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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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February 2, 1984

Arkansas Baptist

NEWSMAGAZINE



Seeds of caring
produce missionary
page 2



(BP) photo / Paul Brock

Ron Greenwich's life changed dramatically when he found the love of Christ at age 12 in the Arkansas Baptist Home for Children. He and his wife, Alana, have just been appointed missionaries to South Brazil.

Former Arkansan to share life of victory with Brazilians

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—As Ron Greenwich was growing up, it seemed his family was always the last to live in a house before it collapsed or burned.

But Christian love he found—at Arkansas Baptist Home for Children and in a missionary kid he married—helped him overcome the alcoholic poverty which marked his early life.

Now he plans to share his victory. He and his wife, Alana, have been appointed Southern Baptist missionaries to Brazil, where he will continue a career in social work.

"Maybe if you don't feel loved and appreciated by someone, it is hard to feel loved by God," the 35-year-old Tennessee native said. "Probably had I not met Alana I would have been like a number of people who lived at the children's home and went to college with me but dropped out."

Greenwich and his brother and sister were taken to the Arkansas children's home when he was 12 years old. Years later when he met Alana as a junior at Ouachita Baptist University, in Arkadelphia, Ark., his self-concept was still suffering and his motivation was low.

"I think the fact God led me to Alana or Alana to me has helped me grow," he said. Her love for him helped him see possibilities in himself.

When they met, she was a freshman and it was her first year away from Brazil where she grew up with her parents, missionaries Bill and Jerry Ichter of Pennsylvania and Kentucky.

Greenwich's character immediately appealed to Alana. "He had such a good sense of humor about things that happened," she recalls. "He was very easy to talk to, and he just took things so well."

On their second date, Greenwich opened up to her about his past, and this impressed Alana. "That more serious side of him showed he did have some objectives coming out of his background," she said.

He had lost his father to divorce at age three. Both his father and his mother's second husband were alcoholics. "We were just a poor family, and it was quite traumatic for me," Greenwich said. "We were always the last ones to live in a house before it fell down or burned down, and wearing the

same clothes all the time is embarrassing."

The family survived on the minimum wage Greenwich's mother brought home from whatever job she could find.

"I know it was a great sacrifice for my mother to take us to a children's home," he admits. "She told us we were going to live with a very nice old man who could give us new clothes and food. It didn't really dawn on me we would be staying there. I stayed six years."

At the home Greenwich committed his life to Christ, began reading the Bible, grew spiritually and eventually promised God he would help people through social work. With a children's home scholarship, he attended Ouachita.

After graduating, Greenwich attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, then married Alana and went to work as a social worker. One of his first jobs was for the children's home and then for the Christian Child Help Foundation in Houston, while attending the University of Houston for a master's degree in social work. Just after that he felt the first stirrings of call to the mission field.

Alana did also. She prayed if God wanted them and their three children on the mission field, he would speak through her husband. About a year after her prayer the two missed church due to illness and wound up watching Charles Stanley of First Church, Atlanta, on television. His sermon was on Jonah and reaching lost people.

"We both just flew to the TV after it was over," Alana remembers. "Ronnie said to me, 'You know, I just get the feeling that we need to do something. I've been thinking about this for two years. I just know we have to act, to do something.'"

Just making that decision seemed to bring a greater joy to their lives, Greenwich recalls. The couple contacted both the Home and Foreign Mission Board but pursued contact with the Foreign Mission Board.

The Greenwiches will work in the city of Florianopolis, where he will direct the Multiminity Center. The center, which offers a variety of practical classes in such subjects as cooking, sewing, painting and gymnastics, reaches about 500 Brazilian families yearly.

In this issue

7 get ready!

BTN, the Sunday School Board's new satellite communications network, will provide more training opportunities for Baptists than ever before. The Arkansas Baptist State Convention recently ran preliminary tests necessary to get ready for BTN's approaching launch date.

8-9 issues

Gambling, U.S. hunger and race relations are all issues that affect our lives. Experts on each of these areas offer their perspectives on these thorny problems to help others formulate their responses.

Brotherhood group sets, exceeds Lottie Moon goal

A recently-reorganized Baptist Men's group at Mt. Olive Church, Crossett, set and beat an ambitious goal for the congregation's 1983 Lottie Moon offering for foreign missions, the first time in that church's history men had set that goal.

The \$5,000 goal, the highest ever set by the church, doubled the previous year's goal, which the congregation also exceeded,

said church secretary Sandra Swaim.

The Baptist Men's group reorganized in September 1983, after two years of inactivity. It now averages 25 in attendance. The group led morning worship services Jan. 22, with a men's choir and quartet and a male song leader, accompanist and offertory musician. Chairman of deacons J.B. Rainey preached the morning message.

Equal access to religion for students

The editor's page

J. Everett Sneed



Most, if not all, committed Christians would feel that it is unjust for anti-Christian philosophy to be presented in our public schools with no opportunity for Christians to pray publicly or discuss religious concepts. The dilemma has been how to provide opportunity for public prayer and religious discussion without violating the First Amendment to the Constitution and separation of church and state. The currently proposed "equal access" legislation (S.815 and H.R.4172), sponsored by members of both parties, would solve this problem.

The proposed "equal access" legislation would guarantee both secular and religious non-school-sponsored groups equal access to any limited open forum created in a public high school when students meet on their own initiative, without official encouragement or sponsorship. The legislation, sponsored by Senator Mark Hatfield (Republican) and Representative Don Bonker (Democrat), would provide opportunity for groups of high school students to get together on their own at school to pray and study the Bible whenever it did not interfere with the normal school schedule.

In the last few years, a wide range of legislation has been proposed to provide opportunity for prayer in public schools. Most, if not all, would have violated our Constitution. For example, those bills calling for "prescribed prayer" clearly would place the government itself in the position of participating in the establishment of religion, thereby, violating the First Amendment of our Constitution. Even voluntary prayer would provide opportunity for the establishment of religion at government expense.

To bypass the establishment clause, some have recommended constitutional amendments. Our Constitution and Bill of Rights have served us well for more than 200 years. Such amendments could destroy our separation of church and state, opening the door for government-sponsored denominations as in most countries.

The Hatfield-Bonker legislation is not a constitutional amendment. The "equal access" legislation would not result in government sponsored or supervised prayer in the public schools. Since the meetings would be totally student-sponsored, with no faculty involvement or announcements, the prayer and religious speech would be totally voluntary.

The Hatfield-Bonker proposal, restricts the equal access to high school students only. The reason for not including elementary students is that these youngsters are not capable of voluntarily initiating and controlling religious and secular meetings. Therefore, legislation of this type is more likely to be declared constitutional.

Though the "equal access" legislation calls for students to meet on their own initiative, it would not eliminate a teacher or other adult acting as a monitor. Most schools are required by their insurance policies to have an adult present during student meetings. Normally, this is a teacher. But if the monitor in no way intrudes in the student's initiation and control of the meeting, legal sponsorship does not exist.

This legislation refers to non-school-sponsored events. The French Club, an arm of the Language Department, or the Glee Club of the Music Department are regular school activities. But the Young Democrat Club, Young Republican Club and a Stamp Club are not considered a part of regular school curriculum. The religious clubs would be granted equal access on the same basis as other secular non-school-related groups.

The legislation would provide for students to occasionally invite outside speakers. Obviously, to have a speaker regularly would destroy the student control. The invitation to an outside speaker could only be at the initiative of the students.

The proposed "equal access" legislation has wide and diverse sponsorship. For example, the Senate version has 24 co-sponsors, representing Republicans and Democrats, liberals and conservatives.

James M. Dunn, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, says, "We support S.815... because it permits the free exercise of religion without offending the establishment clause, because religious speech in public secondary schools should not be ruled out simply because it is religious, and because S.815 is legislation and not an attempt to amend the First Amendment."

This is a wonderful opportunity for all Christians to give a strong, positive stand for religious freedom. If you favor this legislation write Senator Dale Bumpers at Room 6313, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, D. C. 20510, and Senator David Pryor, Room 404, Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, D. C. 20510.

Your congressmen may be contacted at the following addresses: Representative Bill Alexander, Room 301, Cannon House Office Building, Washington, D. C. 20515; Representative John Paul Hammerschmidt, Room 2160, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D. C. 20515; Representative Beryl Anthony Jr., Room 506, Cannon House Office Building, Washington, D. C. 20515 and Representative Ed Bethune, Room 1330, Longworth House Office Building, Washington, D. C. 20515.

Arkansas Baptist

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

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Woman's viewpoint

by Betty Golden

A role model

I have heard it said by some that we have no national heroes, no one we truly admire or wish to emulate, and no one we think can provide the dynamic leadership needed for our times. I do not know if this is true. But I do know how much I need someone stronger than I who can inspire in me the belief that we mortals can persevere in the faith in spite of all life's problems.

Jesus, the Master Designer, left us an example of a perfect life. In him we find all we need. I still find challenge and strength in the pattern of a devoted Christian. The writer of Hebrews told us to provoke each other to love and to good works. Busy young women, mothers, and grandmothers all need to see an ordered, spiritual life in the hectic, demanding schedule of today.

I have been deeply privileged in knowing many such models in my life. For the past 36 years I have known a lady who richly blessed my life by knowing her. It was my mother-in-law, Oza Golden.

My mother-in-law was quickly summoned to heaven this past December. She left behind a saddened family, but also a family that could rejoice in the joy and peace that she now has in our Lord. She left behind an example and heritage of Christian graces that are truly inspiring. She was a gracious, loving lady who loyally served her Savior, her church, her husband, and her family. She was of such character that even her great-grandchildren who are old enough to remember her will "arise up, and call her blessed" (Prov. 3:28).

In her last years, as her and her husband's health failed, she remained a serene Christian with an indomitable spirit to face great difficulties. She was the type of elevating Christian influence so needed by all of us. I believe I am a better, richer person for having known her.

This tribute to my mother-in-law is possible only because of the power of Christ in her life. Because of the high price Christ paid for my salvation, I want my life to be a model to show someone else the best way.

Betty Golden taught school for 16 years. A mother and grandmother, she is married to Oscar Golden, pastor of Calvary Church, Benton. She teaches a third grade Sunday School class and assists a class of pre-schoolers three days a week.



One layman's opinion

Daniel R. Grant

Making sure we meet real needs

Giving food to the hungry and a cup of cool water to the thirsty are not likely to go out of style any time soon. Not only are they Christian mandates, but they are deeply ingrained American traditions as well. I suppose thousands, perhaps even millions, of baskets of food were delivered to families in varying degrees of human need during the last Christmas season. This undoubtedly brought a great deal of joy to many homes, but I always have that haunting feeling that many people have specific needs, if only we knew, that might be met more effectively by something other than a basket of food.

Arkadelphia Rotarians made just such a remarkable discovery in the midst of their

community Christmas project of delivering food to 21 families certified by the County Social Services Department as "truly needy". Russ Burbank and Spencer Honey knocked on one door and it was answered by a father holding a sick one-year-old daughter in his arms. When he heard what the Rotarians were doing, and saw the food, he said, "As much as we need this food, can you take it back and sell it?"

Seeing their confusion he explained, "I've got a doctor's prescription that needs filled for the baby. If we can get her well, that'll be all the Christmas we need". It was later learned that the father had walked five miles in bitter cold weather the previous day to

take his sick child to the doctor, only to receive a prescription that he did not have the money to fill.

The goodwill visitors took the prescription to be filled, and made a few phone calls relating the story. When they returned with the prescription, the father said two ladies came by for his wife and baby and took them to their house to do washing. Another person provided warm clothes and shoes. He said almost \$100 in cash had been brought by. His concluding comment was "Mister, I don't know who all your friends are but tell them I said thanks. We never dreamed of anything like this." To complete the story, the father, who was unemployed, received an offer of work and began working Christmas night, and the baby's sickness was much improved.

I am convinced that the Christian heart of America is generous. Our problem all too often is being so busy and so preoccupied with our well-provided friends, that we simply are not aware of the real needs of some of our neighbors. A good prerequisite to "love thy neighbor" is "know thy neighbor".

Daniel R. Grant is president of Ouachita Baptist University.

MK Prayer Calendar Home and foreign missionary kids who attend college on the Margaret Fund

February

- 4 Julia Garner (Malawi) OBU Box 3078, Arkadelphia, AR 71923
- 5 Marti Spiegel (E. Brazil) OBU Box 4531, Arkadelphia, AR 71923
- 20 Susan Nichols (Paraguay) OBU Box 3839, Arkadelphia, AR 71923
- 22 Stanley David Littleford OBU Box 4367, Arkadelphia, AR 71923
- 24 Laura Eford (Hawaii) OBU Box 4473, Arkadelphia, AR 71923
- 28 Bonnie Pinkston (Ivory Coast) OBU Box 4501, Arkadelphia, AR 71923

You'll be glad to know...

by Don Moore

...No ministry will be cut short by the economic crunch of 1983. We started with a building freeze, then had floods, then drought and ended up with ice. All of this in a year already threatened by inflation. The hope of reaching our budget after falling short in November was shattered by the holidays and ice storm so severely affected attendance in our churches. There seemed to be no way.

In fact, (off the record) I had already reconciled myself that all of our departments, agencies, institutions and mission boards were going to have to end the year with significantly less than they had expected to receive.

...It has to be a miracle! Almost \$1 million came in December. We have reached 99.48 percent of our budget. All ministries received fulfilled funding. That means more and more of our people are being conscientious in their stewardship. It means our churches, likewise, are trying to be good stewards. It means you believe in what we try to do together!

...It's working! Little children, college students, distressed ministers, discouraged lay leaders, struggling churches, troubled youth, super senior adults, lonely apartment dwellers, displaced persons, threatened marriages and a thousand and one other situations are being aided by our ministry as we encourage, equip and enable our churches.

It's a great work. All we do as denominational leaders is designed to help your local church to function more effectively or to help your church perform, ministries worldwide that it could never do alone.

...The Lord likes it! He blesses so! We respect and honor his bride so much! We keep Jesus central! He is lifted up above all else! We trust his Word! We major on bringing people to be reconciled to God through Jesus Christ and helping them to become like Jesus in their lives.

I really shouldn't be surprised that God has met the need. What he calls us to do, when we do it, he enables us to do. Again, to God be the glory!

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

February 2, 1984



Moore

Who evaluates?

A statement made in your editorial in the Nov. 17, 1983, issue must not go unchallenged. I refer to the gratitude you express to the committees and messengers for establishing an independent board for the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine, followed by this statement: "Every convention needs one agency to objectively evaluate the work of all its institutions."

I would like to know which minute of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention gave the Newsmagazine the authority to be the watchdog for all its institutions. As far as I understand the working of our convention, the Executive Board oversees most of the work between convention sessions and other boards oversee their own responsibilities.

Lacking any mandate from the convention, I would presume you have some scriptural basis for becoming the one to "objectively evaluate the work of all (the convention's) institutions." May we please have chapter and verse? As far as I can remember, there is no historical basis for such a superior authority in Baptist polity or in New Testament ecclesiology.

If such a prophetic role is to be exercised in our convention, I believe it is to be found fulfilled in the pastors in the pulpits rather than in the editors' chair of our newsmagazines.

Your statement reminded me of a question asked in a recent editorial in *Newswatch* magazine. It queried in effect: who elected the media to choose the next president? Or for that matter, who chose the editors and news commentators to serve as the conscience and counsel for the nation? Good question!

I believe, sir, the doctrine of the priesthood of the believer and the presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of every believer guarantees to the people in the pew and the pastor in the pulpit not only the ability but also the right to evaluate the work of the local church of which each is a member and the effectiveness of all the institutions we support, including the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine.

I do not believe we have decided to give up that privilege and duty to any "one agency." — W. Trueman Moore, Ft. Smith.

Tax justice needed

Baptist ministers may be mistreated by changes in the Social Security program. The IRS treats a minister as employee and discounts his housing allowance as income. Social Security classes the minister self-employed and includes housing allowance as income.

While the income tax decreases the rate

Letters to the editor

of taxation with lower income, Social Security has been increasing the amount of income on which its tax must be paid. Consequently, Baptist ministers soon will be compelled to pay 13.4 percent of all their income for Social Security.

While a wealthy physician might pay Social Security on half or less of his total income, the average minister will pay on his total income. If the church tries to assist the minister with his Social Security tax, the minister must count that as income and increase his income tax.

In an effort to allow ministers and churches the freedom of choice to classify the minister as employee so that the church could pay its fair share of the Social Security tax, Senator Walter D. Huddleston of Kentucky introduced an amendment to grant that justice. The amendment was rejected by a joint House-Senate committee. Perhaps Baptists need to ask their federal Senators and Representatives that their ministers be treated fairly. To force a minister to be classed as self-employed for Social Security taxation but as an employee for income tax seems unfair and discriminatory. — Russell Bennett, Louisville, Ky.

Blind or biased?

Regarding recent letters by Joe Dan Reed (10/10/83) and Clarence Edwards (12/15/83) to the editor of the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine: echoes of Dale Moody whose contract at Southern Seminary was not renewed after he published his divergent views. Both of the above mentioned letter writers and the former professor in Kentucky should have given a lot more careful attention to Romans 9, 10, and 11 in their total context before placing their "half-truth comments" in print for the rest of us to read.

Salvation is of the Lord from start to finish, and salvation is taught in all three of these chapters and the entire epistle. What a tragedy that some are so blind to—or so biased against—the tremendous twin truths of divine sovereignty and human responsibility. Both are scriptural. God has said it and that settles it, whether or not anyone believes it.

Fully explain this, or any other, theological antinomy? Of course not. It is humanly impossible. But wise people will firmly believe and faithful preachers will vigorously proclaim "all (not only part of) the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27).

Election and evangelism are both biblical. To deny (and, worse still, to denounce) either of these great doctrines is a very serious mistake. May God either shield us from or strengthen us against all "mistakes" and "myth-takes" of some blind or biased ministers. — Charles Rosson, Gravette

by Millie Gill / ABN staff writer

Kyle Johnson

has resigned as pastor of Grady First Church to become a military chaplain.

Mike Wolf

of Siloam Springs is serving as interim pastor of Gentry First Church.

Charles Bradley

of Marianna is serving as interim pastor of the Brickey Church.

Michael L. Trammell

began serving Jan. 1 as pastor of Central Church in Mineral Springs, coming there from the Second Church of Houston, Texas, where he was serving as minister of church programs. He is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Pam,

has a son, Matthew.

S. A. Harms

has resigned as minister of visitation at the Bella Vista Church.

Wallace Ferguson

of Monticello is serving as pastor of the Fountain Hill First Church. He and his wife, Linda, have a son, Todd.

Dale Wooten

has resigned as pastor of the Fouke Church.

Joe Morris

has resigned as minister of music and youth at Dardanelle First Church, effective March 4 to accept a similar staff position with the First Church of Bettendorf, Iowa.

R. Wilbur Herring

of Jonesboro has been called to serve as interim pastor of Conway First Church.

Randy Dill

has been called by Conway First Church to serve as interim music director.

Dave Dailey

was recently ordained to the ministry by Park Hill Church in Arkadelphia, as requested by Murfreesboro First Church where he serves as minister of youth and music.

Mr. and Mrs. J. T. Stocks

celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary Jan. 15. He has served as minister of music at Maple Avenue Church in Smackover since 1961. Both are retired school teachers.

briefly

Star City First Church

ordained Edwin Ollar to the ministry Jan. 29. He is a graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Ministers and deacons of Harmony Association assisted.

South Side Church

in Fort Smith Woman's Missionary Union held a prayer emphasis weekend Jan. 28-29 with Julia Ketter, director of Arkansas' WMU, as speaker. She taught the book "Holding the Ropes," by Jean Parks Jan. 28 and was speaker for a prayer breakfast on the 29th.

Elmdale Church

at Springdale held an evangelism banquet Jan. 20 with Bill Hogue as speaker. Enter-

tainment was provided by Marabeth Jordan and Gina Harp.

Lakeshore Drive Church

in Little Rock will hold deacon ordination services Feb. 5 for Charley Duncan and Tom Logue.

Little Rock First Church

will hold a special program Feb. 7 concerning "How to recognize and witness to Moonies." Chris Elkins, a former Moonie and a consultant in the Interfaith Witness Department of the Home Mission Board, will be speaker.

Fordey First Church

held deacon ordination services Jan. 22 for Jim Johnson. Phil Beach was speaker.

Watson Chapel Church

at Pine Bluff recently voted to construct a new auditorium, estimated to cost approximately \$480,000 plus furniture and sound equipment.

focus on youth

Magnolia Central Church

held a parent-youth conference Jan. 21-22, featuring sessions on their relationship to one another, the world around them and to Christ. Phil Briggs, professor of youth education at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, and Rosemary Hoover, entertainer and homemaker from Independence, Mo., were leaders.

Thirteen states adopt new church annuity plan

Thirteen state conventions have adopted the proposed new retirement plan for Southern Baptist church personnel.

Annuity Board President Darold H. Morgan commended the leadership of the 13 Southern Baptist state conventions for taking the lead in adopting the new Church Annuity Plan in 1983.

Morgan said, "It is time to challenge the churches with a new retirement plan that will ultimately provide an adequate retirement income for all pastors and full-time church employees." Morgan noted the basic plan allows participation by all ministers serving churches cooperating with Southern Baptist state conventions. An expanded version offers additional contributions from the state convention.

To receive state convention funds, the member agrees to make the initial contribu-

tions and the church must contribute twice the member's contributions up to 10 percent of pay. The church may also elect to pay the member's part. The state convention will provide funds amounting to one-half the church's contributions up to \$35 per month. The convention's first \$210 will be allocated to the Protection Benefit Fund to provide long-term disability and death benefits. The remainder of the contributions will go directly into the individual's retirement income account.

Although the new plan doesn't become effective until Jan. 1, 1988, state conventions must finalize the adoption process by Dec. 31, 1984 so adequate implementation can be made, Morgan said.

The new Church Annuity Plan will be considered at the 1984 Arkansas Baptist State Convention Nov. 6-8 in Fort Smith.

Church plans restoration

Plans are underway to reconstruct a Civil War-era building which housed the Washington Church until it was destroyed by a tornado in 1946.

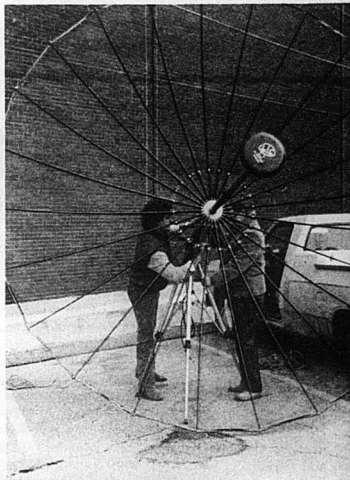
The project, which will cost a minimum of \$60,000, is part of a historic district restoration in the southwest Arkansas community, which was once the seat of state government. Both Methodist and Presbyterian churches located within the square mile district have been restored.

The project will require the congregation to hold services in its educational facility while the sanctuary is razed and the facsimile of the original building is constructed.

Pastor Earl Wesson reported the church lacked \$6,000 of a \$15,000 goal which would enable them to receive matching funds from the Washington Restoration Foundation.



BTN... get ready



ABN photos/Millie Gill

Testing teaching technology—Checking the interference level in Little Rock was the first step toward installing a receiver at the Baptist Building for BTN, the Baptist Sunday School Board's new training network via satellite. State convention personnel will be able to get the same teaching programs as churches when limited program-

ming begins in late June. On a recent Saturday, Gerald Jackson (in coat) helped a technician from a local firm set up for the test with an antenna. Jackson, Church Training Department associate who helps churches with media/library programs, advises all churches to test for microwave reception before buying equipment.

God has no favorites: Acts 10:34, NEB

by W. David Lockard

Peter experienced a race relations day on a personal level and it transformed his life and his ministry.

Peter had been taught that Jews were separate and that all other people were both different and inferior. This meant that he would have simply avoided such people. Not knowing them, he prejudged them on the basis of race, culture, and religion. This continues to be the essence of the curse of prejudice.

Peter's move from prejudice and narrowness began when he met Jesus. Jesus constantly reached out to Samaritans and non-Jews and treated them with the same love and concern which he showed toward fellow Jews. Peter could not ignore this strange example, but it is never easy to change old ways. God dealt with Peter in a personal way in order to save him from his well-cultivated prejudice.

In a vision to Peter, God declared that nothing which he has created should be regarded as "unclean." This vision which focused on animals was immediately followed by an unexpected encounter with a Gentile named Cornelius.

This despised Gentile was a devout person in search of God. God honored his quest and answered his prayer. It must have shocked Peter to realize that the God who had directed him to Cornelius had also directed this same Gentile to Peter. Peter must have shouted his discovery: "I now see how true it is that God has no favorites" (Acts 10:34, NEB).

The wonderful truth is that God's love is universal and unqualified. As his creatures, we are equal in our worth and in our guilt. Indeed, God has "no favorites."

Race Relations Sunday is not the only way for Southern Baptists to work for improved

race relations. However, it can be significant if we make it a time to reflect upon the continuing struggle against every form of racism and upon our Lord who broke down the dividing wall of hostility between us.

No one is free of prejudice. Prejudice is deep-seated. Prejudice often comes from our culture and our customs, but primarily it arises from our ignorance, our pride, and our sinful self-centeredness.

God has shown himself to be just and impartial. If we are to be the people of God, we too will strive to extend love, respect, and justice to all persons.

Now is a good time to declare with Peter: "God has favorites."

W. David Lockard is director of organization for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

SBC hunger experts disagree with hunger task force report

ATLANTA (BP)—Southern Baptist hunger experts criticized findings of President Reagan's Task Force on Hunger Assistance, labeling the commission's report biased and out of sync with the condition of poor people in America.

"It makes me wonder who they listened to," said Nathan Porter, national domestic hunger consultant for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. He added reports from Southern Baptist home missionaries and volunteers who work with the poor "show this committee has not been exposed to what's really happening.

"There are literally millions of Americans who are struggling to provide food for their families," he said.

The 13-member presidential commission presented its report to President Reagan and conceded "hunger does persist" but claimed allegations of "rampant hunger" could not be substantiated and it was impossible to measure the extent of hunger in America.

The New York Times reported the commission claimed federal cuts in hunger assistance "have not reduced the availability of the major federal food assistance to Americans with incomes at or below the poverty line."

The Task Force recommended a series of policy changes in food assistance, including some cuts in federal aid programs and the creation of block grants for states.

W. David Lockard of the Christian Life Commission, which coordinates the Southern Baptist Convention's hunger education and action, criticized the report's conclusions as "subjective, superficial and debatable."

The task force, he said, ignored "volumes of existing and reliable data" in its study. He

referred to a joint statement released last summer by mayors of large U.S. cities which cited hunger as a significant and continuing problem in urban areas.

"Yet this concern, along with the testimonies of thousands of persons who serve on the front lines of the war against hunger, was not reflected in the task force's report," he added.

Foy Valentine, executive director of the social concerns agency, pointed out Southern Baptists' response to hunger in America should not be dampened by the controversial report.

"Our responsibility has not lessened," he said. "The Bible has not changed. Regardless of another bureaucratic study of the problem, we are mandated by our Lord to feed the hungry and help the oppressed wherever they may be found."

Andy Loving, administrative director for SEEDS, an Atlanta-based organization of Southern Baptists concerned about world hunger, charged the commission was not bipartisan in make-up and did not represent a broad spectrum of positions on hunger concerns.

Most of the committee members were Republicans and committee chairman J. Clayburn LaForce, dean of the UCLA Graduate School of Management, admitted he had little knowledge of federal food assistance programs before the task force convened, Loving explained.

Southern Baptist home missionaries and others "who are on the firing lines" and have contact with poor people, report two to three times as many people now seek food assistance than before budget cuts were implemented two years ago. Loving said the commission's lack of knowledge about hunger in America reveals the need for some

sort of on-going monitoring system to determine needs.

Compared to the bloated stomachs and other outward signs of hunger overseas, the committee was correct in stating rampant hunger could not be substantiated, said Everett Gill, a Southern Baptist who is director of Christians Against Hunger in Georgia, an ecumenical lobbying group. Unlike other countries, said Gill, "We give only enough relief to prevent poverty from becoming an embarrassment. In a country as rich as this there's no excuse for people to have to worry about what they will eat and how they will buy it."

"The committee was almost obligated to say it (hunger) is not there because if it is, then the Reagan administration has to do something about it," Gill said. "You can't put as much money and concern into building armaments as this administration does and at the same time acknowledge the dimensions of poverty in this country."

Gill said federal aid is insufficient to meet poverty needs. Using Georgia as an example, Gill noted Governor Joe Frank Harris has proposed only a three percent increase in Aid for Families with Dependent Children payments, raising payments for a typical family of three to \$210 a month. "That family has to make choices between food, heat and clothing that people with enough money don't even have to think about," Gill said. "Would we say a person who doesn't have heat instead of food is not hungry because he chose to eat while freezing?"

The spokesmen also warned the panel's proposal to lump federal anti-hunger funds into block grants for states would lower national standards for minimum needs. Two-thirds of state payments for food assistance are matching federal funds, explained Gill.

Miami Association mends ethnic divisions

MIAMI (BP)—An ethnic rift which threatened to split the Miami Association two years ago and led to the resignation of both the director of missions and head of language missions has healed.

That's the observation of Doyle Wetherington, the new executive director of the association which has been without a leadership staff since Dottson Mills and John Pistone resigned.

"There has been a real period of healing and understanding, and there seems to be a sense of unanimity and cooperativeness," Wetherington said. "I don't expect any problems. Both Anglo and ethnic church pastors have expressed themselves as desiring a unified witness for Christ."

Marcos A. (Tony) Ramos, pastor of Calvary Church and president of the Hispanic Baptist Pastors Conference, agrees.

"It's not a Baptist problem, but a com-

munity problem," Ramos said. "What we need is a lot of humility among both Anglos and Hispanics and the realization of the Kingdom of God is not an ethnic enterprise."

Some 37 of the association's 117 churches and missions are Hispanic. Ten others are American black congregations, nine are Haitian, two are East Indian (Jamaican), and one each is Chinese, Russian and Miccosukee Indian. Most of the congregations, with a total of 50,000 full members, are integrated. One predominately Anglo congregation, Highland Park, has a black pastor, James Phillips, Wetherington pointed out.

Wetherington, 55, said his first order of business will be to find an associate director for language missions.

He has been in Dade County for nearly

nine years. He was pastor of Homestead Church for four years and was associate pastor and then acting pastor at Miami Central Church before being selected to head the association where he said the "problems of distance and time, because of the pressure on local church staffs to meet the genuine needs in their communities, have tended to obscure efforts of fellowship in the larger context."

Wetherington, who spent nine years as an automobile dealership executive before entering the ministry, said he not only expects to see area Baptists engaged in more cooperative projects, such as their summer recreation and education program in the Liberty City area for the past two years, but to be increasingly involved in interdenominational and interfaith projects.

Without a national average, he warned, states could drop standards far below the national average, endangering millions of poor people.

Guaranteeing adequate benefits for poor people should be a primary concern for Southern Baptists, he said, especially in light of the fact for 1981 the 11 states with the lowest benefits were all traditional Southern Baptist states.

Malnutrition and undernutrition also are dangerous, said Loving, noting medical studies have linked infant mortality rates and rise in the number of low-weight newborns to poor nutrition. Budget cuts have decreased food stamp benefits to some 800,000 people, dropped three million from school lunch programs and half a million from school breakfast programs.

In addition, noted Porter, 35 million people live under the poverty line with another 35 million on the border. Further cuts would endanger these people, he said, many of them children or elderly.

"Reports like this will simply add to the apathy toward poor people," charged Porter. "We're being lulled to sleep by the supposed rise in the economy and by reports like this."

Loving added if the committee's proposed budget cuts are adopted, churches and other private sector groups will have to take up the slack. He said perhaps the church should be more involved anyway, but "there is a degree to which the government should not disengage itself. I don't mind debate between the church and government over who helps and how much, but hungry people have to eat in the meantime—and they can't afford our lengthy and verbose discussions."

Expert on organized crime refutes pro-gambling claims

WASHINGTON (BP)—Despite recent trends toward its legalization, illegal gambling still ranks as a major source of revenue for organized crime in the United States, according to an FBI expert of organized crime activities.

Sean McWeeney, chief of the organized crime section in the FBI's criminal investigation division, told Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission staff member Larry Braidfoot gambling joins narcotics and labor racketeering as the most lucrative ventures of organized crime. Braidfoot, who has led the denominational agency's efforts to inform and mobilize Southern Baptist opposition to gambling, met with McWeeney in McWeeney's Washington office.

The FBI official refused to confirm estimates of revenues generated for organized crime by gambling, since such estimates "are not part of the FBI's job." Some gambling experts have estimated \$26-30 billion comes annually from organized crime's gambling operations.

McWeeney also refuted claims of pro-gambling forces that legalized gambling, particularly state lotteries, reduces illegal gambling activities and thereby bites into the pocketbook of organized crime.

He cited recent studies of legal gambling in New Jersey and of off-track betting in New York as evidence the result may be the opposite. "The major track problem," he pointed out, "is credit. Legal gambling creates new gamblers who switch over to illegal gambling when their money is exhausted. They switch to the illegal games because they can get credit."

McWeeney identified illegal sports bookmaking as the number one money producer for organized crime's gambling activities, due primarily to the immense popularity of pro football. Sports gambling, he said, would be followed by pari-mutuel gambling (mostly on horse races), illegal lotteries and casino gambling, in that order.

McWeeney sympathized with the difficulties in educating the public about the threats posed by gambling and its ties with organized crime.

"Small individual bets by themselves don't seem significant," he explained. "But millions of these small bets provide an enormous source of income which can then be used in other organized crime activities like the narcotics trade."

"Those who go overboard in their betting are likely to wind up getting involved with loan sharks. Only then, when they are unable to pay the exorbitant fees, do they run into the violent aspect of organized crime."

'Small individual bets by themselves don't seem significant, but...'



Elder said ready to assume board presidency

by Linda Lawson

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Lloyd Elder describes himself as "on ready" as he prepares Feb. 1 to assume the presidency of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

Elder, 50, was elected in February 1983 to succeed Grady C. Cothen at his retirement Jan. 31, 1984. Elder is completing 10 months of orientation, which has included interviews with persons throughout the board and at every level of the denomination.

"This orientation period has allowed major learning opportunities for developing relationships, participating in the operations of the board, and increasing my sensitivity to Baptist people and other Sunday School Board audiences," Elder said.

"My intention as president of the board is to keep its focus on the local church and to magnify the excellence of this organization through servant-team leadership," he noted.

Elder said he was not totally surprised at the size of the Sunday School Board—1,800 employees, 16 programs of work and a 1983-84 budget of \$149.2 million. However, he added, "I am amazed at the complex and extensive resources the board has to do its work."

For example, he said, "Each program, such as Sunday school, has resources for its own role. But it extends those resources as it relates to other programs such as church training, church administration and church music."

Another part of Elder's orientation was a detailed study of the 93-year history of the board. He came away grateful for the hope strengthened by an increased awareness "the Sunday School Board and the convention have had other days of struggle and gone on to experience growth, harmony and fellowship."

A knowledge of the board's heritage helps him "keep the large, founding vision in mind and becomes a point of reference in making today's decision," Elder said.

"It has helped me to keep aware of the central purpose of the board and its relationship to the convention and the people. I have come to know in a sense the vision and heartbeat of people like J.M. Frost" (the Virginia pastor who led the effort to establish the board and became its first corresponding secretary).

Many conversations with Cothen also have been a key part of Elder's introduction to the board. He described Cothen as a "vi-

sionary leader at the center of Southern Baptist life with a deep commitment to the Bible and the lordship of Christ. He has become a cherished friend."

Among Cothen's contributions, Elder cited Cothen's initiation of the Bible Book Series for youth and adults, his emphasis on Bible teaching for the masses and his initiation of BTN (Baptist Telecommunications Network) which will begin broadcasts by satellite to churches in June.

"Southern Baptists will continue to be enriched by the impact of Grady Cothen's ministry," said Elder.

In the midst of his preparation to become the board's seventh president, Elder also began writing a book on denominational

renewal which is due to be released by Broadman in June of this year.

Combining the management principles of organizational renewal and the biblical principles of spiritual renewal, Elder said he hopes to challenge the denomination as an organization to make positive changes at every level toward more effective service to Christ.

"I am not talking about renewal in the sense of moving from bad to good but moving from today into tomorrow and dealing with the changes in a vital and authentic way," he emphasized.

Linda Lawson is a writer for the Baptist Sunday School Board.



(BP) photo: David F. Haywood

After 10 months of orientation, Lloyd Elder prepares to assume the reins as president of the Baptist Sunday School Board.

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Southern Baptists to open homes to Olympic spectators

LOS ANGELES (BP)—Area Southern Baptists are planning to open their homes to out-of-town visitors during the summer Olympics, according to Vicki McEntire, staff assistant in charge of housing for Summer Games Ministries, the organization coordinating Baptist outreach during the games.

SGM is organizing a bed and breakfast plan which will offer Olympic spectators lodging in area Baptists' homes at a fraction of the going commercial rates.

While commercial firms are renting private bedrooms for \$70 to \$110 per night, SGM will charge \$20 per adult and \$15 per child for a room and breakfast in a private home.

McEntire said houses may also be available for rent, though each would be priced individually.

"We're aiming for 100 homes and hope we'll have more," she said. Housing will

be scattered throughout a 200-mile area encompassing the 23 Olympic sites.

In 1981, only 250,000 hotel beds were available in southern California. Lodging chains have frantically been building new motels for the expected 800,000 to one million spectators.

Most available motel rooms have been booked months in advance, however. An average hotel stay will cost the Olympic visitor \$160 a day for a double room.

Many spectators will turn to commercial agents to find a private bedroom to rent, McEntire noted. While most are legitimate firms, many have already been found to be fraudulent.

SGM has set June 1 as the deadline for housing applications. A small, nonrefundable deposit will be required. Housing will be available July 25-August 15 (three days before and after the games).

McEntire said SGM will be sensitive to special requests from both hosts and guests such as smoking or nonsmoking accommodations, children, pets, special needs for the handicapped and other personal preferences.

While most homes available through SGM will probably be rented by Baptists, McEntire said the program is open to all. In addition to SGM, area Lutherans and United Methodists are offering low-cost housing as part of an overall ministry to Olympic visitors.

SGM is jointly sponsored by the local Southern Baptist churches, the Southern Baptist General Convention of California and the Home Mission Board.

Persons interested in Olympic housing can contact SGM at 445 West King Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90037; (213) 749-7043.

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Olympic volunteer applications due

LOS ANGELES (BP)—Southern Baptist groups interested in ministry opportunities during the summer Olympics July 28-Aug. 12 should apply to the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board immediately, according to Kevin Collins, staff assistant for Summer Games Ministries, the organization coordinating Baptists' Olympic outreach.

SGM will host a volunteer group directors' orientation here Feb. 12-14. Group leaders will be responsible for their transportation to and from Los Angeles; SGM will provide housing, meals and local transportation, Collins noted.

SGM will assign college and church youth

groups to activities throughout the 200-mile area encompassing Olympics events. College groups will primarily engage in personal witnessing at the 23 event sites, while younger volunteers will assist local churches with beach witnessing, surveys, campground services, backyard Bible clubs and vacation Bible schools.

SGM is a joint venture of 300 local Southern Baptist churches, the Southern Baptist General Convention of California and the Home Mission Board.

For applications, write to Esther Burroughs, Home Mission Board, 1350 Spring St. NW, Atlanta, Ga. 30367; (404) 873-4041.

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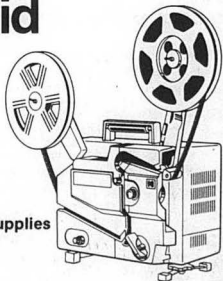
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Ross

God provides so many opportunities of service. I am so thankful for the opportunity he has provided me to serve and become involved in ministry to people. The door of opportunity he opened for me to serve as director of development for our Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services is an answer to prayer. As a former board member, I observed the multitude of children who are reaching out for help due to abuse or neglect. They not only have physical needs, but they have emotional, social, and spiritual needs. It is our prayer and our goal to give each child the opportunity of becoming the person God intended them to be.

I know that Arkansas Baptists will continue to give increasing support to this ministry when you know of these needs. I look forward to sharing our ministry with you. Please contact me at 376-4791 so we can share our program with your WMU, Baptist Men's group, Wednesday evening service or your entire church. — John A. Ross, director of development

Evangelism Evangelism philosophy

The philosophy of any person, group or organization helps determine the direction they go. The Arkansas evangelism philosophy is based on the Great Commission of our Lord. This commission was given to the church in the New Testament days. We are committed to help the churches of our day fulfill the commission of our Lord.



Shell

Jesus stated that we are to teach all nations. A more literal translation of this statement is that we are to make disciples of all people. As we go about our world, we are to share Christ with each person that we confront. We present Christ by the public proclamation of the gospel and by the per-

sonal presentation to individuals. We do our best mass evangelism when we do good personal evangelism.

Many of us do not have the intellectual oratory ability of great preachers, but we have the greatest message that can be proclaimed by human lips, the message of a saving Christ.

The message of the church today is the same as the message of the first century. We must preach Christ as the sinless Savior. Christ came as our perfect sacrifice. We must share with the world that we have a suffering Savior. He laid aside the crown of glory to come and wear a crown of thorns that we might wear the crown of life.

The world, staggering in insecurity, needs to hear that Christ is our securing Savior. Jesus said, concerning his own, "... they shall never perish". — Clarence Shell, director

Church Administration Pastoral conferences

"Pastoral Leadership for Growing Churches" will be the topic of the Area Church Administration Workshops to be conducted



Holley

in four areas of our state the week of Feb. 20. Two of the workshops will meet at East Side Church in Ft. Smith and at First Church, West Memphis, on Monday and Tuesday, Feb. 20-21. The other two workshops will meet at Park Hill Church in North Little Rock and at First Church, Pine Bluff, on Thursday and Friday, Feb. 23-24. In each of the four locations the workshops are scheduled for 2-5 p.m. and 7-9 p.m. on the first day and 8:30 a.m.-12 noon on the second day.

Pastors and church staff members will find these workshops to be very helpful as they deal with the personal and organizational leadership skills that are essential to leading a church to experience growth. Topics to be dealt with in the workshops include: Clarifying the Growth Vision, Personal Leadership Style and Effectiveness, Motivating Persons for Growth, and Making a Commitment to Excellence.

Workshop leaders are Dr. Joe Stacker, director of the Church Administration Department, BSSB, and Dr. Truman Brown and Dr. George Clark, consultants in the Church Administration Department.

Pre-registrations for the workshops should be addressed to Church Administration Workshops, c/o Robert Holley, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203. — Robert Holley, director

Woman's Missionary Union Our global village



Anthony



Grober

"Our Global Village" is the theme for two Acteens Encounters scheduled March 30-31 at First Church, Pine Bluff and April 27-28 at East Side Church, Fort Smith. Through the use of home and foreign missionaries, journeymen, internationals and others, Acteens will learn about the interdependence of all nations. Program personnel and Acteens will seek to transform the gymnasium at each setting into a global village. Acteens will have an opportunity to view the settings informally and visit with missionaries.

Creative conferences and inspirational music will complete the agenda for the Friday evening and Saturday meeting.

Marjorie Grober from Brazil, Tina Murdock from Singapore, Ariel Hernandez, language missions in Warren, Connie Anthony from Israel, Monica Keathly, Upper Volta, and John, Mary and Susan Monroe, Zimbabwe, are some of the missionaries who will be present for one of the events.

Acteens leaders should have received publicity about this event. For more information about registration, write WMU, Box 552, Little Rock, Arkansas 72203. — Betty Jo Lacy, Acteens director

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Monthly financial report

Public funds require public accounting. Monies given for church ministries should be accounted for on a monthly basis. How can this be done?



Walker

A verbal report by the treasurer is one method. The treasurer can share monthly receipts and disbursements. If a church isn't able to print a monthly report, it can be written on a chalkboard. The best method is to make available a printed report for all church members.

What should the monthly report reveal? Any report should tell enough to show that the church's expenditures are in harmony with the stated wishes of the church as expressed through the church's budget.

The monthly report should reflect good accounting procedures. All receipts and disbursements must be accounted for. Too long a report will discourage reading and too brief a report might cause unnecessary questions.

Monthly reports can encourage church members. It helps the people to know when a church falls behind in ministry gifts. A budget report can stir some members to action.

When a church does well, the people have an occasion to give thanks. The church that exceeds budget needs has an opportunity to thank the Father and seek other opportunities. The reported budget is one way to inform the people of their around-the-clock ministries. — James A. Walker, director

Church Recreation

Drama Festival Workshop

Arkansas will have its first Drama Festival Workshop March 9-10 at Camp Paron. The workshop will deal with how to minister and communicate through three media—clowning, puppetry and drama. Workshop content will include conferences on starting clowning, puppetry or drama groups; "how to's" of puppet construction, clown make-up and drama production; and fellowship and recreation activities using these media.



Robertson

Featured workshop leader will be Everett Robertson, drama specialist with the Church Recreation Department of the Baptist Sunday School Board. Other conference leaders will include "Beep and Boomer" the clowns and several other qualified leaders from Arkansas and surrounding states. There will be opportunities for clowning, drama and puppet groups to perform.

The Drama Festival Workshop is for pastors, staff and volunteer leaders working in these areas of church recreation. Youth and adults who are members of performing groups are also welcome. The workshop will begin at 6 p.m. on Friday and adjourn at 3 p.m. on Saturday.

For reservations or further information contact Bill Falkner, Church Training Department, Arkansas Baptist State Convention, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203, phone 376-4791. — Bill Falkner, associate

Christian Life Council

Altruism

Altruism: "Selfless devotion to the welfare of others." Altruist: "One devoted to the welfare of others."



Parker

The above are two fairly familiar words we've heard most of our lives. We may not have used either because we had not looked up their definitions or had them other otherwise defined.

The story is told of a sharecropper accused by his landlord of stealing a mule. At the trial both judge and jury tended to be sympathetic toward the sharecropper. They knew the landlord to be mean and greedy. The verdict was rendered: "Not guilty, provided he return the mule."

Extremely upset and calling the verdict ridiculous, the landlord demanded and got a re-trial. The second verdict was "Not guilty and he can keep the mule!"

God, too, always gives more mercy than we deserve. We are saved by his grace through faith. Unlike the above greedy landlord, God is always concerned about the welfare of others.

Using the new word, altruism, since we are saved by his grace through faith, we are also to live by faith.

Christians in every arena of life should be altruistic. Politicians, ministers, medical doctors must keep the welfare of others before their own interests.

Pray to be a Christian altruist. — Bob Parker, director

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- Texarkana Beech Street Church
- Pine Bluff South Side Church

Dunn declines controversial board renomination

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—James M. Dunn, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, has declined renomination to a second term on the board of directors of People for the American Way.

Dunn's membership on the 28-member PAW board has drawn considerable controversy in the past year, including a resolution adopted by the Alabama State Baptist Convention asking that funding for the BJCPA be withdrawn because of Dunn's participation in the organization.

People for the American Way is described by friends as a "national educational group" for First Amendment rights, and by enemies as an organization of "pornographic smut peddlers, homosexual activists and baby-killing abortionists."

Despite Dunn's action declining to serve a second term, the action does not appear to have quieted his critics. One, former Alabama Congressman Albert Lee Smith of Birmingham, suggested the only way to quiet the criticism would be for Dunn to resign as BJCPA head.

Dunn told Baptist Press that on Jan. 11, 1984, "I declined renomination to the board of that organization (PAW). On that date, I told the nominating committee that since I rotated off the board Dec. 31, 1983, I would not serve a second (three-year) term.

"It is important to emphasize that I made this decision in part because of time and energy spent dealing with a very few Southern Baptists who have been engaged in a smear and harassment campaign. Leaving the leadership... (of PAW) does not reflect any retreat from working with groups with different degrees of disagreement," he said.

The head of the Washington-based BJCPA noted such attacks "may be instructive to all of our agencies, if we recognize the challenge to the precious right of free association, if we identify the tactics of those

with a personal and political agenda attempting to use Southern Baptists and if we determine to know the facts and not be misled by distortion and untruth."

He noted the attacks on him and BJCPA—an organization of nine Baptist bodies in the U.S. and Canada—have "required a great deal of forbearance and forgiveness on our part."

He commented he remains "one of the 104,000 members of People for the American Way," which he described as a "broad-based people's movement." He added he believed his membership in PAW, as well as his leadership role was as "an individual... any place organization names were listed it was understood to be for identification purposes only."

One of the criticisms of PAW is that Norman Lear, producer of such television shows as "All In The Family," "Good Times," and "Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman," is

associated with the group.

"The fact Norman Lear is associated is irrelevant," Dunn said. "It is not his; it does not belong to him. Father (Theodore) Hesburgh (president of Notre Dame University) also is on the board, and that doesn't make me a Catholic. The late Ruth Carter Stapleton was on the board, but that didn't make me a charismatic."

R.G. (Gene) Puckett, editor of the Biblical Recorder, newjournal of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, and chairman of the board of BJCPA, said the decision not to serve a second term "is evidence of his (Dunn's) deep commitment to the best interests of all Baptists. He has preserved his own integrity but has acknowledged the responsibilities of his role to put the best interests of Baptists above other things."

Sam Currin, U.S. District Attorney for the Eastern District of North Carolina, and chairman of the Southern Baptist Public Affairs Committee, which relates to the BJCPA, said he is "glad" Dunn has resigned from the board, but hoped it was a "clean break" with PAW.

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Youth Choir Festivals

9:00 a.m. to 2:40 p.m.

Senior High & Combined
Bill Green, Richardson, Texas



Junior High and beginning
Don Fellers, Central Church, Magnolia

Registration deadline Feb. 6

Feb. 18, 1984, Park Hill Church, NLR

International

I am the Lord

by Wm. M. Burnett, Beebe

Basic passage: Isaiah 43-45

Focal passage: Isaiah 43:1-7

Central truth: God's love for his people.

The lesson passage begins with the words, "But now," which mark the contrast between chapter 42, which describes Judah's severe punishment, and the opening paragraph of this chapter, which promises deliverance. We are able to see that God's punishment of sin-ridden Israel is in no way a rejection or a casting off of his people. His love and mercy are expressions of his power to extend his redeeming grace in comfort and assurance of divine favor.

We who have trusted in Jesus Christ for salvation stand in this grace. "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8-9). The apostle goes on to say that we are created in Christ for the work he appointed us. God's love is not tentative, it is eternal. We are "created in Christ Jesus", redeemed through his shed blood and called to a life of service through his revealing and sustaining grace.

God's love is further expressed in promises that through water and fire he will protect his people. Water is reminiscent of his care for Israel in the Red Sea and the crossing of the Jordan. Fire perhaps looks back to the Hebrew children in Nebuchadnezzar's furnace. For us and for Judah he promises to meet the challenge of the uncertain circumstances of life and to be with us when the fires of persecution rage.

His love is expressed again in his promise to gather his people from the ends of the earth—"Everyone that is called by my name". This promise is expressed by Paul, "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ" (Eph. 1:10a).

God gives three reasons why he will gather them. (1) He created them for his glory. (2) He formed them to reflect his glory. (3) He completed or will complete his purpose in them. All this is true of us who trust in Christ for salvation.

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Life and Work

Following Jesus

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

Basic passage: Mark 8:31-38

Focal passage: Mark 8:34-38

Central truth: A call to take up one's cross is a call to life and death.

When Jesus began to teach his disciples that he would be a cross-bearing Messiah, they rebelled. The disciples, then and now, rebelled in the face of suffering. Jesus' disciples were very much products of their own time. That is to say, they were looking for a military-political Messiah.

When Jesus said point-blank that his rejection and crucifixion was coming, Peter simply could not remain quiet. He grabbed Jesus and began to rebuke him.

Peter did not mean to be disrespectful, he just had some strong feelings. Whatever else you think of Peter, you must give him credit for speaking his mind.

Jesus turned his back to Peter and said: "Get away from me Satan." (Mark 8:33b). This was a stern rebuke. We must remember, however, this was one of the temptations Satan had used on Jesus in the wilderness.

Jesus realized that Satan makes no more terrible—no more powerful—attacks than when he attacks us in the voice of a friend.

The main thrust of his lesson is in vv. 34-38, where Jesus calls upon his disciples to take up the cross. He had already called them to be his followers—his imitators. Now he calls for the supreme sacrifice: life itself!

All who follow Jesus must forget self and take up the cross. We, like Peter, tend to think cross-bearing is enduring life's everyday problems. But when Jesus called upon would-be disciples to bear the cross, he was calling upon them to give their lives.

Why was Jesus so strict? Because he came to earth to make men great, not to make life easy. He told them plainly that the man who seeks to save life will lose it, but whosoever loses his life in serving Christ will be given life abundant and everlasting.

There is no greater prize than life! Once it is gone there is nothing with which to buy it back. Let us, therefore, heed Jesus' call to take up the cross. In so doing we will find life.

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Bible Book Study

Israel's wars

by H. E. Williams, president emeritus of Southern Baptist College

Background passage: II Kings 13:1 to 14:22 (I Chronicles 25:1 to 26:2)

Focal passage: II Kings 13:22-25; 14:9-14

Central truth: God spared Jerusalem because of his covenant with Abraham, despite the city's sin.

This period in the history of Israel and Judah marks the close of the ministry of Elisha. After his prophecy of the future unhappiness of Israel in her wars with Syria, he died. In this prophecy, he indicated that King Jehoash would win only partial victories over the Syrians, who would ultimately be their undoing. He also predicted that Hazael, as king of Syria, would inflict terrible misery upon Israel.

In the twenty-third year of the rule of Joash in Judah, Jehoahaz, son of Jehu, became king of Israel and ruled from the capital in Samaria for 17 years. His reign was marked with the tragic influences of the evils of Jeroboam. He led Israel into terrible sins which angered the Lord, who permitted both King Hazael and Benhadad of Syria to inflict heavy losses upon them in battle after battle.

Jehoahaz asked the Lord for relief from the terrible oppression of Syria and the Lord "sent a leader" who led them to a time of temporary peace. However, the nation continued in the sins of Jeroboam, even keeping the image of the goddess Asherah in the capitol city of Samaria.

During most of the reign of Jehoahaz, Syria constantly oppressed Israel, but the Lord preserved them from total destruction because of the Abrahamic covenant. God never forgets nor fails in his promises.

In the second year of the reign of Jehoash in Israel, Amaziah became the king of Judah. He immediately executed the assassins of his father, Joash, but spared their children under the terms of the Laws of Moses.

Amaziah, feeling his power, challenged Jehoash of Israel to engage in war with Judah. They met in battle at Beth Shemesh, and Amaziah's army was sadly defeated. About 200 yards of the temple wall was destroyed, and the rich treasures and holy vessels of the Temple were taken to Samaria, the capital of Israel.

Man that is born of woman has his troubles, but they would be infinitely fewer if he would follow the Lord completely.

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KC housing still available; Dixon Hotel closes

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Anyone wanting to attend the 1984 Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Kansas City next June should have no trouble getting a hotel room.

The remaining rooms won't be within walking distance of the convention center, but most have easy access to freeways or six shuttle bus routes which will operate to and from the convention site. The exact routes have not been determined.

Quite a few people who thought they would be able to walk to sessions may have to join those in hotels on the outskirts of Kansas City, though. The Kansas City convention housing bureau has notified the SBC Executive Committee the Dixon Hotel (two blocks from the convention center) is being closed and its future is uncertain.

"We had been given 150 rooms at the Dixon," Tim Hedquist, director of financial planning for the Executive Committee, said. "Those people will be informed of their new rooms by the Kansas City bureau directly—the Executive Committee will have no control or knowledge of the shifts."

Hedquist pointed out the housing bureau received 6,000 requests for the 4,000 rooms they set aside for the convention, but Kansas City has more than 13,000 hotel rooms.

"People can get rooms—they'll just be a distance from the convention center," Hedquist said. "Even 1,000 of the bureau's 4,000 rooms are outside of walking distance and some of them are 15-20 miles away."

"Even if the housing bureau had taken all 13,000 rooms to assign itself, there still would have been just 3,000 rooms 'close in' and those are the rooms everyone wants," he continued. "Approximately 95 percent of the 2,000 applications which were sent back requested either the Radisson Muehlebach or the Holiday Inn Center (two of the closest). People who say they can't get a room really mean they can't get a room within walking distance."

Organized groups apparently grabbed most of the housing bureau rooms by know-

ing how to increase the odds in their favor, Hedquist said.

Under the procedures used by the Kansas City bureau, applications were stacked according to first choice then filled until the allocated space was used up. "Those who studied the system realized if they put down as first choice a hotel other than the ones across the street their odds for getting a room downtown increased considerably," Hedquist said.

As a result, all of the rooms were filled with first choices.

Bureau personnel feel many applications included bogus names and one individual sent in 100 separate room requests. Under the system, one credit card can guarantee any number of rooms even if the person is not listed to stay in those rooms and names can be changed after the reservations have been confirmed.

"Technically all these tactics are legal, but it sure works against the layman from a small town who didn't know the system," Hedquist said.

It also worked against many SBC agencies. Last week the Baptist Sunday School Board and the Home Mission Board called looking for additional rooms and many agency personnel whose jobs require them to be at the convention have reservations in the outlying hotels.

Hedquist said the 1985 convention in Dallas will see changes in the housing bureau system. "The Dallas people have agreed to process application forms one at a time instead of stacking them by first choice, to require the reservation be confirmed by someone staying in the room and not to allow the substitution of names without notifying the housing bureau."

Anyone still seeking room-reservations can contact: Housing Information, 460 James Robertson Parkway, Nashville, Tenn. 37219 to request a list of Kansas City hotels so they can make reservations directly.

National CP lags behind budget needs

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—First quarter gifts to the national Cooperative Program of the Southern Baptist Convention were almost \$1.5 million above the first three months of the last fiscal year but still fell behind budget needs.

December contributions of \$8,848,602 were a monthly record and reflected a 2.2 percent increase over December 1982. That was the smallest monthly percentage increase since February 1982 and the ninth lowest in the past 10 years.

The first accurate budget projections will not be available until after January figures are included, according to Tim Hedquist, director of financial planning for the SBC Executive Committee.

This year 22 of the 34 state Baptist conventions increased their voluntary contributions to the national Cooperative Program. Many of the state fiscal years start Jan. 1 so those increases will not show up at the national level until February.

The agencies which operate the worldwide mission and education programs of the Southern Baptist Convention will have a better idea of what percentage of their allocation will be funded next month when Hedquist completes the projections.

The first quarter gifts of \$25,506,291 are 6.21 percent ahead of the first quarter of 1982-83. Comparatively, the national Cooperative Program received only \$8.87 million the first quarter of 193-74 and \$16.6 million five years ago.

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