical work spanning nearly 35 years in Jordan may be coming to an end.

Efforts have been initiated to find a buyer for the Baptist Hospital at Ajloun—perhaps a religious organization or the Jordanian health ministry. A final sale would be approved by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. Hospital trustees hope the sale will be completed by June 30, 1989.

The hospital's board of directors cited "inadequate patient loads, shortage of personnel, and finances" in concurring with the Southern Baptist missionaries in Jordan that

the medical work end.

The Baptist Community of Jordan reported six churches, nine preaching points and 403 members at the end of 1985. Fifty-five baptisms were recorded.

The hospital treated 2,160 inpatients and 11,241 outpatients last year. The number has been declining since a high of 2,908 inpatients in 1977 and a high of 17,884 outpatients the following year.

One reason for the downturn is that the number of government hospitals has increased in recent years. Also, the Baptist Hospital's fees are higher than those charg-

ed at government-subsidized facilities.

The Baptist Hospital's capacity was pared down from 50 to 30 beds in 1978. Its nursing school closed after the number of students dropped from a high of 31 in 1974 to three in 1978. The average inpatient load is 15 to 20, Calhoun said.

Southern Baptists began work in Jordan in 1952 when the initial facility was purchased from a British doctor.

The government has plans to open a diagnostic medical clinic in Ajloun offering full, 24-hour service.

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Staff needed

Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services is in need of one couple to work as relief staff for the Jonesboro Group Home for Boys (ages 12-17) and one couple for the Paragould Emergency Receiving Home (ages 0-12). The husband may be employed elsewhere. Single persons may be considered. For more information, call Ed Pilote at (501) 932-3456.

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South Dakota Brotherhood, WMU tackle farm crisis head on

by D'Lesa Carroll

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)—Mobridge, S.D., is like many towns in the United States. It has restaurants, gas stations, stores and nice homes. Driving through the town, nothing seems out of the ordinary.

But unlike many U. S. towns, most of Mobridge's 3,800 residents are struggling for survival.

In this north central South Dakota city everything and everyone revolves around agriculture. But because of a severe economic depression and farming crisis, businesses are shutting their doors, one railroad has closed down and every day a once-prosperous farmer is filing for bankruptcy.

In a recent U. S. Department of Treasury report, Mobridge was listed as having the lowest median income per family in the entire United States. With these financial hardships come higher-than-normal rates of stress-related illnesses, child and spouse abuse, alcoholism and drug abuse.

Mobridge Southern Baptist Church's Woman's Missionary Union and Brotherhood are helping to combat the overwhelming emotional, mental and physical needs in this farming community. Their game plan: food and clothing distributions, financial assistance with utility bills and shelter for the homeless, just to name a few ministries.

"We have to meet the physical needs first, then the spiritual," said Pam Agee, WMU director.

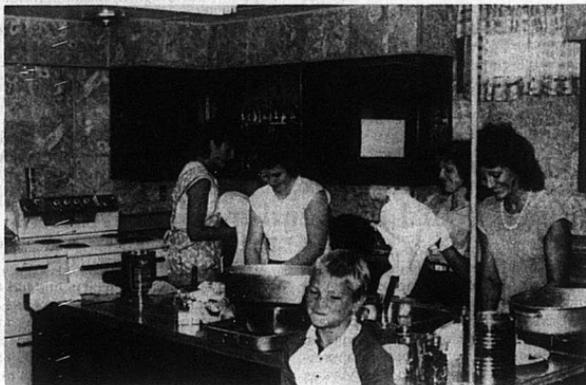
She and her husband, Bill, moved here nine years ago when he accepted the pastorate of the Mobridge church. Because they brought new beliefs to a predominantly Lutheran and Catholic area, they were not welcomed with open arms—and still are criticized by some today.

They've helped establish a Southern Baptist church and now have 170 members, but times are still hard.

"The people are beginning to be more receptive to us now because they realize they don't have anyone else to turn to except the Lord," Agee said.

First Benin WMU meeting

COTONOU, Benin—Baptists in Benin recently conducted their first national Woman's Missionary Union conference. A highlight of the conference was the testimonies of several women who recently turned away from their superstitious beliefs and committed their lives to Jesus Christ. They told of the despair they felt before and the joy they experienced as new Christians. A young woman, greatly influenced by the testimonies, gave her life to Christ. The conference was a "wonderful answer to prayer," said missionary Marilyn Bonnell. Benin Baptist women "discovered that they can lead themselves and do it well."



These Baptist women from Mobridge Church, Mobridge, S. D., are busy cooking an evening meal which is free to anyone in the community. This Wednesday night meal is just one of the church's many ministries to its struggling farming community. Pictured left to right: Ardella Ackerman, Cindy Ford, Sandy Friedel and Pam Agee.

When the community does turn to the church, they find a free meal program, provided by Baptist Women and Baptist Men. On Wednesdays, the Baptist Women cook all day to prepare an evening meal which is open to anyone who would like to come. For those who can't come or feel uncomfortable going to a church to eat, the Baptist Men deliver meals to homes. This program is one way the men can share Christ with those who won't attend church.

The church receives some food supplies from the government to help feed many unemployed families. The members hope to begin a milk program soon and plan to have hot lunches served to students at the nearby school. Since the school does not provide hot lunches, some children eat bagged lunches or go downtown to eat. Others go without.

"We have church members without food, without heat, without electricity, and sometimes out on the street without housing. I've had to stand by and watch many of our children run through mud and ice water in their one pair of tennis shoes full of holes," said Michael Pike, minister of education at the Mobridge church.

So the church members find new shoes, food and fuel for the furnaces. But it's not easy. Coats, gloves and other essential clothes for the winter are hard to come by, but at least those items can be donated by those more fortunate. Money to pay utility bills or the rent is harder to find. But still, the church tries.

The government supports some families, but even that's not enough. What is sad is so many cases is most of the farmers are too

"rich" to qualify for the aid, Agee said. If they own a car or a home, they are "rich" even if they don't have a bite of bread on the supper table, she said.

But still others throughout the state don't even have a home to call their own. They come by the carloads into Mobridge looking for jobs. Once in town and defeated, these passer-bys need shelter at night or money for gas to travel on.

"These job-seekers aren't bums, they are hard-working individuals who would gladly work for any price to provide food for their families," Agee said.

The Agees often receive midnight calls from persons needing a place to stay for the night. If possible, they are able to put them up in a church member's home, hotel, or sometimes the local jail.

"The hardest thing for me to handle is when people call me in the dead of winter needing a place to sleep or food to eat, and I have nowhere to send them. It's hard for them to understand that God loves them and will take care of them when they're starving or freezing to death," Agee said.

"Sometimes I can hardly sit at my dinner table and eat or sleep in a warm bed knowing that so many people are doing without," she said.

"So many times I've wanted to run back home—to the South—and forget about the problems up here, but I know this is where God wants us. We've seen many miracles happen and know that there are many lying ahead if we will keep trusting him."

D'Lesa Carroll is public information assistant with WMU, SBC.

International

God's presence

by C.A. Johnson, Walnut Street Church, Jonesboro

Basic passage: Daniel 3

Focal passage: Daniel 3:14-18, 23-26

Central truth: Christians can count on God's presence and power as they face opposition because of their faithfulness.

Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, erected a huge image of gold in the province of Babylon. He then summoned the principal officials of his empire to the dedication of the image. Everyone was commanded to fall down and worship the image at the sound of the music. Anyone refusing to obey the order was to be cast into a fiery furnace. Refusal to worship the image was an act of defiance to the kingdom and its king.

The threat of being burned alive was enough to cause the entire crowd to fall down before the image. The only exceptions were Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego (commonly called "the three Hebrew Children"). The refusal of the Hebrew youths to bow down was brought to the king's attention. The king flew into a rage and confronted the three young men. They were given a second chance to bow down. The young men not only refused to bow down, but they affirmed their faith in God. They vowed to be faithful even if God did not deliver them.

The three Hebrew children were bound and thrown into the fiery furnace. The fire was so hot that it killed the strong men who threw them into the furnace (v. 22). What the king saw astonished him. He saw four men in the furnace instead of three. Moreover, they were free, walking about in the fire, and making no attempt to escape. Most astounding of all was that the form of the fourth man was like the Son of God. The king readily recognized that the God of these young men was greater than all the gods of Babylon. The king bade the Jewish lads to come out of the fire. They came out unscathed and unharmed. Nebuchadnezzar then blessed their God.

One of the greatest needs of our day is for people to have their priorities right. The three Hebrew children certainly had their priorities right! God came first in their life. They had learned to depend upon God in every circumstance of life. They remained faithful to God whether he would or would not deliver them (vv. 17-18). God's people need to learn to be faithful to God, even if God does not deliver the way we want.

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Life and Work

When marriage ends

by Sidney G. Carswell, Crystal Hill Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: Matthew 5:27-32; 19:1-12; Ephesians 4:32; 1 John 1:8-10; Deuteronomy 24:1-4

Focal passage: Matthew 5:31-32; 19:3-9; Ephesians 4:32

Central truth: God's ideal for marriage is one man for one woman for life.

The central truth of this lesson states the biblical ideal. Very few if any Christians are unaware of the biblical teachings on marriage and divorce. However, there are two areas that are sensitive in which we do not minister well.

First, we need to recognize that divorce is not the unpardonable sin. Jesus gave marital infidelity as grounds for divorce (Matt. 19:9). It is generally accepted divorce was not required. Forgiveness and reconciliation are recommended as taught by Hosea. If the marriage could not be repaired, it could be dissolved. God did not intend that two people be locked into a relationship that would finally destroy them.

Since divorce is not the unpardonable sin and since it is not a communicable disease, we should not seek to approach the divorced person with love, encouragement and reassurance. All sin is against God. God is able to forgive any sin. Certainly we are obligated to forgive and to approach those who are hurting. We should approach those who lose a partner through divorce in much the same way we minister to one who loses a partner through death. In many cases the divorced person hurts worse. There is the pain of tension and failure added to the loss of the partner. The church needs to help them see that divorce is not the unpardonable sin and there is life after divorce.

The second area has to do with remarriage after divorce. Many interpret the words of Jesus in Matthew 19:9 as giving the innocent partner of an adulterer the right to remarry.

The Apostle Paul suggested that it was better to marry than to be in a position of constant temptation (1 Cor. 7:8-9). The fact is that in our society many marriages have dissolved and both partners have remarried. Many of these second marriages are in the churches. They are faithfully serving God. The prophet Hosea and 1 John 1:9 lead me to believe that God's grace and redemption is available to those who divorce and remarry as well as those who divorce and remain single.

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Bible Book

God restores his people

by Homer W. Shirley Jr., First Church, Siloam Springs

Basic passage: Zechariah 9:1-11:17

Focal passage: Zechariah 9:9-12; 10:2-3a,6-10

Central truth: Though God disciplines his people when they sin, his promise to restore his people shows that his love and mercy never cease.

The pain and suffering of today has a way of preoccupying our attention and preempting our vision of the future. We are plagued with "momentitis." We live as if the present moment characterizes all our future. Our thinking becomes so circumstance-related we have difficulty seeing any hope for better days.

God does discipline his people. We have been observing that in this series of studies. As we have already stated, he has a redemptive purpose in discipline. It is our responsibility to find and follow his will and purpose so that we experience reconciliation to him.

God also restores his people. He often reminds us of better days and our need to trust him to bring them about. His admonition to "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just and having salvation; lovely, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass" (9:9), is a look to better days. It is a reference to the coming of Jesus Christ, the Messiah.

You and I have the record of his coming in the New Testament. To us who are believers in him, we have the witness within that these words are true. We can always believe God. He fulfills his promises.

Such emphasis should encourage all of us young and old to rely on God. Regardless of our current situation we must remember that God does care for us. He will act in our behalf. It is not God's intent to cast people away forever. Rather he is seeking to reach people. He wants to save all (9:16). He will save all who come to him through faith in Jesus Christ.

Just as we must look beyond the circumstance of the moment, we must look beyond this present age. To become too earth-bound will negate our effectiveness for God. Our vision must be far enough down the road to keep us out of the ditch. Just as Israel must look beyond the captivity to the restoration in Jerusalem, we must look beyond life here on this earth to life in heaven.

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HMB requests new search committee for president

ATLANTA (BP)—By a vote of 40-36, directors of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, meeting in executive session, requested the resignations of seven members of a search committee appointed in June to nominate a new president.

Directors also asked their officers to appoint a new search committee "that will give fair representation and proper balance to all members of the board."

In response to the action, six of the seven members resigned from the search committee, although not from the board. M.A. Winchester, a medical doctor from Whitley City, Ky., declined to resign "for reasons of personal integrity."

The motion was made by Johnny Jackson, executive director of the Paul Jackson Evangelistic Association, Little Rock, Ark. Jackson said he was making the motion "in light of the apparent imbalance of the present search committee in regard to theological issues facing our board."

Although the action was taken during executive session in which the media, staff and visitors were asked to leave, copies of Jackson's motion, including the vote count, were given to news media by Home Mission Board outgoing chairman Travis Wiginton of Norman, Okla.

Just before the meeting ended, Wiginton resigned as chairman of the board, saying he had accepted the pastorate of Kona Baptist Church in Hawaii, effective Sept. 7, and would no longer be eligible to be a board member from Oklahoma.

The board elected Clark Hutchinson, pastor of Eastside Church, Marietta, Ga., as "interim" chairman until the regularly-scheduled election of officers in March 1987.

In an interview after the meeting, Wiginton said the votes were a "clear indication" of the control of the board by what some have called "fundamental-conservatives" in the Southern Baptist Convention.

"The implication is the same old story we've had for several years, a lack of trust" between Baptists who disagree with each other in the political and theological controversy confronting the SBC, said Wiginton.

He said he was aware that board members who were unhappy with the selection of the search committee had caucused and decided to ask that the committee resign, even before they had presented their first report.

Wiginton asked search committee chairman Eugene Cotey, pastor of First Church, Murfreesboro, Tenn., to lead the opening devotional and to present the search committee report as the first item on the agenda.

After Cotey's devotional, but before his committee report, a motion was made by Ann Frazier of Roanoke Rapids, N.C., that the board go into executive session.

Wiginton ruled the motion out of order, saying he already had recognized Cotey for his report, but the board voted 38-31 not to

sustain the chair and went into executive session.

Long-time board staff members said it was the first time the board had gone into executive session since 1973 when the board was dealing with a "sensitive personnel matter." The board has met in executive session only two or three times in the last 25 years, according to informed sources.

Behind closed doors, Jackson made his motion to ask the committee to resign, and Wiginton ruled the motion out of order. By identical votes of 40 to 36, the board voted against sustaining the ruling of the chair and voted to approve Jackson's motion.

Wiginton explained later he felt any attempt to disband the committee before it did its work and before it presented its report would violate the board's bylaws.

Later, the board in more routine and open business actions voted to authorize a \$300,000 loan to the Colorado Baptist Convention, voted to purchase property adjacent to its building, promoted three staff members to new positions and employed three other new national staff, appointed 24 new missionaries, and heard a report from the board's acting president on progress made since the resignation of William G. Tanner as president on June 15.

While the board was taking action on scheduled business, the seven-member search committee met privately to pray and discuss their response to the request to resign. No announcement was made during the "open" business session of the actions taken during executive session.

After Wiginton resigned as chairman and Hutchinson was elected, the board went into a second executive session to hear the response of the search committee.

Wiginton said each of the committee members gave his or her testimony, and announced an individual decision. The committee decided they would not resign as a group, but make individual statements.

All members of the committee except Winchester told the board they were resigning. They included Don Aderhold and Frank Wells of Atlanta, Lula Walker of Beaverton, Ore., Lawana McIver of Dallas, Troy Morrison of Montgomery, Ala., and Cotey.

Wiginton said he believed there is a possibility that some of the committee members who resigned may be asked to serve on the second committee to be appointed by the five officers.

Hutchinson, the new chairman, said in an interview after the board meeting he did not know when the new committee would be appointed and announced.

Hutchinson led the board members in a standing ovation in appreciation for Wiginton's leadership as chairman, and asked the board members to kneel in prayer asking God to "send a fresh sense of love" to Baptists for the board and for the denomination.