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July 31, 1986

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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July 31, 1986

Arkansas Baptist

Newsmagazine

A summer camp
for disabled children
page 11

ARKANSAS BAPTIST NEWS
PROPERTY AND ARCHITECTURE
Historical Commission,
Little Rock, Tennessee



On the cover



ABN photo / Mark Kelly

One Arkansas association ministers in a unique way to the physically and mentally handicapped within its area. Liberty Association's weeklong camp is reportedly the only one of its kind among Baptist associations (see article on p. 11).

In this issue

8-9 caring in crisis

When families are coming apart at the seams, physical and mental abuse run rampant, Arkansas Baptists provide a caring, structured environment for family members needing shelter.

13 touching farm families

American farm families, long noted for their stern self-sufficiency, can be difficult to help when they begin to suffer the pain of losing a family farming operation.

Missionary to recruit pastors in state

James D. Bryant, missionary to Thailand, will travel the state to challenge pastors to consider becoming foreign missionaries. He is one 20 furloughing missionaries serving as enlistment assistants with the Foreign Mission Board's Missionary Enlistment Department.

Bryant, who is from Harrison, will meet with as many preachers as he can from August 1986 to May 1987. Through participation in pastors' gatherings and in personal meetings, Bryant will help identify



Bryant

pastors who could be general evangelists overseas, and will encourage the pastors to consider missionary service.

According to Bill Morgan, director of the enlistment department, about 95 percent of Southern Baptist pastors stay in the United States where only 5 percent of the world's 5 billion people live. Much of the world has yet to hear the gospel which many pastors preach over and over to the same people.

"There are literally hundreds of preachers whom God has gifted for ministry across cultural lines. It is hard to believe that the Lord of the harvest who has opened so many doors for us would call so few," said Morgan.

Bryant's furlough address is 107 Cardinal Drive, Harrison, AR 72691. He can be contacted by telephone at 501-741-2884.

Lay Renewal Weekend planned Oct. 16-18

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — "Doing the Word" will be the theme of a Lay Renewal Weekend Oct. 16-18, sponsored by the Southern Seminary Foundation. The program events will be held at Louisville's Brown Hilton Hotel and on the campus of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Highlights of the weekend, which will begin with dinner Thursday and conclude at noon Saturday, include Bible studies in James, led by Harold Songer, professor of New Testament, and a mini-concert by Cynthia Clawson, Christian concert artist.

Speakers will include William Hendricks, professor of theology and popular lecturer and author; and Kenneth Chafin, professor of preaching and author of *Help! I'm a Layman* and *Is There a Family in the House?* Seminar leaders will include marriage and family counselors Lewis and Melissa McBurnie, who will discuss topics such as conflict and stress, parenting, and building better

marriages; and Jack and June McEwen, who will discuss simplifying one's lifestyle.

"The entire program will emphasize personal and spiritual growth for laypersons," explains Pat Pattillo, executive director of the Foundation, which is composed of 33 laypersons from 14 states. "We believe this will be a tremendous weekend for couples who participate."

Pattillo indicates that this event is a revival of a heritage of lay renewal involvement at Southern Seminary that began with the Layman's Leadership Institute in the early 1950's. That group was a pioneer in the lay renewal movement.

Cost for the three-day event is \$150 per couple, which includes conference registration and materials, two dinners, two lunches and refreshment breaks. For more information write: Lay Renewal Weekend, Southern Seminary Foundation, 2825 Lexington Road, Louisville, KY 40280, or call (800) 626-5525.

Missouri executive announces retirement

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (BP)—Missouri Baptist Convention Executive Director Rheubin L. South has announced his retirement effective Dec. 31, 1986.

In a written report to the convention's executive board July 15, South noted he will celebrate his 65th birthday on Dec. 16. In December 1985, the executive board asked South to continue beyond his 65th birthday, through 1988.

"I appreciate the executive board granting the two-year extension of my service as executive director. However, we believe we sense the Lord's will of what is best for us and Missouri Baptists," he said.

South, who was diagnosed as suffering from leukemia in April, thanked board members for their support during his recent hospitalization. He said doctors were delighted and surprised at his progress, adding, "the answer is in the hundreds of prayers of Missouri Baptists and others around the world."

South told board members he had suffered

no side effects or complications from chemotherapy treatment. He said he had experienced a period of high temperature which ended as his body began producing white blood cells. He added his blood count continues to improve and that bone marrow tests conducted just before dismissal from the hospital "were most encouraging." All intravenous antibiotics also have been discontinued.

To implement his decision to retire, South wrote convention President Wallace E. Jones, pastor of Fee Fee Church in St. Louis, formally announcing the retirement decision. In the letter of June 30, South said, "The extent to which my illness affects my ability to serve as executive director has been much in my thoughts and prayers. Verna and I have discussed our future, and we feel the Lord has led us in a decision concerning what is best for us and Missouri Baptists."

South began his Missouri service on Feb. 17, 1975, coming from a 23-year pastorate at Park Hill Church in North Little Rock, Ark.

Making a moral commitment

The editor's page

J. Everett Sneed



Everyone is aware that homelife today is experiencing tremendous change. The disruptions which have affected families' living are approaching cataclysmic proportions. It appears now that we have reached a crossroads in which we must either move toward recovery or unspeakable ruin. We have reached a crisis in homelife.

The question arises, "Why has such a crisis developed with the families of today?" Some would say that the crisis in the home grows out of our complex social order. We live in an age of hustle and bustle. When everyone is pushed the limit disturbing tendencies often develop. Family living, these would assert, is in a strain primarily because of the complexities of life.

Another would say the home crisis is the product of the materialistic bent of our age. The whole scope of worldliness, and desire for things of the world, place pressures upon the home in which individuals push themselves to the limit in order to obtain more material possessions.

Our age is, also, characterized by "new individualism." The expressions of one's own personality is magnified and everything which hampers self expression is repelled. According to this viewpoint no friendship or even marriage should be expected to take precedent over compatibility. Such an individualistic viewpoint makes incompatibility just grounds for severing of any relationship.

There is, of course, much truth in these explanations. But no one of them nor all of them in combination states the real malady of the contemporary problem confronting our homes. The disease which threatens the home is growing out of the inability of men and women to make a moral commitment to which they will be true for life. When a man and a woman cannot commit themselves to each other for a permanent union and keep that pledge while life lasts, then they do not have the moral resources to build a stable home. The most basic problem is lack of character which destroys homes and breaks down our society. The age-old disease of sin is eating away at the vitality of contemporary homes.

The most important question is, "Is there hope for recovery?" The contemporary crisis will turn toward recovery if husbands and wives strive to create a permanent devotion. The Bible gives a vivid picture of affection which brings a man and a woman together and forms a solidarity for a union of permanent companionship. Such permanence can only come to pass when there is a Christ-like agape love. Agape love goes beyond human infatuation or sexual attraction of one individual for

another. It is a spiritual love that can only be manifested by an individual who has had an experience with Christ. This kind of commitment which produces permanence is, also, the solid rock on which the structure of society rests.

The only way to avert any home crisis, whether general or individual, is by strengthening the bonds of affection which is the basis of marriage. When we help men and women attain the character required to make moral commitments to which they will be true, the crisis will be averted.

Another question which arises is, "How can we divert the home crisis in the future?" The answer lies in training our children toward mature devotion. One of the great qualifications young people need for entering into marriage is the mature capacity to give and receive affection. This is the point at which maturity is most needed for successful marriage.

First, we can train our children through example and experience. Children need to know that their parents love each other with a devotion that is true, steadfast, and unshakable. Daily example of such devotion between the parents is one of life's greatest lessons for the children.

Children also need to see the warmth of parents for their children. The home must be bound together by true affection. It is that cradle of love which supports life.

Our children, also, need to be warned of the dangers of false romance. Our society today is shot through with the doctrine of false love or romance. Hollywood has set forth the idea that love falls out of the blue and "zaps" an individual and they are totally overpowered by its force. Hollywood further maintains that the love which suddenly falls upon an individual can leave in like manner.

Our young people need to learn the meaning of true devotion. Psychologists tell us that there are five steps to emotional maturity. These are: (1) the infant loves himself; (2) the baby lifts the horizon of his affection in attachment to his parents; (3) the boy or girl loves his gang, friends of his own sex; (4) the growing teenager is attracted to the opposite sex; and (5) an individual reaches emotional maturity when he can direct his affection to one person in lifelong devotion.

Contemporary individuals need instruction, both negative and positive, in the meaning of true devotion. Individuals must strive for emotional maturity. The crisis will be ended when individuals are willing to make a moral commitment to which they will be true for a lifetime.

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meeting the information needs of Arkansas Baptists

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J. Everett Sneed, Ph.D. Editor
Mark Kelly Managing Editor

Erwin L. McDonald, Litt D. Editor Emeritus

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Letters to the editor expressing opinions are invited. Letters should be typed double-spaced and must be signed. Letters must not contain more than 350 words and must not defame the character of persons. They must be marked "for publication."

Photos submitted for publication will be returned only when accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Only black and white photos can be used.

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'Super Summer' experience aims at training youthful leaders

A rigorous week-long schedule jammed with intensive leadership training and thought-provoking personal application. Sound like fun?

"Fun" was only one of the adjectives being used by senior high youth to describe their experience at Arkansas' "Super Summer" July 14-18 at Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia.

In its second year, Super Summer drew 530 youth from more than 60 Arkansas Baptist churches, an average of 8.8 youth per church, said Jim Lagrone, ABSC Evangelism Department associate.

That response demonstrates a broad interest among Arkansas Baptist churches in serious discipleship and personal evangelism training for older youth, Lagrone believes.

Super Summer organizer Rick Caldwell, minister of youth at Geyer Springs First Church in Little Rock, said Super Summer was designed to offer something challenging, exciting and different for older youth.

"The vast majority of our churches have a disease called 'youth dropout,'" Caldwell asserted. "We have strong junior high ministries, but few seniors and college-age young people attending."

The reason, Caldwell believes, is that church programs offer too little for older young people. He explained that when Geyer Springs adopted a philosophy of "build-up"—that is, activities which grow in magnitude for each age group—the church found its ministry to older youth growing.

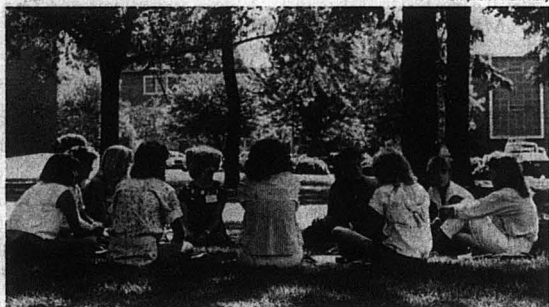
The anticipation of having something to look forward to keeps younger children involved in and excited about a youth program, Caldwell believes. Super Summer was designed as such a "reward" to older youth for staying involved.

Several factors make Super Summer attractive to older youth, Caldwell said. First, it is held on a college campus, with air-conditioned dormitory housing and cafeteria food.

Mr. and Mrs. Ronald P. Baker, missionaries to Indonesia, report a change of address (Kotak Pos 38, Bengkulu, Indonesia). He was born in Lee County and considers Brinkley his hometown. The former Debbie Rogers, she was born in Fort Smith and considers Van Buren her hometown. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1982.

Mr. and Mrs. James D. Bryant, missionaries to Thailand, have arrived in the States for furlough (address: 107 Cardinal Dr., Harrison, AR 72601). He was born in Harrison and she, the former Virginia Estes, grew up in Omaha. They were appointed in 1980.

Linda Dillworth, missionary to the Philippines, has arrived in the States for furlough (address: 4717 Roswell Rd., Apt. D-5, Atlan-



ABN photo / Mark Kelly

A "family group" led by a Super Summer staffer follows up a plenary session with discussion and application under the shade trees on Ouachita's common.

Second, it features outstanding youth communicators on program. Third, the format allows young people freedom to choose their study topics from a long list of "hot" topics.

Youth were asked to select classes they would attend all week and different seminars for each night of the week. Topics ranged from personal devotions and witness training to suicide, divorce, and drugs and drinking.

Youth ministers attending the program also were able to select classes and seminars designed especially for them, Caldwell noted. Forty-five college-age Super Summer staffers freed the youth ministers from responsibility for their young people to enable them to profit from the week as well.

Program personalities for the event included Dawson McAllister, youth evangelist from Columbia, Tenn.; Tierce Green, music evangelist from Arlington, Texas; Mike Huckabee, pastor of Immanuel Church, Pine

Bluff; Don Moore, executive director, Arkansas Baptist State Convention; Bill Falkner, ABSC Church Training associate; and Dean Findley, SBC Home Mission Board youth evangelism consultant.

Although sponsored and coordinated by the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, the Super Summer program was planned by a nine-member steering committee composed of youth ministers from across the state, Lagrone noted. That steering committee will rotate new members on each year in order to "keep in touch with the needs that are out there," he said.

"We're trying to build a vibrant commitment to Jesus Christ among these youth," Caldwell concluded. "We want to help them understand Christianity is real and exciting and affects every dimension of our lives. Then we want to challenge them to move into the greatest mission field in America—their high school campuses—and make a difference."

missionary notes

Bluff, GA 30342). She lived in Fort Smith while growing up. She was appointed in 1977.

Mr. and Mrs. Roy D. Hawkins, missionaries to Venezuela, have completed furlough and returned to the field (address: Apartado 358, Valenci, Edo. Carabobo, Venezuela 2001-A). He was born in Parks and she is the former Judy Palmer of Oklahoma. They were appointed in 1973.

Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth G. Robertson, missionaries to Senegal, have completed furlough and returned to the field (address: BP 3330, Dakar, Senegal). He was born in Pine Bluff and lived in Wilmot, Pickens and Tillar. She is the former Margaret Howard of Clark County. They were appointed in 1976.

Mr. and Mrs. William L. Sergeant, mis-

sionaries to Taiwan, have arrived in the States for furlough (address: 340 N. Highland, Fayetteville, AR 72701). He was born in Iowa and she is the former LaVeta Pierce of Kansas. They were appointed in 1970.

Mr. and Mrs. J.O. Terry Jr., missionaries to Asia, have arrived in the States for furlough (address: 1742 Belmont Ave., Baton Rouge, LA 70808). He serves as media consultant for Asia. He is a native of Louisiana. The former Mabelee Worthen, she was born in Fordyce. They were appointed in 1968.

Dr. and Mrs. Jack E. Tolar, missionaries to Nigeria, have arrived in the States for furlough (address: 8255 Campobello, San Antonio, TX 78218). He is a native of Texas and she is the former Barbara Corrington of Hot Springs. They were appointed in 1962.

You'll be glad to know: . . .

...What you have done for a sister church! Hear it from the pastor's letter!

"Please let me share with you the work that was done here. A year ago, October 1985, I came to pastor the Pleasant Grove Baptist Church. They had become exhausted, with very little hope of renewing the life of the church in the future. There stood a 32'x36' block building with no Sunday School rooms, no water or restrooms, and no baptistry. One year and five months later, with the help you gave us, we now have water, bathrooms, a baptistry, two Sunday School rooms, a small fellowship hall with a small kitchen, and the auditorium was remodeled. Also, we have air and heat being installed at the present time.



Moore

"March 30, 1986, there were seven baptized following our revival, and on April 13, there were two more baptized in our new baptistry.

"It is more than moments of amazement to those who had lost faith and hope, just to learn and know what Southern Baptists can and will do if only given a change. There is more willingness to support the Cooperative Program now that they are enlightened and found help in time of need.

"In behalf of the Pleasant Grove Baptist Church and the body, I would like to express our appreciation to you for our new found hope, and your concern and help" (Excerpts of letter from pastor Troy Akers, April 18, 1986). The above was taken from a letter of thanks to your Missions Department. It needed to go to you, as a contributing Arkansas Baptist. It was your money given through the Cooperative Program and Dixie Jackson State Mission offering that made this help possible. This story is being duplicated again and again. It is thrilling! We can't do much more than we are doing, though. The reason? Arkansas churches have not been growing in their support of missions. In 1983 our churches gave 11.9 percent of their undesignated receipts for the Cooperative Program. We have been there ever since. Let's get off high center this year and make possible more thrilling stories such as the one I've shared.

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

Letters to the editor

Unjust labeling

So, I'm a liberal. The Lord Jesus Christ saved me when I was 15 years old living on a farm in Oklahoma. At age 16, the Holy Spirit called me to preach his Word. I am now 65 years old and I have been faithful to that calling. For over 45 years I have served as pastor, evangelist, discipler, conference speaker, overseas missionary and evangelism consultant. In all of this ministry, the Bible—the holy Word of God—has been just that, the Word of God. I have never needed other men of verbalize for me that belief in the Word of God. God's Word has never required me to use the adjective "inherent."

In the recent meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention held in Atlanta, President Charles Stanley appealed to the convention to elect Adrian Rogers as president so as not to depart from the fundamentalist-established philosophy. He indicated by this that Winfred Moore was of another philosophical persuasion which would do great damage to the convention. Prior to the convention, Moore had been accused by some fundamentalists as being liberal and of being used by liberals. When they placed Moore in this liberal category, they placed me there too. I will take my place alongside this man of God with joy.

Due to this unjust and unauthorized labeling, I could be bitter and resentful were I controlled by the "flesh." I refuse to be so. I will just continue to witness personally to the lost, preach the Christ of the Word and do all I can to bring in God's kingdom.—**Ervin E. Hasteley, Richmond, Va.**

Jesus showed his truth

I am a child of the living God, and against any unification of church and state. This nation and church grew together for almost 200 years, one not interfering with the other. That didn't suit Satan. Jesus said I beheld Satan fall like lightning to the ground (Lu. 10:18). It's reasonable to believe that Satan can create a facsimile of light.

Our eminent professor from Virginia best think on these things before he states the number of members of cults in these United States, for they number in the hundreds of thousands, who claim they are saints of light! Jesus said Satan was a liar and the father of

it (John 8:44). It's like him to say that the mention of God or teaching of his Word in public school was infringing on people's rights!

Fellow Christian; study God's Word and pray the Holy Spirit to lead you into all truth as is found in Jesus who was God with us (Matt. 1:23). Jesus said I am the truth, the life and the way (John 14:6). That is the great I AM that sent Moses to Egypt to bring his people out and the same who said, take this gospel into all the world and I am with you always.

Jesus showed his truth, life, and way in the four Gospels. He cleansed the lepers, opened blind eyes, made the lame to walk, the deaf to hear, cured the mentally ill by casting the demons from their brains, cured palsies, fever and blood flow, straightened bent backs, cured withered hands, and told Peter to look in a fish's mouth for money to pay taxes. Raised the dead! What a Savior! Praise the name of Jesus! Perilous times are with us. Paul tells us whether by trumpet sound or death we drop these robes of flesh, we meet our Savior! (I Cor. 15:51-58) We shall see him as he is for we will be like him! (I John 3:2) What glorious expectation! Praise the Lord.—**Vivian Stone, Mayflower**

Put all this to rest

I would like to write an answer to Mr. Johnson of Pine Bluff who seems to think that Southern Baptists went the wrong way again in Atlanta. I sure am glad that we still went the wrong way as he stated. But, it goes against all that I have been taught and have learned through the years.

I have been a Southern Baptist all of my 37 years in the ministry. I have attended many of our conventions during these years. It seems to me that the best thing we can do is to accept what nearly 55 percent of our messengers voted for.

I believe in the "priesthood of the believer," and I don't care for Mr. Johnson or anyone else telling me that I went the wrong way, when I feel I followed the leadership of the Holy Spirit in voting as I did.

Why don't we put all of this to rest and accept what we are doing to the glory of God and salvation of souls!—**John Colbert, Corning**

Baptist hospital, university form joint program

MEMPHIS—Baptist Memorial Hospital, Memphis, and Union University in Jackson, Tenn., have announced the formation of a cooperative nursing education program.

The program will allow the two institutions to work jointly at the Memphis hospital's campus starting in September. The two-phased cooperative effort will provide instruction which may lead to the baccalaureate of science degree in nursing.

Baptist Memorial Hospital is the largest privately-owned hospital in the nation and is operated by the Southern Baptist Conventions of Tennessee, Arkansas and Mississippi. Union University is the oldest college in the Southern Baptist Convention.

For further information, contact the Baptist Memorial Hospital Recruitment Office at (901) 522-6103 or the Union University Shelby County Office at (901) 363-6044.

Arkansas all over

by Millie Gill / ABN staff writer

people

Ken Reece will begin serving Aug. 10 as pastor of Mayflower First Church, moving there from more than eight years of service as pastor of Ola First Church. He and his wife, Pat, have two children, Jennifer, 12, and Billy, eight.

Monte Elam recently entered the field of evangelism following 28 years of service in the field of communications. He is a member of Alma First Church and may be reached by contacting the church.

Anthony Kimbrough is serving on staff this summer at Glorieta Baptist Conference Center. He is working as a director in the area of youth recreation. He is a student at the University of Arkansas, working on a master's degree in broadcast journalism. He is the son of Rev. and Mrs. Billy Kimbrough. His father is pastor of Alma First Church.

David Poe began serving July 20 as pastor of Bono First Church, moving there from Woodsprings Church in Jonesboro.

Mark Chism has resigned as pastor of New Liberty Church near Blytheville.

Dewie Williams, who recently retired as administrator of chaplaincy services for the Arkansas Department of Correction, is residing at 3508 South Apple, Pine Bluff, AR 71603.

Ariel Hernandez recently observed his fifth anniversary of service as director of the Hermitage Migrant Mission Center. Hernandez and his family were recognized at the recent dedication of the center's medical clinic and were presented with \$200 by those attending the dedication.

Billy West is serving as pastor of Tennessee Church at Texarkana. He and his wife, Pam, and their children, Melissa, Adam and Brooke, moved on the field July 15.

Scott Bryant has joined the staff of Forrest City First Church as association pastor and music/media coordinator. He and his wife, Kendra, have a daughter, Nicole.

Elmer Lynn West has joined the staff of Marion First Church as director of education, youth and children.



Reece



Elam

John Colbert has resigned as director of missions for Current-Gains Association, effective Aug. 1. He will reside at 704 Park Street in Willow Springs, Mo.

Ken and Wilma Bradley have returned from doing volunteer mission work in San Point, Idaho. There they were involved in adult evangelism that resulted in 10 professions of faith. They are members of Fayetteville First Church.

Cora Steward of Elaine died July 19. Her services were in Helena on July 21. The widow of W.C. Steward, her survivors include seven daughters, Lernelene Mosley of

Mobile, Ala., Merle Garrison of Blytheville, Susie McNair and Vivian Knapp, both of Little Rock, Patsy Jeffery of Cabot, Mary Perkins of Lambrók and Glenda Cravens of Melwood; two sisters; two brothers, 13 grandchildren; 21 great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren.

Lester Passmore has resigned as pastor of Angora Church, Leslie.

Benny Grant began serving July 13 as pastor of Sparkman First Church. He is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and has attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He also has participated in the Seminary Studies program in Little Rock. Grant has served as pastor of Arkansas and Texas churches.

Burford Francis is serving Holland Church as music director. He also serves as director of Faulkner Association Cold Springs Camp.

Bill Garrett began serving July 16 as pastor of Brumley Church in Conway, going there from Mount Vernon Church.



North Arkansas Association held its first annual spring associational meeting recently at Eagle Heights Church, Harrison. Coordinators were (left to right) Pastor Stanton Cram, Dale Taylor, moderator and L.B. Atchison, director of missions. Curtis Mathis (right), pastor of Harrison First Church, was elected as moderator for 1986-87. The main purpose of this meeting, instituted through constitutional revision in the annual session last fall, is to elect associational officers and committee personnel. This will enable associational officers to attend key leader meetings and other training opportunities provided by Arkansas Baptist State Convention to assist in early planning for the new church year that begins in October. Fall associational meetings also will be held.

briefly

West Memphis Second Church celebrated a "Together We Build" program June 19 with a dinner and afternoon musical program. Members contributed \$10,098 and pledged \$13,105 toward construction costs of additional Sunday School classrooms.

Genoa Church recent Vacation Bible School resulted in 12 professions of faith and nine baptisms. The church had 16 additions by baptism in June.

Waldo Church launched a family outreach program in June that resulted in 11 baptisms and two additions by letter.

Caraway First Church held a June 15 noteburning service to observe payment of a \$61,000 indebtedness. Harold Ray, director of missions for Mount Zion Association, was speaker. Bob Hall is pastor.

Jonesboro Fisher Street Church mission team was in Cherokee, N.C. July 25-Aug. 2 to lead backyard Bible clubs, and evening worship services and to assist with Scripture distribution.

DeQueen First Church ordained Mike Sims to the deacon ministry July 27.

Cotter First Church has declared the month of July as "Love and Appreciation Month" for Pastor Dean VanLaningham and his wife, Penny. VanLaningham has resigned effective Aug. 3 to attend Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is a graduate of Southern Baptist College and Ouachita Baptist University. He has pastored churches in Arkansas for 22 years, serving at Cotter for more than seven years.

Oseola First Church mission team was in Huntington, Ind., July 19-26 to lead backyard Bible clubs.

Otter Creek First Church in Little Rock ordained Dennis Braner, Dennison Yates and Jim Trost to the deacon ministry July 20.

Russellville Second Church is installing the Baptist Telecommunications Network equipment in their church for the purpose of equipping and training workers in their areas of leadership responsibility, according to Pastor David McLemore.

Pleasant Grove Church at McCrory will observe homecoming Aug. 3. J.T. Summers, a former pastor, will be speaker.

Morton Church at McCrory will observe its 50th anniversary Aug. 3 with special services throughout the day.

Little Rock Immanuel Church will spotlight its singles ministry Aug. 10 when single adults will lead a 7 p.m. worship service. Pastor Brian Harbour will bring the message, "The Family is Big Enough for Singles." A fellowship will follow in Vaught Fellowship Hall.

Mayflower and Conway Harlan Park Churches youth joined together June 14-20 to do resort mission work at Lake Tenkiller in Oklahoma.

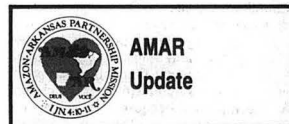
Valonia Beryl Church youth are doing mission work in Gary, Ind. Melinda Whitford represented the church recently in the Better Speaker's Tournament at Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center.

Conway Second Church youth will be in Ore City, Texas, Aug. 8-15 to lead a day camp and present three musical concerts.

ABN photo / Millie Gill



1986 marks Jamie Jones' 35th year of service as Baptist Student Union director at the University of Arkansas. A birthday party July 19 at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock BSU Center and another July 25 at Fayetteville First Church were given to celebrate his years of service. Sharing in the Little Rock festivities were three of his nine grandchildren (pictured above), other family members, former students, and BSU directors from across the state. Jones has served the second longest tenure at the same location of any BSU director in the country, according to Tom J. Logue, Arkansas Baptist State Convention BSU director.



A Fayetteville commissioning service was held for representatives from Fayetteville First Church, Fayetteville Immanuel Church, Prairie Grove First Church and Lincoln First Church prior to their leaving for work in Brazil.

Fayetteville First Church has contributed \$3,900 for the Jarunas Church in Belem, Brazil, to be used to pay the indebtedness on church property and provide needed assistance to their pastor.

For information about the Amazon-Arkansas Partnership Mission, contact Glendon Grober, P. O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203; (501) 376-4791.

Congregation started

SINGAPORE—After training for four months, 10 members of the Changi Church and a pastor, Matthew Lim, began worship services in Tampines New Town, a new housing estate of about 120,000 residents.

been involved in sexual promiscuity. She came on a referral from a pastor in another part of Arkansas.

The girl's parents had come to their pastor saying they could no longer control her. She was staying out all night and was involved in drinking and sexual immorality.

"She was reaching out for love and acceptance," Davey observes. "Her needs simply were not being met."

When the girl came to the shelter, she was still under the influence of alcohol and drugs. Davey says, "She responded well to love and to a stable, structured environment.

"Our home provides a kind of structure to which most young people will respond favorably. This, for most of our clients, is the first place in which there has been consistency, structure and love. Most of the young people who come here have been confronted with inconsistency in the lives of their parents and others."

This particular young girl stayed at the shelter for 60 days and was a model as far as behavior and deportment were concerned. She shared in all the activities of the home and took pride in her appearance. She also shared in the activities of Midway

Church, although she never made a public decision while she was at the shelter.

Recently she was transferred to the home at Monticello. Her parents say there has been a total turnaround in the girl's life.

The final example of a client at the shelter was a battered wife and her two teenaged daughters. The husband and father, a successful businessman, had been battering them physically and psychologically for a number of years.

On the night the woman and her children came to the shelter, the family had been on an outing together. Upon returning home, a quarrel took place, and the husband beat his wife and daughters.

Davey observes, "Battering is not relegated to the down and out or the derelict. It can be present on any socioeconomic level."

The family stayed three weeks at the shelter. On the second day the wife came to Davey and said, "I have something to give to you." It was a 45-caliber revolver she had bought to protect herself and her daughters.

The girls completed their school work, and both girls responded well to the love they found at the shelter. They made a decision to move to another state and to start new

lives. Funds were made available through White County Baptists for relocation in another state where there were relatives. Reports indicate things are going well for the mother and her two daughters.

The husband now is receiving psychological counseling. Davey observes, "It may be too late to restore this family, but help for the one who is doing the battering is essential whenever possible."

Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services provides counseling for families to assist them in dealing with all types of relationships, with a goal to preserving the home.

The Daveys are excited about their place of service. Davey says, "This is the most exciting ministry in which I have ever been involved. It gives us an opportunity to see the Lord working in the lives of many people almost daily. I would encourage those who are seeking God's will for their lives to consider ministry through Family and Child Care Services.

"This could be an exciting ministry for churchless pastors," Davey continued. "It provides opportunity to care for God's sheep."

Emergency receiving homes provide for special needs

by J. Everett Sneed

Family and Child Care Services maintain five emergency receiving homes in Little Rock, Sherwood, Camden, Paragould and Judsonia. All of these, except the Judsonia shelter, serve infants through 12 years of age. The Judsonia facility serves young people ages 10 through 18. Both Judsonia and Paragould serve battered or destitute women and children.

The purpose of the emergency care is to provide immediate ministry any time of the day or night, for 30 to 60 days until Social Services or the Juvenile Court or the staff of Family and Child Care can determine what is the best plan for a particular child. Family and Child Care provides a loving home-like setting with involvement in church, school and recreation.

"The children are victims of abandonment, physical and sexual abuse," observes Executive Director Johnny Biggs. Almost half of the children have been victimized by sexual abuse. The sexual abuse often comes from a family member, a neighbor or a mother's boyfriend. It may be with the full knowledge of the child's parents."

The first emergency receiving home was established in Little Rock in 1977. It came as the result of an article that was carried in the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* in May of 1976. The Olivet Church, Little Rock, made a house available to the Family and Child Care Services at a reduced rental rate.

The Geyer Springs WMU was instrumental in developing a support group for the shelter with approximately 10 churches in the Little Rock area participating by providing resources for the children who are residents of the facility. In order for Family and Child Care to maintain a receiving home a church, association or group of churches are required to assist in the ministry.

The various emergency receiving homes average from 7 to 10 clients per month. The five facilities will care for approximately 500 battered and/or neglected children and young people per year.

The Little Rock Emergency Receiving Home was filled to capacity within 48 hours of its opening. Doug McWhirter, Jr., director of program and staff development, observes that this has been the pattern in each of the shelters as they were opened. He said, "Currently there is a need for three or four emergency receiving homes in the state. But these cannot be developed until churches and/or an association indicate availability to participate in the establishment of additional ministries."

Biggs says that prior to opening a new facility, Family and Child Care makes a feasibility study which is in turn presented to the Family and Child Care Board. When resources are available and the need is demonstrated, a new ministry is started.

Both the Paragould and Judsonia facilities

care for battered women. At Paragould 8 women and their 13 children have been cared for since its March 1986 opening, and at Judsonia 15 women and their 25 children have utilized the facility. Last month there were 11 referrals of battered women to the Paragould emergency receiving home. McWhirter says, "We never dreamed there would be this kind of need. But when you make a response to a demonstrated need people will come forward and you will learn just how severe the problem really is.

"Battered wives," McWhirter continues, "can come from any socioeconomic level of society. Middle-class and upper middle-class wives can usually find the economic resources to get away from the situation. Women from lower socioeconomic situations may find it more difficult."

The emergency receiving homes have filled an important need. Executive Director Biggs says, "We have had very positive results in the lives of children, young people and battered women. You can observe almost daily the physical and emotional healing which is produced through the ministry of our shelters. We are fortunate to have people who have a sense of call to serve as directors of our shelters. God is blessing this ministry in a very special way."

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

Daveys find ministry exciting at Judsonia Emergency Shelter

by J. Everett Sneed

John and Mary Davey are the directors of the Judsonia Emergency Shelter, a service of Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services. The shelter provides emergency residence for young people, battered wives and their children.

The Daveys have a very interesting and diverse background. Mrs. Davey is a former high school teacher in Missouri with extensive involvement in Southern Baptist work. At one time she was the interim Baptist Young Women director for the Missouri Baptist Convention.

Dr. Davey is native of Canada whose parents were Canadian Baptist missionaries to Rhodesia (now Zambia) and Liberia. His background includes work with radio, television, and newspapers, as well as pastoring.

Immediately prior to the Davey's employment with Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Service, the Daveys felt God's call to work in a childcare institution and served with the Buckner West Texas Children's Home for one year.

In March of 1985 the Daveys moved to Judsonia to help prepare the shelter for its opening on May 21, 1985. Prior to this the Daveys had spent five months on the campus of the Child Care facility at Monticello.

During the first year of its operation, the shelter served 95 clients. Ten of these received Christ as their Savior and nine were baptized. Davey became pastor of the Midway Church shortly after he and his wife became directors of the shelter.

He says, "The church provides a unique place of love and ministry for all of the residents of the home. Our church has opened its arms to the ministry, and the church has been blessed because of its willingness to serve in this way. The two ministries dovetail together in a remarkable way."

The facility is geared basically to care for young people 10 to 18 years of age. It also has facilities to care for a battered spouse and her children. The children of battered spouses have ranged in age from one month to 18 years of age. Eighteen battered spouses and their children already have been served.

The children of a battered spouse participate in the activities of the home, but come under the immediate care of their mother, if she is physically and emotionally able to care for them. A battered spouse and her children go to church and eat with the other residents if it is discreet for them to do so. The other 75 to 80 individuals served by the shelter have been young people ages 10 through 18.

There are a number of ways the shelter receives its clients. Perhaps the greatest number come through the Social Services office in White County, which calls to see if room is available in the shelter.

The Daveys inquire as to the need for the individual to come to the shelter. Many of the young people have been abused either



ABN photo / Mark Kelly

John and Mary Davey share cold drinks with a couple of emergency shelter residents about to leave their care to live with family in another state.

physically, psychologically or sexually. Others come from dysfunctional families, such as those where divorce has occurred.

Other referrals come from pastors, physicians, juvenile judges and area Family and Child Care counselors. Davey observes, "Many of the young people have run away from home, but often the problem can be solved through Christian counseling with the young person and his parents."

Normally a young person remains in the shelter up to 30 days. There are exceptions in which emergency situations demand they remain for a longer period of time. Occasionally there is no place for the client to go. It also may take longer to provide foster home care for the young person.

Davey observes that some children need behavior modification or psychological counseling. Some of the children go back to their own families. Others require foster care or attention at the home at Monticello.

One example of the work of the shelter was with a young woman who was expecting a child. She came to the home as a referral from White County Social Services.

Earlier she and her husband had come to White County from California. Between the two of them, they had a \$600-a-week cocaine habit. To support the habit, the husband had worked at two jobs and the wife had worked full-time also.

Each of them had made a decision early in 1986 to "kick" the habit. The young wife had become pregnant, and apparently the pregnancy had shocked them into reality.

Davey says, "We believe God saw potential in them and intervened to bring them here. They originally had come to White County thinking they could stay with friends and relatives. But soon this situation erupted, and they found themselves out on the street.

They found a temporary small apartment but could not find work.

The husband became involved in criminal activity, and the two of them fled to Florida. After they had been there three or four days, he was arrested by Florida authorities in behalf of White County.

The young woman hitchhiked back to White County, but she had no place to stay. She was referred to Social Services, who in turn called the shelter.

Arrangements were made for her to stay in the shelter temporarily. Davey says, "Normally in situations such as this, the shelter works with Social Services to secure a maternity care center."

The Midway Church was in revival, and the young woman was invited to attend. She accepted the invitation, and one of the first evenings of the revival she accepted Christ as Savior.

At this point she knew nothing of her husband's situation. In two or three days she received word her husband was being extradited back to White County. She was excited about seeing her husband and his return to the county.

One of the first things she did when she was able to see her husband was to invite him to the revival, although he was still incarcerated in a local detention center. The next morning she received word her husband was free on bond and would be able to accompany her to church. He came that evening and accepted Christ as his Savior.

The couple today is still a part of the Midway Church. They attend regularly, and he has found employment. Davey says, "It appears they are on their way to a better life. The young man still faces court proceedings and the possibility of incarceration."

Another example is a teenage girl who had

Morgan counsels ministers on personal, church money management

by J. Everett Sneed

ABN photo / J. Everett Sneed

The ABSC Stewardship Department conducted Money Management Seminars on July 14 and 15. The two seminars, held at Grand Avenue Church, Ft. Smith, and in the Baptist Building, Little Rock, featured John Morgan, pastor of the Sagemont Church, Houston, Texas.

Dr. Morgan, who has pastored the Sagemont Church for 20 years, led the congregation from a membership of 16 to 8,000. Approximately one-half of the additions have come through baptism. The church property is valued at \$8 million and is totally debt-free. Currently, the church is averaging approximately 2,400 in Sunday School. The church gives over \$500,000 per year for mission endeavors.

Morgan emphasizes that the Lord wants Christians to be debt-free. He says, "God doesn't want Christians, churches, or our denomination to be in financial bondage."

Morgan originally wanted to be a banker with a law degree. After the Lord called him into the ministry and he began to observe how many families were breaking up as a result of financial problems and how much money our churches were putting into debt retirement, he became convinced that the Lord had a financial system that would solve these problems.

In 1975, the Sagemont Church was in debt \$600,000 and the church's facilities were packed with people. Morgan says, "I read the Bible through with my people and found there were no building programs described in the Bible. I learned the people always paid for God's buildings as they were erected. I felt that if God was able to do it then, he could do it now."

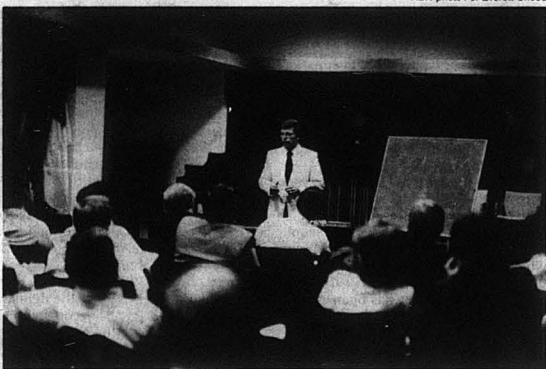
Since 1975, the church has paid off its \$600,000 indebtedness and erected four other buildings. The largest is a \$3 million auditorium which seats 2,500 people. All of the buildings were erected without any type of interim financing and were paid in full prior to being occupied by the congregation.

Morgan says, "The method we used is simple. We determined to let God be God, and we built only as God provided."

The congregation employed sub-contractors, which submitted bids to them in phases. Morgan illustrates by saying there was a bid by a contractor to prepare the ground and footing, and the congregation raised the money. Another bid was from a contractor to pour the cement slab and rough-in the plumbing. When this was paid and completed, the congregation raised the money to erect the steel framing.

Morgan observes, "In each instance we didn't delay the work one day. We stayed ahead by keeping the needs of the next phase of building before our people and the Lord blessed us."

Morgan says that when a church has extreme indebtedness which is preventing it from supporting missions, an in-depth study



John Morgan, pastor of Sagemont Church, Houston, Texas, led two money management seminars for the ABSC Annuity / Stewardship Department July 14-15.

must be conducted so that the congregation becomes aware of the lost potential in serving the Lord.

He illustrated this by supposing that a church had an indebtedness of \$200,000. In most instances it would cost at least \$400,000 to pay off the indebtedness at the present rate of interest over a 20 year period.

Morgan says, "The congregation first must be motivated to say, 'God can do it.' And second the people must say, 'We are willing to give if God will provide us with the resources.'"

The pastor must make it possible for the people to give, Morgan says. This requires a great deal of faith on the part of the pastor. He must not worry about failure. The pastor must be convinced this is what God wants the congregation to do, and he must obey.

Morgan says the second step to financial freedom by churches is to stop the interest they are paying on loans. He feels the best way to do this is to encourage members of the congregation to loan money to the church interest-free. "If, for example," Morgan says, "the congregation owes \$200,000 and 200 family units in the church would loan interest-free \$1,000 each, the congregation could pay off its indebtedness."

The church would then pay back its members. This would go quickly, since the church would be paying only on the principle. Morgan observes it would not cost the members a great deal of money. He said, "At today's rate of interest, people receive five and one-half or six percent interest. On \$1,000, an individual would lose \$55 to \$60 a year. The individual also would have to pay taxes on the interest earned, so the actual loss is less than the \$55 or \$60 per year."

Morgan says it is much easier to encourage

people to give to something that is happening. He says, "God motivates people to give before the fact. No one likes to give to pay off a debt."

"I think it is very important for us to be free to carry out Bold Mission Thrust," Morgan says. "As long as our churches and our families are in bondage to financial institutions of the world, we are not going to be able to do what God desires us to accomplish. We have missed many opportunities where we could have bought television stations or satellites because our indebtedness has hindered us."

Morgan says financial indebtedness for individuals is the number one marital problem in the Houston area. He also is confident this is true on the national level.

Morgan says there are several steps a family must take in order to free itself from financial bondage. First, a family must recognize that all credit purchases must stop. Morgan says, "A family must not worsen the problem under any circumstance."

The second step is for a family to start honoring God with the first fruits of the family's income.

Third, a family must transfer ownership of all possessions to the Lord. This means complete recognition that the Lord is the owner of all a family has and that the family members are his stewards.

Fourth, a family must start putting as much money as possible on the principle of their debts.

Fifth, a family must sell everything that is depreciating on which it owes money. This may mean a family must step back in the kind of transportation that it is using.

Sixth, the husband will need to get a temporary extra job in order to retire the debt.

Morgan says, "The family needs to learn to do as many jobs as possible around the house. It is important that we take care of the things God has entrusted in our hands."

Morgan emphasizes that a family's becoming debt-free should be an entire family effort. He feels children should be brought in on it and encouraged to get jobs to assist the family in becoming financially free.

Morgan says, "I encourage young people getting married, if both of them are going to work, to live on the husband's income. If the

wife works for six years and puts everything she makes into savings, by the end of the sixth year she can stop working and the interest will equal her monthly paycheck. The wife can come home and raise her children and have a second income."

Morgan feels that in most instances it is fine for a family to finance a home since it is an item that will appreciate in value. Items which will depreciate in value should not be financed.

Morgan says, "The key to Christian finan-

cial freedom is to recognize God will supply our needs. These needs are food, shelter, and clothing. These are basic necessities and do not cost too much. The successful Christian is one who is committed to the Lord and disciplined in his everyday living."

Morgan's complete seminar is available on both audio and video tapes. He also has a book entitled, *Financial Freedom*.

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

Associational camp ministers to disabled youth

by Mark Kelly

A blazing summer sun scorches observers at poolside. Tanned teenage lifeguards swim through the glare, watching their youthful charges frolicking in the water. Excited shouts and shrieks of laughter shatter what would be an otherwise quiet afternoon heat.

The setting is an Arkansas Baptist associational youth camp. On the surface, it could be any one of dozens, but actually it is one of a kind.

The camp is Liberty Association's annual four-day encampment for handicapped children. Half of the swimmers playing in the water are physically disabled or mentally retarded. The other half are counselors who have volunteered their time to help the children have a summer camp experience.

Judi Bledsoe, a member of Trinity Church, El Dorado, and director of special ministries for Liberty Association, helped start the annual camp three years ago. Although several Southern Baptist state conventions offer such camping experiences, the associational camp Bledsoe coordinates apparently is the only one of its kind. In addition to the four-day camp, the association also sponsors four weekend outings for handicapped children.

"A lot of folks told us it couldn't be done," Bledsoe recalls. "We started with 12 the first year. This year we have between 55 and 60 registered for our next weekend camp."

"We have children with every kind of disability you can imagine, spina bifida, cerebral palsy, blindness, deafness, anything," Bledsoe explains. "But we swim, play volleyball, do crafts, go fishing, have worship and Bible teaching times, everything you would ordinarily do in camp."

The only difference between her camp and any other youth camp is the counselor to camper ratio, Bledsoe says. The camp recruits one counselor for each disabled camper.

The counselors, mostly older teens and young adults from area churches, are a dedicated lot, Bledsoe reports.

"Our counselors come and stay with these kids. They have to help them with everything. They stay in the room with them while a colostomy or urostomy is being serviced, when they could be out on the lake



ABN photo / Mark Kelly

A teenage staff counselor helps one youngster with her lunch during Liberty Association's annual summer camp for disabled children and youth.

with their friends," she says. "But they're willing to be here, changing wet beds and putting diapers on 19-year-olds, and then going home at night to wash clothes and sheets for their campers."

It takes a special kind of person to give so much so selflessly, Bledsoe asserts. But she takes exception to the tag "special ministries."

"When Jesus was on earth, he was among the deaf, blind, and lame every day. He met their needs," she explains. "What we're doing isn't 'special' ministries. Special ministries are single adults and things like that. We're just doing what Jesus did every day."

Bledsoe says statistics indicate three people out of every 100 in any community will be mentally retarded. Add to that the number of physically disabled and then multiply that by the number of family members for each one, and you have a significant ministry need with which to deal, she says.

"This isn't just a matter of ministry to the disabled," she explains. "The families of

these kids never get to leave. There is a need for respite care. We call this a 'grief ministry' because parents who have 'special' children ask the same questions as those who have lost children through death. These are special needs which should be touched."

The Liberty Association has been very generous toward the ministry, Bledsoe explains. The four-day camp costs \$15; the weekend camps cost \$10. But an open scholarship policy allows campers who cannot afford that much to come anyway. And special construction needs to accommodate the disabled have been willingly provided as well.

"The need is there," Bledsoe emphasizes. "There's even literature available from the Sunday School Board. We've received training and would be willing to help anyone interested in starting ministries to the disabled. But many churches just aren't meeting the need."

Mark Kelly is managing editor of the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine.

Gun-toting militant becomes Bible-quoting evangelist

by Ken Camp

LUBBOCK, Texas (BP)—It's a long way to go from being a gun-toting militant to being a Bible-quoting evangelist, but like a modern-day Apostle Paul, Gilbert Herrera bears witness of God's ability to transform an enemy of the church into a preacher of the gospel.

The son of a Lubbock, Texas, police officer killed in the line of duty, Herrera turned against the law early in life. He served two terms totalling five years in the Huntsville, Texas, Walls Unit, first for a burglary to support his \$400 a week heroin habit and later for parole violation.

Following his release from prison in the mid-1970s, Herrera was elected West Texas Prime Minister of the Brown Berets, a paramilitary Hispanic group.

"We were called activist, militant, communist. What we were was a group of people willing to die for what we believed in," he said.

Herrera explains the Brown Berets were founded to oppose police brutality, discrimination against Hispanics and other injustices, but members later took a more hate-filled, anti-Anglo position.

Once, when the Ku Klux Klan threatened to patrol the Texas-Mexico border to keep illegal aliens from crossing the Rio Grande River, Herrera led an armed group of Brown Berets to meet them.

"We went to the border with automatic

weapons to face the KKK, ready to die if we had to," he says. "I'm glad now that they didn't show up, because if they had, I know someone would have been killed."

Hated and feared by many for his militant stance, Herrera accepted death threats as routine business, and he escaped several attempts on his life. A former companion in prison, Juan Perez, served as his personal bodyguard and as a major in the Brown Berets with 28 men under his command.

In spite of his para-military trappings and questionable reputation, Herrera was courted by respectable politicians who recognized his ability to deliver votes. After actively being involved in one gubernatorial and two presidential campaigns for others, Herrera ran for mayor pro tem of Lubbock, placing third among a field of 12 candidates.

With Perez as his business partner, he began nearly five years ago promoting musical groups for nightclubs and concerts. In spite of his success as a businessman and political powerbroker, he felt unfulfilled.

One evening during a cocaine-induced fit of depression, Herrera put a .38-caliber revolver to his head and pulled the trigger. As if by a miracle, the gun did not fire, but the click of the trigger brought him to his senses. He noticed his television was on, and an evangelist was talking about God's plan of salvation.

"That got my attention," remembers Her-

ra. "I was tired of being hated. I was tired of being shot at. I said 'I wish I could serve the Lord someday.'"

He still was unable to surrender to God fully at that point, however. Some time later, he encountered Juan de la Garza, Baptist evangelist from Mission, Texas, outside a Lubbock radio station. The two men talked, and Herrera began to feel the need to make a decision for Christ.

"I went for a whole year under conviction," he says. Finally, he contacted De la Garza and expressed his willingness to become a Christian. The two knelt together in a closet, and Herrera accepted Christ. He later joined Iglesia Hispana, a mission of First Baptist Church of Lubbock.

Feeling led into full-time Christian service, the former Brown Beret leader began traveling with De la Garza throughout Mexico and Texas. After he led Perez, his former partner, to Christ, the pair once again began to work together, but this time in the Gilbert Herrera Evangelistic Association.

"Ten years ago people saw me on TV carrying weapons, wearing long hair and a military uniform. For me to come back 10 years later and talk about God is hard for some to accept," he notes. "The story of Paul keeps me alive. It keeps me going."

Ken Camp writes for the public relations office of the Texas Baptist Convention.

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Southern Baptists minister to farmers in crisis

by David Reid

"It's rough to get through times like this," says the elderly country preacher and farmer.

He stands at the door of a barn, speaking to Missouri television viewers about a subject they know too well, farm failures. But this farmer has hope.

His appeal was aired when Missourians' attention was focused intently on the television prior to last fall's "all-Missouri" World Series. Missouri Southern Baptists showed a 30-minute documentary on the rural farm crisis just prior to the first game between the St. Louis Cardinals and Kansas City Royals.

Don Evans, director of rural-urban missions for the Missouri Baptist Convention, produced the video. Evans, a graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, is one of many Southern Baptists who find their ministries turning toward farm families in crisis.

"For years the farmer has ministered to us by providing food," Evans said. "Now we need to minister to him."

The video, titled "Come Before Winter: Missouri Baptists Look at the Rural Farm Crisis," has aired on 17 stations in Missouri and neighboring states and twice on Baptist Tel. Net.

Through it, Evans suggests how churches can help farmers suffering from increasing financial losses. Such a ministry is difficult, he said, because of the farmer's pride and independence.

"The most important thing you can do is walk alongside them and maintain your friendship," Evans said. "When the crisis

comes, Daddy often drops out of worship because of the embarrassment. Then the mother drops out and finally the children.

"They feel like failures and become alienated from the church," he said. "They quit showing up at the coffee shop or they quit doing their grocery shopping at normal times so they won't be seen."

"Churches have to keep the family involved," Evans said. "We have to say, 'We don't measure you by how you succeed in your career. God loves you no matter what.'"

The SBC Home Mission Board granted \$50,000 in domestic hunger funds to Evans' ministry. He has already distributed \$30,000 to Missouri farm families.

However, he has had to find creative ways to get farmers to accept help. In some cases, they funnel the aid through friends who can say, "You've helped me in the past, let me help you." In others, they have given credit lines anonymously through local grocery stores and paid off the bills as soon as they came in.

Jesse Canafax, a church relations consultant for the Baptist General Convention of Texas, said some rural communities suffering from the farm crisis have been doubly afflicted by an accompanying decline in the oil industry.

Giving is down in some churches, but a more serious problem exists. "People have been affected worse psychologically," he said. "Families have suffered as well as churches and communities."

Canafax, another Southwesterner, now helps rural churches organize prayer groups,

establish counseling programs and conduct seminars to teach people to deal with adversity.

First Baptist Church in Lamesa, Texas, recently held such a seminar. The church, located in a cotton farming region, sponsored "Farm Family Weekend" last spring. The weekend event featured sessions on money management, bankruptcy and foreclosure, as well as Bible studies, testimonies, prayer meetings and singing.

"We've seen many people turn to God and find help and overcome their feelings of failure," said pastor C.H. Murphy, a Southwestern graduate.

Murphy organized the seminar because he "became concerned while counseling with families and trying to help them stay together," he said. "Marriages were being destroyed by the stress."

The seminar's impact carried over to his church's Good News America revival this spring, Murphy said. The church continues to minister to farm families through the counseling center and weekly support groups.

"A farmer is difficult to help because his heritage is one of honest, hard work that has always paid off," Murphy said. "If he ever came up against something he'd just work a lot harder and whip it."

Through the ministries of Murphy and others, more self-sufficient farmers are turning to God for help.

David Reid writes for the public relations office of Southwestern Seminary.

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Baptists' ambassador for Christ stands out at the United Nations

by Mark Wingfield

SWBTS photo by David Bell

NEW YORK (BP)—As a native of India, Ted Mall blends in with the mosaic of races at the United Nations. But as an ambassador of Christ, he stands out.

Mall came to the United States and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, as an international student in 1976. Today he ministers to the most diverse international assembly in the world. He is Southern Baptists' witness to the New York City diplomatic community—a national ethnic missionary supported by the denomination's Home Mission Board. More than 35,000 people represent most nations of the world either at the United Nations or nearby diplomatic offices.

"Being an international student myself prepared me to identify with these people," Mall says. "I went through some of the same things these people went through."

That understanding gives him an introduction to share the gospel with people who may not have heard of Christianity. And the seminary education, he says, gave him "the biblical background and capability to withstand when somebody questions my faith."

Mall's work takes three approaches.

First is outreach. "We try to make friends and develop relationships through which evangelism can happen," he says.

When a new diplomat arrives, Mall contacts him by letter to set up an appointment. He makes a formal presentation to that person and welcomes him to the United States on behalf of Southern Baptists.

"Sometimes on the very first contact I have occasion to present a Bible or witness to them," he says. "Sometimes it takes weeks or months or years."

Second is a ministry to social and material needs. Through one program, Mall introduces diplomatic families to local Baptist host families. The host families help the foreigners adjust to American culture. They also include them in family activities at Christmas and Thanksgiving. Mall provides economic assistance to diplomats from poorer nations. Differences in currency exchange and living requirements make some diplomats' salaries inadequate for survival in New York.

Third is cross-cultural communication. "We want to present them Christianity in the most favorable way," Mall notes. One way he bridges the communication gap is through Bible distribution. He keeps copies of the Scriptures in 100 languages, which he gives away. "We make Scripture available to anyone who would want it or need it in any language," he explains.

To help people understand those Bibles, he leads Bible studies twice each week and on request. Over the past year, his Thursday noon Bible study has drawn students from 48 countries.

One Soviet diplomat, who is not a believer, gets a constant supply of Russian



Ted Mall stands amid the flags of the United Nations. As Southern Baptists' chaplain to the international body, Mall ministers to many who have never heard the gospel.

Bibles from Mall. She originally took one to display on her bookshelf, but it disappeared. Now she keeps several Bibles on display until they all disappear. Mall calls this his "silent witness" because he is sure other Soviets are taking the Bibles to read. His witness spreads around the world through Bibles and through people.

Early one Sunday morning, he was awakened by the phone. The voice said only, "I'm Chen, and I'm here." Mall had never met the man, but learned a friend from Chicago had referred him. Chen had come from mainland China to work on a project in automation technology. Finally, about 5:30 a.m. he went to get Chen at the bus station. Chen went with his family to church that evening—his first time in a Baptist church.

"He told me he was not really interested in Christianity," Mall remembers. But Mall and his family continued to befriend the man. They took him to tourist spots and showed him how to get around.

Last year, Chen attended a banquet where a Texas youth choir sang. Mall says Chen

noticed it "seems like Christian young people have a hope that Chinese young people don't. If hope is part of being a Christian, I might be interested." Soon afterward, Chen became a Christian. He has returned to his hometown in China, where there is no other evangelical witness.

Southern Baptists' ambassador to the United Nations sent out one more ambassador for Christ to the nations.

Mark Wingfield writes for the public relations office of Southwestern Seminary.

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International

God's promise of renewal

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

Basic passage: Ezekiel 36

Focal passage: Ezekiel 36:22-32

Central truth: God provides abundant blessings to persons who turn to him for renewal and restoration.

Chapter 36 gives a comprehensive view of God's dealing with the nation Israel, both past and future. The nation had defiled their land by their disobedience to God (v. 17). As a result, God poured out his wrath upon them and scattered them among the heathen (vv. 18-19). By this very act, God allowed his holy name to be profaned for both the Israelites and their God were despised and ridiculed by the heathen (vv. 20-23).

But God will vindicate his holy name (vv. 21-22). God promises to restore his people to their land for his own name's sake rather than for Israel's sake (vv. 22-24). Moreover, God declared that he will cleanse his people of their wrongdoing. He will give them a new heart which will result in inward devotion and motivation to serve him (compare Jer. 31:31-34). In that day, God will put his spirit within them and cause them to walk in his statutes (vv. 25-28). God will rebuke the famine, cause the desolate places to be tilled, (vv. 29,30,33-35). All people will know that it is the Lord who has performed this work (v. 36).

Regardless of one's view as to the fulfillment of this prophecy, every child of God can rejoice in the grace and power of God set forth in Ezekiel 36. God's gracious dealing with Israel is a ray of hope to all who have been disobedient to God. No one is beyond God's love and grace. The hardest and most sinful person can receive forgiveness of sins and the blessings of the Lord. The penitent sinner can receive a new nature wherein dwells the Spirit of God. Christian duty calls for us to tell a lost world that God's grace and mercy is available to all who turn to him. No one need despair.

The blessings which God promised to his restored people Israel ought to remind us of the blessings we have in Christ. As Christians we have been forgiven of our sins, Jesus Christ now lives in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, eternal life has been bestowed upon us, and heaven will be our eternal home. The gospel of Jesus Christ calls lost men and women to a new way of life. May we ever be faithful in proclaiming the good news of salvation to a lost and dying world.

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Life and Work

Peacemakers

by Sid Carswell, Crystal Hill Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: Isaiah 2:1-5; 9:1-7; Matthew 5:9; Psalm 34:11-14; Hebrews 12:14; Roman 14:17-19; 12:17-21

Focal passage: Matthew 5:9; Isaiah 2:4; 9:6-7; Psalm 34:14; Hebrews 12:14; Romans 14:19; 12:17-19

Central truth: Christians are to be actively involved in working for peace.

Peace is a condition in which two or more parties are in agreement. Peace can be attained if the parties agree to disagree. They are free to work together in areas of agreement.

The Bible says we were enemies of God (Rom. 5:10). God himself made peace for us through his Son Jesus (Rom. 5:1). Paul tells us Jesus is our peace. Jesus tore down the wall between Jews and Gentiles. He brought unity. He made a new man (Eph. 2:14,15).

Peace on earth is the ideal. If all of our energy and resources were employed in peaceful uses the world would lack for nothing. God looks with favor on people who work at the peace-making process.

Peace among men is a biblical teaching. We are told to live peaceably with all men. We are not to seek revenge if a person does us wrong (Rom. 12:17-19).

This may be one of our most difficult lessons to learn. We can see all of the wars, terrorist acts, and strife in the world today. We desire peace. We want personal peace. We need peace in our families, our churches and our convention. The Bible says seek peace (Ps. 34:14). Our minds ask, how?

The peace process for every Christian begins when we receive Christ as our Savior. He gives us a peace that we cannot understand (Phil. 4:7). Without this personal peace we cannot really work for peace.

Peacemakers are often misunderstood. This is especially true if there are two sides and the peacemaker does not agree with either side. Both sides turn on the peacemaker. Jesus was the greatest peacemaker who ever lived. The Pharisees and Sadducees could not agree on many things. They agreed to kill Jesus. The Jews did not like the Romans. But they teamed up to put Jesus to death.

Peace may appear to be impossible. We may be insulted, ostracized, or even killed. But that does not relieve us of the responsibility of attempting to be peacemakers.

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Bible Book

A summons to rebuild

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

Basic passage: Haggai 1:2-2:23

Focal passage: Haggai 1:2-6, 2:3-4,16-19,21b-23

Central truth: When God gives instructions to his people, obedience is the only adequate response.

We need a new church building, someone says. No, replies another, this building is adequate. It was good for our parents and grandparents. After all we don't have the money for a new building. Besides the place of worship is not all that important.

These attitudes have been around for a long while. In 520 B.C. Haggai spoke the Word of God to his fellow Jews in Jerusalem concerning rebuilding the Temple. It had been lying in ruins since the deportation of Judah to Babylon in 586 B.C. A few had returned in 537 B.C. under the leadership of Zerubbabel. They simply cleaned away some of the rubble and erected an altar for worship. For 17 years they had neglected to proceed with rebuilding the Temple.

God finally gets tired of us dragging our feet and neglecting his work. He sent Haggai to motivate the people to action. The time had arrived. They had built houses to live in that were adequate. But the Temple had neither walls or roof. It is time for action. They needed to set their heart to the matter.

The message is one of priorities. A church must spend time in learning God's priorities, if they are to please him. If a building program is in God's plan for a church, he has resources to bring it to reality. "The silver is mine and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts" (2:8). But he is dependent upon the faithfulness of his people to respond as good stewards.

When people make a commitment to obey God, they appropriate his blessings and resources. This is so not because of who we are but because of who he is. His will is always proper and best. When we respond we place ourselves in a position of usefulness to achieve his purposes. Clarity of God's will and commitment to it are the primary criteria for success.

So, priorities should be determined in conference with God. It is he alone who has the total perspective of his purpose. If it is time to build a building, his people should not question him, but simply commit themselves and resources to the purpose.

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Work begins reconciling tax reform plans

WASHINGTON (BP)—Senate and House conferees began work July 17 in an attempt to reconcile differences in the two bodies' versions of tax reform.

Senate conferees include Finance Committee Chairman Bob Packwood, R-Ore.; Lloyd Bentsen, D-Texas; Bill Bradley, D-N.J.; John H. Chafee, R-R.I.; John C. Danforth, R-Mo.; Robert J. Dole, R-Kan.; Russell B. Long, D-La.; Spark M. Matsunaga, D-Hawaii; Daniel P. Moynihan, D-N.Y.; William V. Roth Jr., R-Del.; and Malcolm Wallop, R-Wyo.

House conferees are Ways and Means Committee Chairman Dan Rostenkowski, D-Ill.; Bill Archer, R-Texas; Philip M. Crane, R-Ill.; John J. Duncan, R-Tenn.; Richard A. Gephardt, D-Mo.; Guy Vander Jagt, R-Mich.;

Donald J. Pease, D-Ohio; J.J. Pickle, D-Texas; Charles B. Rangel, D-N.Y.; Marty Russo, D-Ill.; and Fortney H. Stark, D-Calif.

The conference committee is expected to take at least a month to complete its work. Should a compromise be reached, the con-report then would have to be approved by both houses and signed by the president.

While the Senate tax reform plan would retain current law allowing federal tax exemption for non-profit organizations offering "commercial-type insurance," the House version would repeal that exemption. The House legislation would strip the Annuity Board and other similar church pension and welfare groups of their federal tax exemption.

Emeritus professor R. B. Jones dies

SPARTANBURG, S.C. (BP)—Russell Bradley Jones, emeritus professor of Bible at Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, Tenn., former foreign missionary to the Philippines and president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, died July 17, in Spartanburg, S.C.

Jones, a native of Kentucky, was a graduate of Georgetown College and Southern Bapt-

tist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. In addition to teaching at the Tennessee Baptist school and serving as a missionary pastor in Manila, Jones was pastor of churches in Tennessee, Kentucky, Maryland and Georgia.

Memorial gifts may be made to the Georgia Baptist Foundation for the Philippine Baptist Theological Seminary in Baguio.

Bess handled money, but people made her 'rich'

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Christine Bess handled money during her 35-year career with the Southern Baptist Foundation, but people enriched her life.

Bess began in January of 1951 as the first full-time employee to work with C. H. Bolton, first chief executive of the foundation. She started as a secretary and kept books and later was accountant and administrative assistant. She was executive secretary-treasurer at the time of her retirement this summer.

Along the way, she worked with all five of the foundation's chief executives and worked with hundreds of Southern Baptists who asked the foundation to invest their funds for the perpetual benefit of Southern Baptist causes.

"Christine Bess has helped a lot of Baptist people give what they want to Baptist causes—which will help the denominational enterprise until Christ returns," says Hollis Johnson, president of the foundation for the past 10 years.

"She also has been the link, the tie from administration to administration," Johnson adds. "For all these years, she has provided continuity to the foundation."

And continuity is a stock in which Bess has invested deeply. She still keeps in contact with the families of former foundation executives. Even in retirement, she maintains frequent correspondence with many Southern Baptist investors who entrusted their funds to the foundation, as well as foundation trustees with whom she has served.

"If anything enriches your life, it's not just diversification of people, but continual con-

tact with them," she insists. "My greatest impression of my years here is of people, people-to-people contact."

She reminisces about "unselfish, capable businessmen who came regularly, gave hours of their time" and worked to carry out the intent and purpose of the foundation as its trustees.

She also is fond of her association with the organization's five leaders, who always insisted on a "working with" relationship. "Their openness of mind and receptiveness was most rewarding," she says. "These dedicated Christians—who were in depth in Scripture, devoted to Southern Baptist life and committed to the foundation—not only profoundly affected me, but my family."

That family also is bound up in another relationship—membership in Creevewood Church in Nashville, Tenn. They share a long family-church history. She was chairperson of the first neighborhood census which was used to help the church get started. Today her grandchildren share a pew with her during worship services.

From that pew, and from her Nashville home, Bess continues to cultivate relationships which have so enriched her life.

"Life still holds for me the greatest challenges," she says, noting she still is involved in some phases of foundation work, especially estates in which she still has power of attorney and relationships she has developed over the years with Southern Baptist donors.

So, while she still keeps up with Dow Jones averages, she also keeps up with friends she has made during the past 35 years.

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