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Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

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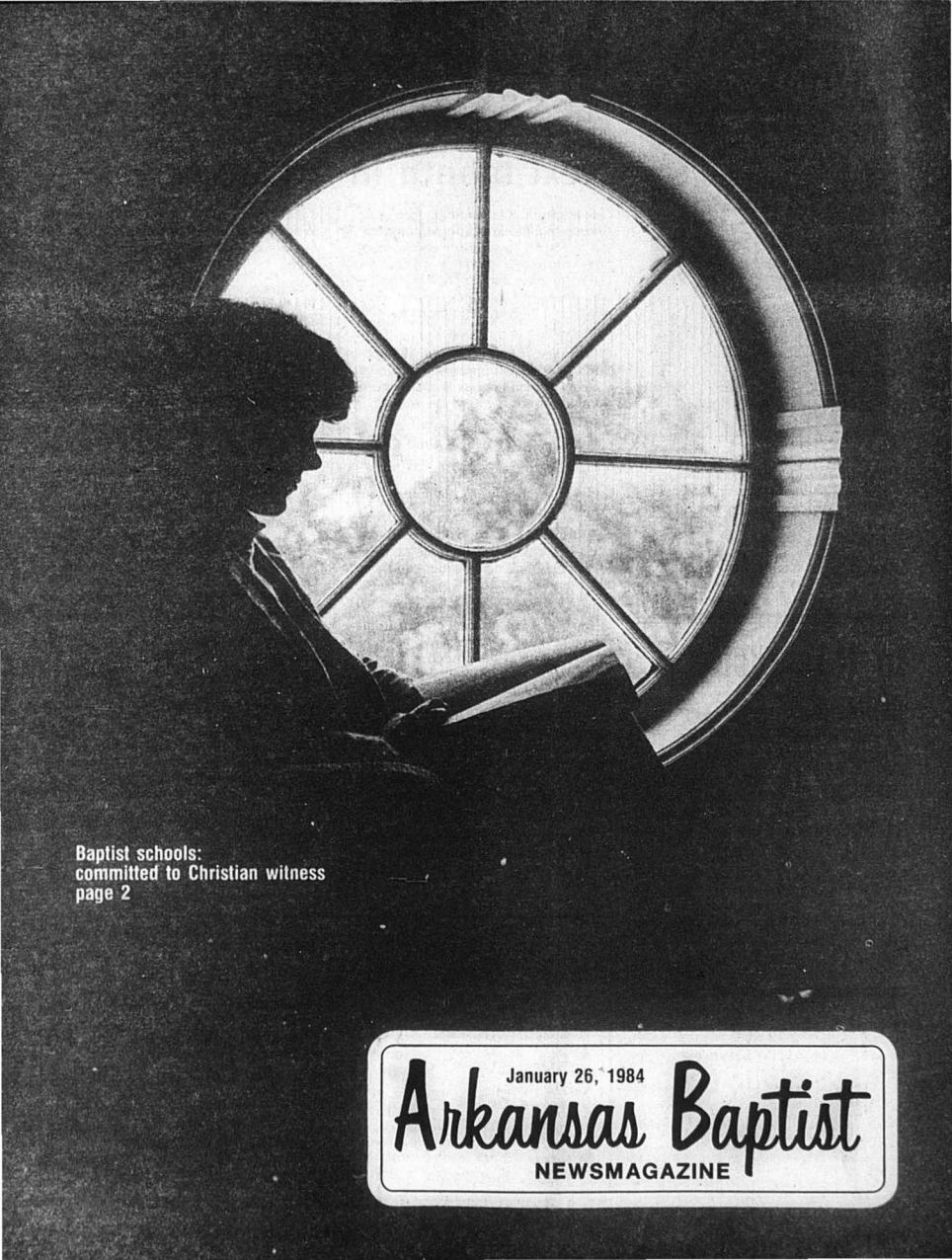
January 26, 1984

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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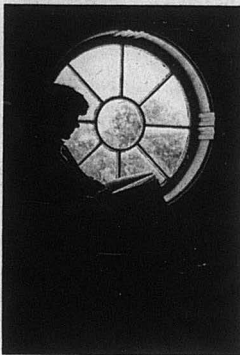


Baptist schools:
committed to Christian witness
page 2

January 26, 1984

Arkansas Baptist
NEWSMAGAZINE

On the cover



BSSB photo © David Hayward

Baptists' colleges—including Arkansas Baptists' own Ouachita Baptist University and Southern Baptist College—and seminaries are truly committed to Christian witness as they prepare full-time vocational Christian workers in addition to Christian professionals in other fields.

In this issue

10 ordain as usual?

T.B. Maston, in the second in a series of articles, suggests it may be time to re-examine Southern Baptists' usual and traditional ordination procedures.

11 SBC black eye

Not only is the forced termination of a pastor a crisis for the minister and the church, but it is an embarrassment to the denomination and a problem that needs to be addressed, conclude some leaders who discussed treatment.

JANUARY							FEBRUARY							MARCH							APRIL							MAY							JUNE							JULY																			
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Next month in Arkansas

February 1, Tax seminar, Immanuel Church in Little Rock. To help church staff members save on self-employment taxes; and advise church treasurers, financial secretaries, and committee members who must help churches comply with new Social Security regulations for employees.

February 5, Baptist World Alliance Sunday. Focus on organization through which 124 autonomous Baptist conventions and unions around the world cooperate.

February 10-11, Single Adult Conference, Park Hill Church, North Little Rock. Third annual meeting for worship and fellowship, plus special interest and leadership conferences.

February 12, Race Relations Sunday. Suggested day for recognizing the need for people of all nationalities and races to relate to each other.

February 12-18, Focus on WMU. Suggested week for the local church to make the congregation aware of Woman's Missionary Union as the church missions organization and an integral part of the entire program.

February 13, Area DiscipleLife Workshops, Fort Smith Grand Avenue Church and Jonesboro First Church. Opportunity for ministers to youth, youth leaders and pastors to learn about DiscipleYouth, an evangelism/witness training program for young people.

February 13-16, Religious Emphasis Week at Southern Baptist College, Arkansas Baptists' school at Walnut Ridge.

February 14, Area DiscipleLife Workshops, Little Rock Calvary Church and El Dorado Immanuel Church. See Feb. 13 event.

February 16, Area DiscipleLife Workshops, Pine Bluff South Side Church and Texarkana Beech Street. See Feb. 13 event.

February 16, Evangelism with Children Workshop, Baptist Building, Little Rock. First-ever sessions to train workers with children to present the gospel to children (and their parents), and counsel children about baptism.

February 18, Youth Choir Festival, Park Hill Church, North Little Rock. Chance for church groups to perform for adjudication and sing together.

February 19, Baptist Seminaries, Colleges and Schools Day. Chance for churches to emphasize Baptists' debt to the institutions which train for church-related vocations and other professions.

February 20-21, Area Church Administration Workshops, Fort Smith East Side and West Memphis First. Conference for pastors and church staff to develop personal and organizational leadership skills essential to church growth.

February 23-24, Area Church Administration Workshops, NLR Park Hill Church and Pine Bluff First. See Feb. 20-21 event.

February 28, Lay Evangelism School Update, at Baptist Building. Introduction to new materials for those who have been trained to lead the schools.

Cooperative Program report: December

Summary for Dec. 1983

	Year	Jan.-Dec. gifts		% increase Over previous year
		Over (under) months budget		
Received	\$936,378.29	1978	158,685.98	10.30
Budget	833,333.36	1979	219,540.30	12.13
Over	\$103,045.25	1980	329,935.43	9.62
		1981	295,706.63	12.19
		1982	(137,611.72)	7.82
		1983	(15,548.95)	11.17

The news that gifts for 1983 were 11.17 percent over 1982 is certainly good news. While we did not reach the total budget, we did raise 99.84 percent. Let us pray that 1984 will be the best year ever for Arkansas Baptists.



This guest editorial, by Al C. Shackelford appeared in the Sept. 28, 1983 Baptist and Reflector, Tennessee Baptist paper.

[In September 1983] the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention gave each SBC agency about five minutes to discuss its request for Cooperative Program funds for the 1984-85 convention year.

Their written requests [were] submitted to the committee's program and budget subcommittee which [met] in January and will bring its recommendation to the February meeting of the Executive Committee. From that February meeting will come the recommendation to the 1984 SBC which will meet in June in Kansas City.

Most of the presentations dealt with what God is doing through Southern Baptists in response to Bold Mission Thrust, which was initiated at the 1976 SBC in Norfolk.

R. Keith Parks, president of the Foreign Mission Board, caught our attention with his brief remarks. Parks reported that the number of missionaries under appointment had grown 26 percent since 1976 (from 2,667 to 3,343); the number of countries in which these serve had experienced a net gain of 18 countries to the present 101 total; the number of churches in these countries had grown by 52 percent; the number of baptisms in these churches had increased 58 percent; and the number of volunteers going to foreign fields had grown by 500 percent.

The FMB president observed that during this period, in spite of our increases in mission giving, the buying power on these mission fields had decreased by 8.5 percent—because of worldwide inflation.

Then, he added, "Bold Mission Thrust is alive and well in every area except financing."

Parks' observation was amplified when the program and budget subcommittee projected that the basic operating budget for 1984-85 would produce only a 3.06 percent increase—from 1983-84's \$114.5-million to \$118-million....

By contrast, the total 1984-85 requests from these agencies are \$138,849,629—an increase of \$24,010,817. The projection means that there will be only \$3.5 million to share with these agencies—meaning that over \$20 million in requests will go unmet....

After several years of failing to reach our goal, the 1981-82 Cooperative Program goal was increased only \$3 million over the 1980-81 goal to \$93 million. Experiencing a fantastic 14.27 per-

cent increase in 1981-82, that goal was passed when \$93,334,356 was given.

Based on this victory, the convention approved a 14 percent increase in the 1982-83 goal to \$106 million and an 18 percent increase in the 1983-84 goal to \$125 million.

With one month left in the 1982-83 SBC budget year, it is estimated that \$102.3 million will be received toward that \$106 million goal. Projecting this 9.6 percent gain in Cooperative Program giving to 1983-84 and 1984-85, the program and budget subcommittee predicts that—unless something gloriously drastic happens—the 1984-85 Cooperative Program gifts will be \$124 million....

Of course, the SBC agencies are already feeling the results of our failure to reach these goals. In the year just ending, these agencies will receive about four percent less than the convention-approved basic operating budget.

If projections hold true for 1983-84, they will receive about 10 percent less than the basic operating budget approved at June's SBC in Pittsburgh.

At a time when Bold Mission Thrust is capturing the imagination of our church members, our SBC agencies must resort to austerity budgeting....

Perhaps our hope for such commitment can come from the Planned Growth in Giving emphasis which was approved by the Pittsburgh SBC. Through mission education and challenge, this emphasis will seek to inspire our people to share more of what God has given to them with their churches, so that our churches can share more of their gifts with missions through the Cooperative Program....

There is another disturbing trend. In 1967 total church receipts of Southern Baptist churches were \$711,775,365, of which 10.04 percent was shared by these churches through the Cooperative Program, including both state causes and Southern Baptist Convention causes. In 1982 total church receipts had grown to \$2,919,507,245—but the percentage shared through the Cooperative Program had declined to 8.68 percent.

During this 15-year period, church receipts had grown 310 percent, but Cooperative Program gifts through state and SBC mission causes had grown only 254 percent.

Bold Mission Thrust demands our commitment—including our financial sacrifice. The world and the Lord are waiting to see if the depth of our commitment includes the depth to which we dig into our pockets.

Arkansas Baptist

NEWSMAGAZINE

Arkansas' third largest publication,
meeting the information needs of Arkansas Baptists

VOLUME 83 NUMBER 4
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The Southern accent

D. Jack Nicholas

Abortion: Our national disgrace

It is estimated that last year approximately 1½ million unborn children were aborted in the United States of America. Approximately one out of four pregnancies now end in illegal abortion. It is incredible that a wrong of such gigantic proportions is answered by relative silence rather than heartbroken outrage. Every Baptist, every Christian in this democracy bears personal responsibility for this terrible state of affairs.

The Bible makes clear that the developing human fetus is a human life in God's eyes, that it is aided by God in fetal development, and that it is to be accorded the same sanctity as any other stage of human development. "You made all of the delicate, inner parts of my body, and knit them together in my mother's womb. Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! It is amazing to think about. Your workmanship is marvelous—and how well I know it. You were there when I was being formed in utter seclusion! You saw me before I was born and scheduled each day of my life before I began to breathe. Every day was recorded in your book!" Psalms 139:13-16.

As George H. Williams, professor of church history at Harvard Divinity School, has said, "Two thousand years of Jewish

Christian history maintain that the fetus is a person with the right to life. We know very well that what has happened in conception is the emergence of a new being and all it needs is time."

Being created in the image of God is the basis for the sanctity of human life, and that sanctity does not depend upon a child being "wanted" or upon an individual being productive in society nor can it be forfeited, even by Supreme Court decree.

The careless, thoughtless, wanton destruction of innocent human life is a blatant violation of God's fundamental law for mankind and will surely provoke his judgment upon this nation.

The solution of this terrible problem depends upon the citizenry of this democracy. It is unlikely that our public officials will act with the courage necessary to correct the problem. The Supreme Court created the problem in the first place and the legislative branch appears unwilling to act.

The profession most directly related to the problem has rejected the moral and ethical implications of the issue. In the July 1983 issue of the journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics, an editorial stated, "We can

no longer base our ethics on the idea that human beings are a special form of creation, made in the image of God; singled out from all other animals, and alone in possessing a mortal soul."

Therefore, since the solution is not forthcoming from our leaders, we as citizens must grasp the magnitude, the meaning and the complexity of this heinous problem and respond to it responsibly. On the one hand, as individuals and as churches, we must speak out against abortion and do everything personally and politically that we can to bring an end to "abortion on demand".

On the other hand, we must provide assistance and counseling to distressed women contemplating abortion, helping them to discover viable alternatives. We must extend compassionate ministry to those troubled women struggling with the guilt of having aborted a baby.

The sanctity of life ethic absolutely requires that we bring to and end the cold, thoughtless, clinical slaughter of the unborn.

D. Jack Nicholas is president of Southern Baptist College at Walnut Ridge.



On the moral scene

by John Finn

A lottery is not a painless form of taxation

In 1972, Governor William Millikin of Michigan opposed the "painless form of taxation" proposed by the lottery proponents. We, too, oppose it, for it is not a painless form of taxation.

A Little Rock black minister tells of people who take money needed to purchase food or pay insurance premiums and use it to purchase lottery tickets. Is this a "painless form of taxation" for the family members involved?

In Phillipsburg, N. J., an Ingersall-Rand Company employee credit union learned last year that it had been swindled by its former manager for about 10 years. The man's attorney claimed he used most of the \$500,000 of stolen funds to buy lottery tickets. He was sentenced to five years in prison.

Painless taxation? Ask the man doing time because he stole to feed his habit. Ask his employers about the painless form of tax-

ation. The family members are suffering the pain of shame and loneliness.

What happened to the money? Much of it went into the pockets of the gambling interests and only part of it into the state treasury. In this case, the bank account of the state was fattened by stolen money. We do not want or need this kind of money flowing into our state treasury.

"Lottery Fever Expensive" is the title of an Associated Press story from Erie, Pa. According to the story, a teen-age boy drew \$6,000 from a bond fund and told his father he wanted to transfer it to a savings account. He went to a newsstand and cigar store and bought 6,000 lottery tickets.

When the father told his son he wanted to talk with him, the teenager said he was sick, went into the bathroom and took 200 aspirins dissolved in water.

How much did the teenager win? When the story broke, relatives began counting the

tickets. It took three hours to count 1,000 tickets, and they discovered four prize tickets worth \$36.50 each. The lottery was not "painless taxation" for the father. It was not painless for the teenager. He cried and said, "I didn't want to hurt anybody."

A lottery is not "painless taxation," for it hurts the participants. It is not painless, for it hurts the family members of those playing the game.

A lottery is not painless to a society, for it takes more money than the state's share from the lottery to solve problems and to treat compulsive gamblers.

The gambling interests may not suffer pain, but those of us standing in the ruins of broken hearts, homes and blasted dreams suffer immense pain. Therefore, we say "no" to a lottery!

John Finn is Executive Director of the Christian Civic Foundation of Arkansas.

You'll be glad to know...

by Don Moore

... Faith is confirmed by death. For several years I had tried to imagine my father lying a corpse. We had farmed together, layed rock together, and hunted together. We had laughed together. In recent years one of our shared delights was me telling yarns that I picked up from preacher friends around the country. He seemed disappointed when I failed to produce a new comical story. In fact, not many months before his leaving us, when speech was gone and strength failed, he scribbled an awfully shaky, almost unreadable note, wanting to know if I knew any new jokes.

What a delight he was! What would it be like, I wondered, when he passed on? What emotions would attack as I would one day see his body without life? These were questions that came to me, as I am sure they do to others.

Well, I'm on the other side of those now. I can testify to God's grace and power. What strength! What peace! What confidence! It is something else! God is something else! Reinforced by a mighty companion of more than 60 years, Dad fought on with unbelievable determination. At 92, with speech gone, strength gone, back gone, and organs failing, Dad needed to go on. God let him go on.

Conclusion: It was right! The event, the time, the place, the way, were all right. "He doeth all things well!" So tremendous was this reality that Mom could sit in the funeral parlor with her six children and say with utter honesty, "I have perfect peace."

The long years of unwavering Christian character and conduct paid off. It's been paying off all along with the lives of the children and everyone who knew him. It paid off in death! Nothing in recent days has confirmed my faith and reinforced my belief in the value of Christian living as the departure of Dad to be with Jesus. "To God be the glory."

Our family so deeply appreciates all of the ways in which our larger Baptist family has supported us.

Don Moore is Executive Director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.



Moore

Let's promote the truth

I find that too many times, repeatedly, some male—within the ministry or otherwise—continues to take the "holier than thou" attitude as to the why's and wherefore's that women are not to be ministers, deacons or to teach men.

The scriptures do reflect this in several places, and these people latch on to it like a dog with a bone, but they fail to ever reflect those women who are listed repeatedly, some preaching the gospel, some deaconesses (Ro. 16:1 RSV), some teachers of all persons (are men persons?). I could go on with this, but I will refrain.

Some men like to quote I Timothy 2:12 (women shall not teach men), but they never mention I Timothy 2:9 (women shall not wear their hair braided, nor beautiful gold, diamonds, jewelry, etc.).

What preacher ever told his wife how to wear her hair or not to wear whatever jewelry she might have. Tommyrot! The preachers pick out what they desire to speak on and pick on the women because basically they have no way to answer back. The Bible can be made to say whatever you desire for it to say, if you search for it long enough.

I would like for all women to just call in sick on one given Sunday and just see what would take place throughout that Sunday's services. How about it, ladies?

I wonder what the Bible might say about Lottie Moon; Ann Wallerman, Arkansas's own missionary or Annie Armstrong. Did any of them ever teach men?

I am not an ERA promoter nor an "ordain the women" promoter, but I do respect the fact that the women do about 80 percent of what is ever done in most any Baptist church (and others as well). These men are so afraid that women might get a toehold within the leadership, they could nearly die.

I am ordained. I am what is known as a conservative. I do like the truth promoted at all times.—**Leon Moore, Texarkana**

Letters to the editor

Involve the layperson

The headline in one Southern Baptist publication stated: "Baptists top 14 million. Church letters show steady SBC growth."

I read that statistical projections show all five church programs will show enrollment increases. The only projected decrease was baptisms.

It would appear we are building marvelous organizations and collecting more money than ever before. But we are slipping in the most important thing.

The figures show there are almost 36 Southern Baptist church members for each baptism. When you consider that a lot of those baptized were coming from other church denominations and were already Christians, it leads one to wonder if we are, in fact, retreating from the command of Jesus when he gave the Great Commission.

On page 10 of the Jan. 12 Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine is a very interesting article about the importance of laymen. The statement is made that 80 percent of the ministers in eastern Europe are lay ministers. It further states that the churches are growing in communist countries.

Now let's take a look at the churches in this country. A lot of churches that we would class as very small and insignificant have a pastor who has no college training. Yet these small churches baptize a lot more people percentage-wise than some of the large churches which have college-trained pastors.

One of the weaknesses of many of our churches is that they are run by the deacons and/or committees. When you involve the common layperson in the planning and decision-making of the church, they will feel an obligation to see that the church grows. They will feel that it is "our church" and that it is no longer "their church".—**Ben Fried, Mena.**

OBU 'Elderhostel' offerings announced

For the fifth consecutive year, Ouachita Baptist University will offer its senior citizen program, known as Elderhostel, as part of its summer calendar of activities.

The program, scheduled for June 17-23 and 24-30, offers persons 60 years of age or older the opportunity to take college-level, liberal arts academic courses on a non-credit basis, free of homework and tests.

Courses offered June 17-23 will be Confederate Washington, America's Religious Folk Songs, and Arkansas English Dialects. A field trip to Washington, Ark., is among the activities planned for the group.

The week of June 24-30, courses offered will be Caddo Indians of Southwest Arkansas, Parables of Jesus, and Trees of Arkan-

sas. Walking tours and a field trip have been scheduled for this group.

The program will cost \$180 per week, covering tuition, dormitory room, board, books; supplies and entry fees. Commuter fees are available upon request.

Participants may select one, two or three of the courses offered.

Elderhostel is an international network of universities, colleges and independent institutions which offers low-cost, short-term residential programs for older adults.

Additional information about the OBU program is available from Carl Goodson, OBU, Box 3727, Arkadelphia, AR 71923; telephone (501)246-4531, ext. 147.

by Millie Gill / ABN staff writer

Dr. and Mrs. H. E. Williams of College City near Walnut Ridge celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary Jan. 14 with a family dinner in the Missouri Room of the Southern Baptist College cafeteria, followed by a fellowship in the SBC Mabree Student Center. Dr. Williams, a native of Casa, founded Southern Baptist College and served as its president for 32 years prior to his 1973 retirement. He has been active in the work of Arkansas Baptists, including leadership in the Baptist and the Inter-Faith World Hunger programs and has participated in numerous civic projects. In May, 1984 Dr. Williams will complete 54 years of service as an ordained Baptist minister. Mrs. Williams, the former Beatrice Black of Perryville, is retired from the teaching profession, having served as a high school teacher. The Williams' were honored with an anniversary dinner Jan. 8 by the Campbell Station Church near Newport where he serves as interim pastor.



Beatrice and H.E. Williams

Mike Rush

is serving Mountain Home First Church as interim music director. He directs the Chorus of Ramey Junior High School in Fayetteville and the Baptist Student Union at the University of Arkansas.

Neal Cordell

was ordained to the ministry Jan. 8 at the Second Church of Greenville, Miss. He is

serving as pastor of the Parkway Church in Lake Village.

Bob Barnett

is serving Cabot First Church as interim minister of music and youth.

Lloyd Cloud

is serving as interim pastor of the Lake Hamilton Church in Central Association.

briefly

Baring Cross Church

in North Little Rock observed Baptist Men's Day Jan. 22 with a breakfast attended by both men and boys of the church.

Batesville West Church

will observe Baptist Men's Day Jan. 29 with a deacon ordination service for James Melton, Pat O'Grady and Billy Roberts.

missionary notes

Mr. and Mrs. Charles T. Browning, Baptist representatives to Jordan, have arrived on the field for their first term of service. Their address is: Baptist Hospital, Box 1, Ajloun, Jordan. They are natives of Arkansas. He is from Judsonia, and she is the former Nancy Woodward of Lonoke. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1983.

Mr. and Mrs. Glendon D. Grober, missionaries to Brazil, have completed furlough and returned to the field. Their address is: Caixa Postal 7261, 01000 Sao Paulo, SP, Brazil. Born in Vicksburg, Miss., he lived in Russellville while growing up. She is the former Marjorie Steele of Ballard County, Ky. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1955.

Mr. and Mrs. Ron Langston, missionaries to Zimbabwe, have arrived on the field to begin their first term of service. Their address is: P.O. Box W-197, Waterfalls, Harare, Zimbabwe. He lived in Etowah, Keiser and Osceola while growing up. The former Janice Wilmoth, she was born in Jonesboro and considers Etowah her hometown. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1983.

Mr. and Mrs. J.A. Lee, missionaries to India, have completed furlough and returned to the field. Their address is: 383 Upper Palace Orchards, Bangalore 560 080, India. He is a native of Mountain View. She is the former Carolyn Stewart of Fort Smith. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission

Board in 1976.

Mr. and Mrs. Stan Parris Jr., missionaries to Venezuela, have completed language school and arrived on the field. Their address is: c/o Clarence Smith, Apartado

10385, Bella Vista, Maracaibo, Venezuela 4002A. They are Arkansas natives. He is from Hope. The former Charlotte Wilson, she was born in Dumas and considers Little Rock her hometown. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1982.

buildings



First Church, Maumelle, dedicated a 10,000 square foot church building Jan. 15 with a worship service and potluck. The new building contains a 350-seat auditorium and 14 class rooms. A Together We Build program raised \$374,00 in pledges above tithes and offerings, which will pay for the building in approximately three years. The old building will be used for class and office space and as a fellowship hall. Pastor Steve Wilkes reports attendance averaging over 200, at least 30 percent over two years ago.

Conference call brings Bible study, fellowship to shut-ins

by Mark Kelly

When illness strikes suddenly or old age finally creeps up on a person, those who have been active in church all their lives can feel terribly isolated and alone, often as much "shut-out" as "shut-in".

And despite all the in-home visits and religious literature, home-bound persons still feel they are missing something very important: the warmth and fellowship generated in group Bible study and worship.

"I miss the fellowship of people in the church so much," sighs Dora Bechtel-heimer, who was "very, very" active in First Church, Camden, until health problems forced her retirement many years before anyone would have expected. "We used to never miss a service when the kids were growing up."

First Church, Camden, found an answer to the problem, however, using a medium capable of tying isolated people together: the telephone.

Every Sunday morning at 9:30, a telephone company operator begins calling 28 home-bound persons, tying them into a conference circuit. At 9:45, a final call is placed to Heyward Adams, who teaches the Sunday School lesson to his "assembled" class from a church office.

Adams and his wife, Dorothy, Southern Baptist missionaries to Nigeria for 23 years, have taught the unusual class since late 1982. In 14 months, enrollment has gone from seven to 28, and average weekly "attendance" is over 20.

Class members differ widely. Mostly older people, some are retired professionals and highly educated, while others can barely write their names, Adams says. They come from several church backgrounds. The class has grown strictly by word of mouth.

The idea came when pastor Francis Chesson read a newspaper account of a similar program in an Orlando, Fla., Methodist church. A check with the phone company revealed the weekly cost would run between eight and nine dollars,

depending on attendance.

Low-cost amplifiers were provided by the church for class members unable to hold a telephone for extended periods, and the class got underway. Before long, two families stepped forward and offered to underwrite the ministry's expenses.

"I like the challenge of something new, something we haven't done before," says Adams, who also visits his pupils by phone. "Teaching this class is very different. You only have voice contact, not eye contact, so you have to work harder to communicate with your voice. I try to follow the quarterly pretty closely, because they have that in front of them."

And despite all the things that separate them, the weekly conference calls and regular telephone visits minister in a way radio and television cannot. "I've been on television and spoken to large congregations at conferences," says Adams. "But I've had a different type of experience here.

"There's a rapport I feel as we get better acquainted. I finally realized we are one."

Mark Kelly is an intern with the Arkansas Baptist News-magazine.



ABN photos / Mark Kelly



(Left) Heyward Adams, a former missionary to Nigeria, now a member of First Church, Camden, teaches a Sunday School class each week to over 20 homebound persons in the Camden community. A weekly conference call—costing the church less than nine dollars—provides sorely-missed group Bible study and fellowship for persons such as Susie Purifoy (above), who look forward to the half-hour sessions.

Denomination leader requests presidential action on ruling

DALLAS (BP)—President Reagan may soon find his desk stacked with letters urging him to overturn a 1983 revenue ruling which prohibits ministers and military personnel with tax-free housing allowances from deducting interest and real estate taxes for personal residences.

Southern Baptist Convention Annuity Board President Darold H. Morgan is encouraging Southern Baptists to join him in writing a letter to the president and Treasury Secretary Donald T. Regan requesting they revoke Revenue Ruling 83-3.

In his letter to the president, Morgan questioned the authority of the Internal Revenue Service to revoke a previous interpretation which had been in effect for more than 20 years. Morgan said he thought the "proper forum for a decision of such monumental economic impact is Congress, not the IRS."

Although the 1983 ruling has not been applied to military personnel with housing allowances, the Treasury Department is reviewing a proposal which could eliminate the mortgage interest deduction for these members of the armed forces. Defense officials argued this step would amount to a pay cut of four to six percent for half a million people in the armed services. They contend approximately 600,000 military personnel will see tax increases of \$800-\$3,000 per year.

Morgan said while the impact on military personnel is severe, ministers will suffer more because the clergy are among the lowest paid workers in the country. He noted the financial impact of Revenue Ruling 83-3 in addition to the higher Social Security taxes that went into effect Jan. 1 will devastate many ministers. He said the IRS admits the additional revenue generated from ministers by the ruling will be minimal.

The new ruling became effective for ministers on July 1. However, the IRS extended the effective date for clergy already owning their own homes until Jan. 1, 1985.

New toll-free number delayed for Annuity Board

A new toll-free number for the Southern Baptist Annuity Board, initially planned for Jan. 1, has been temporarily delayed, according to Annuity Board president Darold H. Morgan.

The number, intended to consolidate several toll-free numbers, was not implemented by Southwestern Bell on the date planned, Morgan indicated.

"We are working on the problem and pushing for a resolution," Morgan wrote in a Jan. 16 letter to Baptist state papers. Until the problem is resolved, Annuity Board members can reach the agency on the old numbers: 1-800-527-9010 or 1-800-527-9003.

Morgan also noted should Treasury Secretary Regan conclude military personnel are exempt from the ruling, such action would be unfair to the minister.

"Such a discriminatory application of revenue 83-3 would contradict advice given by IRS attorneys to the effect that no distinction should be made between ministers and members of the armed forces with respect to deductibility of real estate taxes and interest," Morgan said.

Noting Treasury Secretary Regan's decision is expected to be imminent, Morgan is encouraging interested Southern Baptists to write their letters as soon as possible.

The addresses are: President Reagan, The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20500; and Treasury Secretary Donald T. Regan, Herbert Hoover Building, 14th Street and Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20230.

EQUAL ACCESS NE

Senate Bill: S.815—Senator Mark Hatfield

House Bill: H.R.4172—Rep. Don Bonker

"The time for action on granting students their right to assemble for religious speech has come."

—Sen. Mark Hatfield

"It is inequitable to prevent students at public secondary schools from meeting voluntarily for religious purposes when the school permits student meetings for . . . other purposes. Such a standard is inconsistent with the principles of free speech."

—Representative Don Bonker

In 1984, Congress will consider "equal access" legislation which is supported by congressional Democrats and Republicans, conservatives and liberals. A carefully crafted legislative approach to protect religious speech in our public secondary schools, S.815/H.R.4172 are bills Baptists *can* and *should* support.

The HATFIELD/BONKER approach warrants our support because it:

- 1. Is legislation, not a constitutional amendment:** Equal access legislation would clarify the religious speech rights of secondary school students without amending the U.S. Constitution or weakening the First Amendment's religious freedom guarantees.
- 2. Protects religious speech:** In testimony before Congress, the Baptist Joint Committee said, "freedom of speech may not be curtailed solely because of the religious content of that speech."
- 3. Calls for student-initiated meetings:** To avoid state sponsorship of religion, initiative for religious activities in our public secondary schools must reside with the students.
- 4. Applies to secondary students, not elementary school children:** While secondary school students may be mature enough to conduct their own meetings, the very nature of elementary school does not permit children-initiated meetings.

Southern Baptist ethicist cites '10 good things' in 1983

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—In the midst of gloomy 1983 headlines, a leading Southern Baptist ethicist has reminded the nation life in the past year was "remarkably good."

Foy Valentine, executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, related "10 good things that happened in 1983" in a guest editorial in USA Today, a national newspaper with more than 1.2 million readers.

Valentine found promise in the midst of

peril, noting the world managed to avoid nuclear war and global financial catastrophe. "In spite of brinkmanship and bull-headedness in high places, the nations of the earth did not stumble down Armageddon's hill of horror," he noted.

The Baptist executive praised church groups and other concerned citizens who "worked faithfully in support of peace with justice" and helped bring "the awful consequences of nuclear war" into clearer

focus.

Valentine, who wrote a similar year-ending column for the national publication last year, also found hope in human relationships. "Friendships have grown, family ties have been strengthened, the milk of human kindness has kept flowing, and the web of human relationships binding us all together may be a bit more substantial this year than last," he wrote.

The disenfranchised, disaffected and disaffiliated saw some of last year's worst fears bottom out, he continued, citing increased involvement in world hunger relief and other human rights causes.

On the political scene, Valentine concluded "demagogues found little new running room" in 1983. The militarists in Argentina were reined in. Arafat's rhetoric wilted. Extremists generally found the world unresponsive to their intoxicating oratory."

Valentine recognized improvements in responding to the crisis in public education as national and local leaders "finally started coming to grips with one of the gravest social concerns of our time."

For Valentine, who has directed the Southern Baptist social concerns agency for 23 years, 1983 brought indications "values are somewhat more in and blatant immorality is somewhat more out. Increasing numbers seem to me to have decided to sell image and buy character, to sell indulgence and buy duty, to sell herpes simplex and buy sexual decency, to sell addiction and buy sobriety, to sell entitlement and buy obligation."

"Spiritual values," he concluded, "have not been obliterated, and moral values have not been lost. Thank God."

Southern Baptist missionary heads Israel Council

TIBERIAS, Israel (BP)—Ray Register, a Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board representative in Israel for 18 years, has been elected chairman of the United Christian Council of Israel.

The council is a fellowship of 20 evangelistic protestant groups working in Israel. It seeks to strengthen fellowship among member groups, increase presentation of the gospel and defend religious liberty in Israel.

Other Baptists elected UCC officers were Sallie Lanier, also a Southern Baptist FMB representative, treasurer, and Suhail Ramadan, a pastor in Galilee, named a council member.

Register and his wife, Rose Mary, do evangelistic work with Arabs in the Galilee area.

EDS YOUR SUPPORT

You can support "equal access" legislation offered by Sen. Hatfield and Rep. Bonker:

Arkansas' congressmen are:

Senator Dale Bumpers
Senator David Pryor
Rep. Bill Alexander

Rep. John Paul Hammerschmidt
Rep. Beryl Anthony Jr.
Rep. Ed Bethune

• Contact your senators and voice your support for S.815.

Write: The Honorable _____
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

• Contact your representative and urge a "yes" vote for H.R. 4172.

Write: The Honorable _____
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

• Organize discussion/letterwriting in your church, Sunday school, women and men's groups or prayer meeting. All church members need to be aware of the chance equal access offers religious speech in the public secondary school.

The HATFIELD/BONKER "equal access" legislation deserves our support. Let your elected officials in Washington hear your voice for the free speech rights of religious speech in our public secondary schools.

Congress needs to hear from you
Support
Hatfield S.815
Bonker H.R.4172



BAPTIST JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC AFFAIRS
200 MARYLAND AVENUE, N.E., WASHINGTON, D. C. 20002-5797

Study New Testament concepts of ministry, ordination

by T. B. Maston

There is an increasing number of young people, including many young women, who are responding to what they interpret to be the call of God to some type of full-time Christian service. Some of these young people are really struggling to determine the purpose or call of God for their lives. Many of them do not feel that they are called to preach.

In addition to these young people there is also a larger number, than in former years, of more mature men and women who are preparing for a second career in a Christian ministry of some type.

The preceding developments suggest that this may be a logical time for our churches and our denomination not only to re-study the New Testament conception of the Christian ministry but also to re-examine and re-evaluate our usual ordination procedure.

It is true that in recent years, in response to the needs in our churches and the call of God, some churches have ordained specialized ministers such as education and music leadership. Do we need, however, to go further and ordain any man or woman who feels called to some type of full-time Christian service?

Will you not agree that we should have enough concern and courage to study objectively what is found in the scriptures? Even a casual reading of the New Testament should convince us that too sharp a distinction has been made between the "ordained clergy" and the laymen. We may also be convinced that there is little if any scriptural basis for the rather elaborate type of ordination service that is frequently followed in our churches.

Also, we may conclude that the typical "ordaining council," a term which incidentally is not found in our New Testament, frequently restricts its questions too exclusively to strictly theological matters and largely ignores everyday issues that touch directly the lives of the folks to whom the ordained will minister. Really, there is not enough specific material in the New Testament on the ordination of ministers to support any so-called "orthodox" procedure.

A careful study of the New Testament will reveal that most words that are translated "ordain" or "ordained" in our English versions are more frequently translated "made," "appointed," "chosen," "determined."

Where there is anything comparable to ordination in the New Testament, it most frequently simply included the laying on of hands and prayer. An example is the incident at Antioch when the Holy Spirit revealed that Saul and Barnabas should be set apart for the task to which God had called them (Acts 13:1-3; cf. 6:1-6; 8:18-19; 9:17). This laying on of hands seemingly was symbolic of the anointing of the Holy Spirit for those who were called to a particular task. It is even possible that those being "ordained" or "set apart" had been "ordained" previously.

I personally do not believe it would violate the spirit of the New Testament to have such a service of dedication for any child of God who has had a unique call to perform a distinctive type of ministry for the Lord and the church. Some churches do that now for members who may feel a call of God to missionary service. Why not broaden it to any who have had a specific call?

It may be too much for us to expect many of our churches to re-structure the ordination of pastors. And after all, there are some legal problems involved, such as the right to perform wedding ceremonies. But why not ordain or set apart others to distinctive tasks without their having the so-called privilege of those ordained to the pastoral ministry?

Whatever is done, pastors should not feel their call is superior to others, most of whom have a similar depth of conviction that God has called them.

T. B. Maston is emeritus professor of Christian ethics at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Indians lose high court bid

WASHINGTON (BP)—For the second time in its current term the U.S. Supreme Court has turned aside claims by American Indian tribes that development of recreational facilities on land they consider sacred violates their free exercise of religion.

In an unsigned order issued Jan. 9, the Supreme Court let stand rulings by a lower court in cases brought by Navajo and Hopi Indians to prevent expansion of a ski resort in Coconino National Forest near Flagstaff, Ariz.

Attorneys for the Navajos and Hopis had argued in legal papers filed with the high court that the federal government, by approving the ski resort expansion, unconstitutionally burdened the Indian tribes' religious beliefs and practices. They also contended the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 requires the government to protect Indians' religious freedom on the same basis it protects that of all other citizens.

“President Draper has charted a course which all of us can follow.”
—Dr. Herschel H. Hobbs

The subject of biblical authority is a much-debated topic among Southern Baptists today.

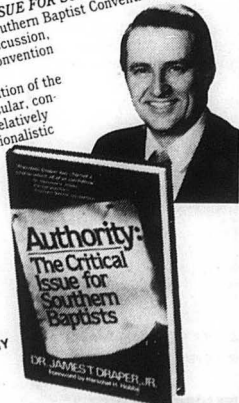
In **AUTHORITY: THE CRITICAL ISSUE FOR SOUTHERN BAPTISTS**, Dr. James T. Draper, Jr., president of the Southern Baptist Convention, takes a thought-provoking look at this area of discussion, and suggests vital solutions to keep the Convention doctrinally pure and missions-oriented.

Dr. Draper traces the historic position of the church as a whole, and Baptists in particular, concerning the Bible. And he explains the relatively recent shift from a biblical base to a rationalistic base. His loving, peace-minded approach will do much to resolve this issue in the minds of his readers.

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Denomination struggles with forced terminations

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Forced termination of Southern Baptist ministers is an embarrassment to the denomination, according to Brooks Faulkner, supervisor of the career guidance section at the Baptist Sunday School Board.

Faulkner estimates, conservatively he thinks, some 2,500 Southern Baptist church staff ministers are dismissed annually in a dilemma the denomination does not know how to handle.

Observers see no easy solution to the problem that can leave ministers and their families emotionally and financially distressed and churches frustrated and unstable.

During a meeting of church-minister relations directors from state Baptist conventions, several problems and some possible solutions were discussed in an effort to gain insight for counseling suddenly unemployed ministers and providing guidance for pastorless churches.

Although no single solution will halt the rash of minister terminations, Faulkner said one step which could positively influence a more stable relationship between ministers and churches would be an open covenant or contract.

"A covenant which includes cooperation, mutual understanding and an ongoing feedback process is needed in Southern Baptist churches between ministers and congregations," Faulkner said.

A frequent problem is neither the church nor the minister knows what to expect from the new situation because expectations are never discussed in concrete terms.

"The church has the right to expect the minister to visit in hospitals, witness to lost people and maintain some regular office hours for visits and calls because they are paying his salary," he continued. "The pastor may not like it as much as studying, but he is answerable to the congregation."

"It is a question of authority in the church," he continued. "The congregation has the right to expect some regular hours, but conversely, cannot expect the pastor to spend night and day visiting and answering the telephone."

"In the question of authority in the local church, ministers need to remember credibility and accompanying authority is gained through years of cooperation and proven leadership," Faulkner explained. "Telling church members who is in charge can do more to raise the question than settle it."

Sometimes churches need to consider alternatives to terminating a minister because of some disagreement. An interim pastor, for instance, could provide the leadership needed for a cooling-off period to salvage a minister's career and the stability and community influence of the church.

According to Faulkner, the minister is rarely the issue in a forced termination, which does not solve the problem. In most cases

where the minister is terminated, a substantial conflict existed before the minister was called to the church.

"After a forced termination, the church often is embarrassed because of what has been done, the pastor is embarrassed because he and his family can't deal with the crisis in their lives and the denomination is embarrassed by the whole issue because we don't know what to do about it," he explained.

In an effort to stem the tide of terminations in the denomination, the church-minister relations directors considered several solutions which, if applied to developing situations, could positively affect relationships between congregations and ministers.



The directors urged seminaries to prepare ministers to deal with conflict through studies in conflict management, staff relationships and personnel management.

"Unless a minister knows how to deal with conflict and other realistic problems, he may never get to use his preparation in theology and Bible study," according to Sam Granade, director of church-minister rela-

tions for the Alabama Baptist State Convention.

Other solutions which surfaced in the meeting were an improved pastor selection process, where pastors and churches are fitted together carefully and with understanding by both parties; assessment of pastoral skills; improved communication between church members and ministers, with allowances for criticism both ways; and the use of Christian principles to resolve conflict.

For ministers who have been terminated, Granade said state conventions should establish emergency aid programs. It is only a temporary measure, but necessary.

James Cooper, coordinator of the ministers' counseling service for the Baptist General Convention of Texas, supported Granade by sharing that, out of a group of 18 terminated ministers in Texas, 11 received less than a month's salary or support. The average time for terminated ministers to find a new church is approximately 18 months.

The state directors agreed guilt for forced terminations in the Southern Baptist Convention cannot be directed solely at either the churches or the ministers. Some churches seem to lose a pastor every two or three years because they are displeased with his performance.

On the other hand, they said, some ministers, in an attempt to climb the ladder of success, change churches too quickly, or are lazy, lack leadership skills or always preach negatively.

The issue is not going to be resolved tomorrow, Faulkner said. In fact, it is only beginning to be discussed openly so the denomination is aware of the many lives which are being affected. He noted a great need for care, compassion and understanding by all Southern Baptists toward churches and ministers alike whose direction and calling have been altered by crises which might have been avoided if treated in the early stages.



State WMU Annual Meeting

March 20-21, 1984

First Baptist Church, Benton

Four sessions: Tuesday, 10 a.m., 1:30 p.m.,
7 p.m., Wednesday 9:30 a.m.

Program Guests:

Gerhard Claas, BWA; Gwen Williams, New Orleans; Connie Anthony, Israel; Evelyn Blount, WMU, SBC; Judy Garner, Malawi; Laura Spiegel, Brazil; Gilbert and Deanie Nichols, Paraguay; Ariel Hernandez, Arkansas; Raymond and Bonnie Peoples, Nigeria; Carla Carswell, MK/Journeyman; Dick and Wilma Giddings, Indiana

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Fuel crisis could alter Tanzanian missions

DAR-ES-SALAAM, Tanzania (BP)—The fuel crisis in Tanzania has left Southern Baptist missionaries wondering from week to week whether they can get enough gasoline and diesel fuel for a wide range of ministries.

Some missionaries have had to curtail their work or watch it nearly grind to a halt, at least temporarily, while others manage to get enough fuel to maintain some semblance of normalcy.

Janet McDowell and Martha McAllister, missionary nurses working out of Mbeya, don't know from one week to the next whether fuel will be available for them to continue life-saving rural mobile clinics for mothers and babies.

In Kyela, missionary Doug Knapp personally baptized more than 4,000 of the 5,000 baptized there last year and started a number of new churches. If mobility decreases, Knapp and African evangelists who work with him may not continue to get that kind of results.

Already, 1983 statistics show baptisms and new churches in 13 of the 22 associations decreased or recorded no gain because of lessened missionary mobility. But increases in the other nine associations caused a 1.8 percent overall gain in churches and an 8.2 percent rise in baptisms, the lowest totals in a number of years. Overall, spirit in the churches remains good despite shortages and inconveniences of many kinds.

The problem, created mainly by a shortage of foreign exchange currency in the East African nation, could cause the Baptist Mission of Tanzania to rethink a missions philosophy built on the concept of wide mobility. A number of missionaries have already begun to analyze what the future holds if the problem doesn't abate.

"Even before this we spent more than 50 percent of our time just taking care of the logistics of living," said one missionary. "If it gets so that most or all of our time is consumed by things other than missions we may have to decide whether we can work here."

But others have begun concluding that less mobility may result in more depth. Instead of far-flung ministries, they may have to stay around home and invest themselves more intensively with fewer people. Thousands of people live within bicycle and walking distance in crowded Africa.

The more intense personal approach may be a wave of the future in missions around the world as resources dwindle and the Southern Baptist mission dollar has to stretch further and further. But meanwhile missionaries are adapting as best they can.

The recent re-opening of the Tanzania-Kenya border, severely restricted for the past six years, will probably ease procurement of fuel from outside Tanzania. But residents don't expect a quick, easy solution to the problem.

Home Board names 67 persons to mission posts

ATLANTA (BP)—Four missionaries, two missionary associates, and 59 persons receiving pastoral aid were approved by the executive committee of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board during its January session.

The committee also elected James L. Hill of Kansas City, Mo., as associate director in the church extension division, and Tommy D. Eggleston of Conyers, Ga., as a national consultant for special mission ministries.

Appointed missionaries were Stephen and Carolyn Cloues of Birmingham, Ala., and Fayiz and Emilia Saknini of Smyrna, Ga. New missionary associates were Rodney and Camille Minor of Norcross, Ga.

Hill succeeds Jerry B. Graham, who is now assistant to the vice president of missions. He will focus on church starting in the eastern United States.

Hill has been director of church extension and language missions for Blue River-Kansas City Association since 1979. He was a church-planter apprentice in Blue Springs, Mo., and pastor of churches in Iberia and Nelson, Mo. He is a graduate of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Mo.

Eggleston will provide expertise in the areas of special events and creative arts for the HMB. Since 1981, he has been as a research assistant at the HMB and as minister of music at Northminster Church in Conyers. He has composed numerous anthems pub-

lished by Broadman Press. He is a graduate of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

The Cloues will remain in Birmingham as he becomes director of church extension. He had been a church extension and planning consultant in Birmingham since 1978.

He is a graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. She is a graduate of Texas Christian University, Fort Worth.

The Sakninis remain in the Atlanta area as he becomes a catalytic language missionary. Since 1980, he has served as a general language missionary for the Georgia Baptist

Convention and was a missionary to the Lebanese in Atlanta 1976-80. He also has been pastor of churches in Tripoli and Beirut, Lebanon, and is a graduate of the Arabic Baptist Theological Seminary in Lebanon. She is employed by J.P. Allen in Atlanta.

The Minors will be church planter apprentices in Norcross, Ga. He is former associate pastor of West Memorial Church in Houston, and former associate director of Reach Out Ministries in Atlanta. He is a graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. She is a graduate of Baylor University, Waco, Texas.

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The mystery of Hoglah

Hoglah was Abraham's great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great granddaughter. She was the daughter of



Parker

Zelophehad who was of the half' tribe of Manasseh. Hoglah's father had four other daughters, Mahlah, Noah, Milcah and Tirzah. (Numbers 26:33) There were no sons. The fact that the names appear to be masculine indicates that maybe dad kept naming each before

birth, hoping for a son. Incidentally, Hoglah's odd name would have been popular in Arkansas Razorback country.

We are told there's something in a name. We can speculate how Hoglah and her sisters received such unusual names.

There's no need for speculation about how the name "Christian" came about. The disciples were first called Christians at Antioch of Syria. Apparently they were so closely identified with the Master, they acted like him, talked like him and loved God the Father and other people like him.

When it comes to decisions regarding lifestyle and even occasional commitments, we who wear the name Christian ought, by all means, to seek the mind of Christ. To not do so puts us in the ranks of Hoglah and sisters. One would wonder about our wearing the name! It's sort of like wondering about so-called "Christians" in Northern Ireland and Lebanon! — Bob Parker, director

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Evangelism

Last call for conference

Our State Evangelism Conference will begin at 1:30 p.m. January 30 at Immanuel Baptist Church, Little Rock. The theme of our conference is "Commissioned to Boldness" from Matthew 28:19-20.



Shell

God has blessed us with some great keynote speakers. Landrum Leavell, president of New Orleans Seminary, will speak Monday evening on "The Power of the Holy Spirit". His new book on the Holy Spirit will serve as our Bible Doctrine study book this year.

Dr. Jimmy Draper, pastor of First Baptist Church, Euless, Texas and president of the Southern Baptist Convention, will speak two times. He will speak on "The Authority of the Bible" and "Victory in Jesus".

Dr. Vance Havner, the highly respected and popular evangelist from Greensboro, SC, will be our Bible teacher, sharing three times in the conference.

Doug Metzger, associate in the Personal Evangelism Department of the Home Mission Board, will speak on "The Authority of Jesus to do Bold Evangelism". He not only teaches people how to win people to Christ but shows them by doing it.

Carlos McLeod, Director of Evangelism for Texas, will speak two times. He will speak on "Doing the Work of an Evangelist in Personal Witnessing" and "Marking Disciples in Baptism".

We are expecting a great conference. It will be much better if you can be there. — Clarence Shell, director

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Family and Child Care Services Train up a child

"Train up a child in the way he should go and..." These words are from the Book of Life, our true source of authority.

For the past two years, I've received letters from two young children at Christmas-time. This brother and sister, ages 12 and 10, wrote "I have decided this year to give my Christmas presents to you." They chose to take the money given to them by their parents to purchase Christmas presents and send it to the "orphanage".

What a blessing to know of their sensitivity to the hurts of needy children, to sense their own developing value system that enabled them to set this kind of priority on their own money, to surmise how their parents and church have nurtured them and trained them in the ways of the Lord. The Lord will bless their obedience and concern expressed for some of his children. At a very young age, perhaps they have already learned that "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me."

People, young and old, from all across our state have remembered our children during this Christmas season. Children living at the children's home, our three emergency receiving homes and group home for boys were recipients of your sharing. Thank you. In addition, through one of our area offices, 18 needy children in the community received Christmas gifts.

Your acts of love have an impact on these young lives. You are helping us teach about a basic value of life; what it means to express love and the source of all love. — Johnny G. Biggs, Executive Director

Afternoon course

When the Seminary Studies Program begins Feb. 27, in Little Rock, an afternoon course called Sunday School Leadership will be

taught at 1:00 p.m. by Dr. Mark Short of New Orleans Seminary. The morning, afternoon and evening classes meet at Immanuel Church, Little Rock at 10th and Bishop Streets during the eleven week semester. Old Testament will be taught by Dr. Harry Hunt at 9:00 a.m. Dr. Peter Butler will teach Church Music Administration at 5:00 p.m..

For further information, contact Lehman F. Webb, Baptist Building, 376-4791.



Short

International

A day of joy and gladness

by Wm. M. Burnett, Beebe

Background passage: Isaiah 35

Focal passage: Isaiah 35:1-6a, 8-10

Central truth: The hope of the believer is a life of joy and fullness.

This chapter speaks of a time when all the conditions of life are ideal. The earth is no longer under a curse for man's sake (Gen. 3:17, 18). The creation no longer travails in pain (Romans 8:22). The desert becomes a garden, and the glory of God is expressed in the unspoiled beauty of nature.

The weak are made strong; the blind see; the deaf hear. The lame walk, and the dumb speak. Life's highway is a holy way. Even the simple have no difficulty finding it and walking in it; nor are there any dangers or obstructions.

Paul says that though we have the first fruits of the Spirit we, "groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies" (Romans 8:23). In the following verse he says that we are saved in hope. John says, "Beloved now are we the sons of God and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him for we shall see him as he is." (I John 3:2).

The blessed hope illuminates the dark path through this world. Our relationship to Jesus Christ is a spiritual reality within us that makes us know that the word of God is sure. What God has promised he will fulfill.

Our experience reinforces that hope. Romans 5:1,2 describes a relationship to God characterized by peace and security. Verses 3 and 4 describe a relationship to the circumstances of this world, a tranquility in tribulation which turns adversity into a cause for rejoicing.

The hope is made more sure because it is based in God's love, "shed abroad in our hearts." To those who know the Lord Jesus Christ and whose minds are set on him, the delightful picture painted for us by Isaiah is as real as it will be when "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge and glory of the Lord as the waters that cover the sea."

This lesson is based on the International Bible Lesson for Christian Teaching, Uniform Series, Copyright International Council of Education. Used by permission.

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Life and Work

Establishing a new ethic

by Joe A. Thompson, pastor, Calvary Church, Blytheville

Basic passage: Mark 7:1-5, 14-15, 21-23

Focal passage: Mark 7:1-5

Central truth: God's new ethic—pure and undefiled religion.

The growing opposition to Jesus' ministry can be seen by the fact that the Pharisees and Scribes sent some of their members to spy on him. The Pharisees were very strict disciplinarians. The Scribes were experts in Jewish law.

The Ten Commandments composed the written law. However, the Pharisees followed not only the written law but "the tradition of the elders" (Mark 7:3b A.S.V.), which were interpretations of the law handed down by various teachers through the ages.

This "tradition" resulted in a multiplicity of rules and regulations which reduced religion to the mechanics of observing rules. These rules were so burdensome that even the Scribes themselves referred to them as a yoke.

Yet they asked Jesus why his disciples ate with unwashed hands. Jesus answered from the prophet Isaiah: "How right Isaiah was when he prophesied about you... you teach man-made commandments as though they were God's rules." (Mark 7:6-7).

Jesus then called the people to himself so he could apply his teaching. Jesus knew the multitude had heard the Pharisees' charges. He wanted them to understand why he had called their leaders hypocrites. Religion, true religion, is more than keeping rules and observing ordinances.

"A man is rendered unclean, not by what goes through his mouth, such as food and drink. No! A man is rendered unclean by what comes from his heart."

Jesus' new ethic was to strike down the oral tradition of the elders and re-establish the original intent of God.

God is not dishonored with dirty hands and with soiled hearts. God is not grieved when his children do not practice proper hygiene—but when they practice poor religion.

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Bible Book Study

Joash reforms Judah

by H. E. Williams, president emeritus, Southern Baptist College, Walnut Ridge

Background passage: II Kings 11:1 to 12:21, II Chronicles 22:10 to 24:7

Focal passage: II Kings 11:1-4, 17-18; 12:2-5

Central truth: Joash, protected from murder by Jehoiada, renewed the covenant, repaired the temple, but did not destroy the high places of illicit worship.

Upon the death of her son, King Ahaziah, at the hands of Jehu, Athaliah seized the throne of Judah and ruthlessly killed all of the "royal seed" (possibly successors to the throne) except Joash who was hidden by Jehoshabea. Joash, a very small child, was hidden for six years in the bed chamber of the palace and later was taken to the Temple and placed in the care of the high priest, Jehoiada.

When Joash was seven years old, Jehoiada initiated a palace revolution to overthrow the Baal-worshipping Queen Athaliah, daughter of the wicked Ahab and Jezebel.

Expectations that the execution of Athaliah would mark the end of the terrible influence of Ahab and Jezebel were not justified by later events.

Upon ascension to the throne, Joash, a mere child of seven years, had to depend upon regents for advice. He found proper counsel in Jehoiada. As long as he depended upon him, the reign of Joash was relatively successful.

Jehoiada led in instituting two reforms. First, he asked the people to renew the covenant of Israel with the Lord. Second, he asked that the king rule the nation in accordance with the law of God and that the people obey the king as the God-appointed ruler.

Joash instituted a tax and offerings to repair the Temple. Restoration of the "House of the Lord" doubtless was needed because of its age and the incidental neglect resulting from Baal worship. The people neglected the "House of the Lord" when they were enjoying the sensuality of pagan religion.

As constructive as Joash became, with the counsel of Jehoiada, he still had spiritual blind spots. One was evident when he permitted the "high places" to continue to exist. Like the leaven of the Pharisees which Jesus warned his disciples about, the silent influence of the "substitute religious practice" ultimately undermines the truth.

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Cult knowledge needed for witness

RICHFIELD, Utah (BP)—Caustic remarks and an unloving witness toward others' beliefs deter rather than enhance Southern Baptists' efforts to win cult members to Christ, according to a Southern Baptist pastoral missionary.

Medford Hutson, an appointee of the SBC Home Mission Board, emphasized Southern Baptists should learn about Mormonism and other cults because of the power those groups exert against Christians.

Hutson, pastor of First Church of Richfield, Utah, talked recently of the need for Southern Baptists to study materials on cults and witnessing resources, including items produced by the Baptist Sunday School Board's Church Training Department.

"When people have a real hunger to learn about cults, they will come at it with an open mind," Hutson observed of his 20 years' work in a predominately Mormon state.

Hutson feels Southern Baptists tend to become "too anti-Mormon or anti-cult when teaching about cults. "When you have a tolerant attitude and a genuine love, you can know what you believe and why," he explained. "A person who becomes agitated does not know what he believes, or thinks he knows everything and isn't interested in studying anything except the superficial stereotype."

"The Christian Confronting the Cults," an equipping center module produced by the church training department, is one resource individuals or groups might choose to study.

As one who has experienced both subtle and blatant forms of harassment from per-

sons who oppose his faith, Hutson strives to exhibit Christian response in every instance.

"We've had to outlive and outlove them," he said of the Mormon residents who control the economy, social structure and school systems in Utah. "There's always an underlying pressure you can feel but cannot quite put your finger on. We've had to look at them through the eyes of Christ and the Scriptures. We had to leave Mormonism alone and love the people."

Hutson and his family have been tested over the years. However, in passing those tests he believes they have won the confidence and respect of Mormons.

He recalls with amusement when sales clerks would give him too much change to see what he would do, or when shop personnel would put extra merchandise in his package to see if he'd return it. His mood becomes markedly sober in recalling the cross being cut off the top of the church and the pain his children suffered when social activities were limited to "Mormons only."

"We have compensated by loving the people in spite of it. "We've had to pray constantly, 'Lord, help us to see them through your eyes.'"

Noting caustic remarks about Mormonism are not allowed at First Church, Richfield, Hutson says emphatically, "We do not hate Mormon people. These are people just like we are, who will accept Christ, if he is presented the right way."

"It's impossible to save a Mormon," Hutson declares. "I can't do it... but God can!"

New WMU building cornerstone filled

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)—Almost 300 people gathered Jan. 8 in the partially completed national headquarters building of Woman's Missionary Union, Southern Baptist Convention for cornerstone ceremonies.

Climax of the 20-minute program was the placement of historical materials in a copper time capsule located in the floor of the lobby. The cornerstone was placed atop this capsule.

State WMU and WMU-SBC prepared boxes to be included in the capsule. Each state WMU box held a copy of that state's history, a list of WMU staff, a list of missionaries currently serving from that state and any other materials indicative of their role in WMU. Their boxes were presented in the order the states came into WMU.

The boxes were presented by state WMU

presidents and executive directors in Birmingham for the 1984 executive board meeting. In exchange, WMU-SBC presented each state with a brick from the new building.

WMU-SBC placed manuals, current magazines, a copy of the WMU history, organizational chart and list of employees and copies of all ceremonies related to relocation in the capsule.

Representatives from the Foreign Mission Board, Richmond, Va., the Home Mission Board, Atlanta, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., attended.

WMU will occupy the new building this spring.

Rogers appointed dean of Southern's RE School

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)—William B. Rogers Jr. has been named dean-elect of the School of Religious Education at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

Rogers was appointed by seminary president Roy L. Honeycutt effective Jan. 1, 1984.

Seminary trustees will vote on the appointment at their regular meeting March 12-14.

The new dean was elected to the Southern Seminary faculty as professor of history and philosophy of education last spring. He has been on sabbatical since Aug. 1.