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September 12, 1991

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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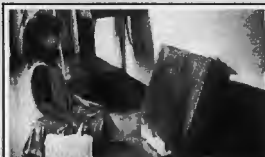
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Arkansas Baptist



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Vol. 90, No. 19

September, 12, 1991

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SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
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Nashville, Tennessee



Arkansas Baptist

At a glance

9 South Highland 75th

South Highland Church in Little Rock observed its 75th anniversary Aug. 18. The church was launched in 1913 as a mission of Little Rock Immanuel Church, and was organized into an independent church in December 1916 with a membership of 30.

10 Plumerville centennial

First Church, Plumerville, held its centennial Aug. 18, with more than 250 in attendance. Former pastor Bill Brown was the featured speaker for the event. The church was constituted Aug. 25, 1891. During the first two months of the church's history, 40 people were baptized into the fellowship. The first building was a one-room frame structure, which stood for 33 years.

11 Executive Board meets

The Executive Board of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention held an Aug. 27 meeting, during which it dealt with a number of important issues. Items adopted included the proposed \$14,624,000 1992 budget, a study on the status of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*, the employment of a director at Hope Migrant Mission Center, 1992 department goals, Arkansas-Iowa Partnership, a budget formula for 1993-97, and a 1995 evangelistic project.

14 'I can do all things. . .'

Beth Ann Reynolds, a member of Hot Springs First Church, returned home Aug. 17 after months in Baylor's Institute of Rehabilitation in Dallas, Texas, following a Jan. 19 car accident which left her in a coma for six weeks. In a moving story of faith and perseverance, her family credits God with her miraculous recovery.

16 Budget exceeds \$200 million

Trustees of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board approved a 1991-92 budget exceeding \$200 million during their Aug. 19-21 semi-annual meeting in Nashville, Tenn. They also approved an administrative request by cancelling a 1992 dated church literature price increase, in favor of a standardized shipping and handling charge for all retail orders.

19 Moody presidential nominee

California pastor Jes Moody will be nominated for president of the Southern Baptist Convention by Mississippi comedian Jerry Clower, as the result of a campaign begun by an ad hoc group of Florida pastors.

Cover story

ABGC photo / Tommy Goode



Jesus loves all the people

12

The Season of Prayer for State Missions is Sept. 15-22. The 1991 State Missions Study focuses on three areas of missions that seek to tell everybody in Arkansas that Jesus loves all the people.

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Role of the deacon

J. EVERETT SNEED

Every Baptist would agree that a deacon is one of the most important people in a church. Across the years, however, many ideas have developed as to his role. Some have viewed him as a church business manager, while others have seen him as one who keeps the pastor straight. A few have felt that the system is a way of honoring outstanding men.

The word "deacon" in the New Testament is derived from the Greek word *diakonos*, meaning "servant." In the time of Paul, life was cheap. A man's power or station in society was often measured by the number of servants he owned. The word "servant" might be spoken like "leper." The word was given a new and lofty meaning by the inspired men of the early church, for a deacon is a servant of the most high God.

It is our belief that the seven men appointed in Acts, the sixth chapter, were deacons although the name was not specifically assigned to them anywhere in that Scripture. These men were chosen out of a definite need. The Greek widows were complaining that the Hebrew widows were receiving a larger portion of the resources (Ac. 6:1). The disciples said that it was not desirable that they would leave off the proclamation of God's Word to distribute resources to the needy. The men functioned well. They solved a problem of fellowship, as well as relieving the load of the apostles.

By the time of the writing of Philippians, the office seems to be well established, for Paul addressed "... all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons" (Ph. 1:1). As a heretical, ecclesiastical structure developed, by the end of the second century, the deacon position was changed. From the position of lay servant he was moved to the lowest position of professional clergy.

The New Testament gives us great insight into the office as it outlines the requirements for those dedicated men. A deacon is to be one who is grave (serious), that is one who has Christian purpose (1 Ti. 3:8). This does not mean that he should not enjoy a good joke. Every pastor agrees that a good sense of humor helps. He should be doctrinally sound (1 Ti. 3:9), mature in Christian service (1 Ti. 3:10), a man with a Christian family (1 Ti. 3:12), a



man of controlled speech (1 Ti. 3:8); a man of temperance (1 Ti. 3:8); and a steward of his possessions (1 Ti. 3:8). In short, the requirements for a deacon are the same as those for a preacher, with the exception of being

"apt to teach" (1 Ti. 3:2).

Many concepts have developed concerning the function of a deacon. They are often referred to as "board of deacons." This conveys the idea of decision making, implying they should have the responsibility of dealing with the business affairs of the church. On the other hand, it should be clearly noted that there are no levels of authority in a Baptist church. Every member is equal to every other member and the congregation, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, must have the final decision in all matters.

In the past, historical circumstances led to assigning of non-biblical responsibilities to deacons. In the 1930s, for example, more than half of our congregations were served by pastors which came only one or two Sundays a month. Someone had to care for the business of the church. In most instances, this became the deacons' responsibility. History reveals that they did a good job in these difficult and unorganized situations.

To use deacons as a business steering committee destroys Baptist democracy and

denies the individual priesthood of every believer. The church business manager concept may have been helpful and valid for small churches of the past that had a pastor's service only on a part-time basis. In today's churches, deacons should serve in a wider, more vital and exciting role.

We believe that a New Testament pattern indicates that a deacon should be a part of the pastoral ministry or spiritual team. They should work under the leadership of the pastor to assist the congregation in accomplishing its spiritual objectives. As a part of this endeavor deacons would:

—Assist in promoting a spiritual fellowship of the church. There is no group who can do more to strengthen the harmony of a congregation. Usually, deacons are people who have been a part of a church for a considerable period of time. They know the people, they are loved by the members, so they can assist greatly at this point.

—Assist in promoting or carrying the gospel. A deacon should be a witness both in his life and in his word. Often, dedicated laymen can do more in reaching the lost than a pastor can.

—Assist in caring for the needy in the community. A part of every church's responsibility is to minister to those who have real needs. It is tragic that we do not always fulfill our God given responsibility at this point. We believe that every deacons meeting should provide a time for reporting on the witnessing and benevolent activities of the deacons.

The office of deacon is an exciting and rewarding calling. We thank God for the dedicated who serve in this capacity. Today, we have some of the finest men who have ever served as deacons.

Arkansas Baptist

J. Everett Sneed, Ph.D. Editor
 Millie Gill Executive Assistant to the Editor
 Darrell Bartlett Operations Manager

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DON MOORE

You'll Be Glad To Know



"On Thursday, July 11, 1991, a group of eight men made a decision for the Lord. When they first arrived one of them had an alcoholic drink in his hand. That same man was the first one to receive the Lord as his Savior that night. That was one of the most rewarding experiences that I had this summer because most of the men were adults and in the Hispanic culture men do not usually listen to women. But that night, for the glory of God, eight migrants were added in the number. Moreover, it gave me the hope that my dad could some day become a Christian if I keep sharing the gospel with him."

This profound report is typical of the reports that came in weekly from Monica Munoz. Monica worked as a summer missionary at our Hope Migrant Center. A college student from Maryland, Monica had a profound influence upon all who came to help her in the work there. Since we have been without a director for some months, her work was of unusual importance. I must say that a great corps of volunteers came to help her, for which we all are grateful.

During the summer, Monica and her helpers have given out 2,994 health kits, 131 teen kits, 223 Use Me books, and 400 Bibles and New Testaments. Their work and witness resulted in 65 migrant farm laborers professing their faith in Christ.

Our State Mission work is as exciting as any other. During the month of September many of our churches have special studies, prayer and an offering for State Missions. A special Sunday School lesson has been prepared to help teach more of our people about mission work in our "Jerusalem and Judah." Arkansas. We also have prepared Prayer Power Cards to help us lead our people to more specific prayer. Please request these and we will be providing them free of charge. The great work of State Missions cannot go on without increasing concern and support.

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

LEGALIZED LOTTERY: SECOND IN A THREE-PART SERIES

The price is very real

A proposed constitution amendment initiative, approved June 24 by the Arkansas attorney general's office, is in the works to repeal the state constitution's prohibition against a state-run lottery, if adopted by voters. In order to secure a place on the ballot for the next general election in November 1992, lottery backers would need to obtain some 70,000 valid voter signatures. They have one year in which to accomplish this requirement.

A legalized lottery plainly puts the state in the business of gambling. Like any form of gambling, the lottery is played excessively by some members of society and they then become victims. These victims are predominantly the poor; those who can least afford to divert money needed for food, medical care and shelter to gambling. How ironic that a government whose instituted purpose is to protect, promote and enhance its citizens' well-being would suddenly reverse its role and become a predator feeding upon its weakest, most vulnerable members.

But, the argument goes, doesn't the lottery offer for some the hope of breaking out of the horrible poverty cycle? Accord-

ing to Amy Bayer, writing in *Consumer's Research* magazine, "Lotteries have the lowest odds of winning of any form of gambling. The primary reason is that, on average, only about half the money bet on lottery tickets is even returned to winners." Odds against winning a lotto jackpot are as high as one in 17 million. "To put this in perspective," Ms. Bayer writes, "the average is eight times more likely to be hit by lightning than he is to win a million dollar jackpot."

Charles Colson, in an articulate entitled "The Myth of the Money Tree," articulated the case against the lottery quite well: "Lotteries . . . ought to raise political questions of the most basic sort. Can a government debase its citizens for its own financial interests? Should the state be involved in exploiting and encouraging a prevalent vice in order to feed its bloated budgets? To such questions the Christian should respond with a resounding no!" We never really get something for nothing. . . . The price is paying for the lottery. . . is very real. It is nothing less than our character.—Larry Page, director, Christian Civic Foundation

Woman's Viewpoint

Birthdays and blessings

SHERRY HOLT



Five years ago this month, I celebrated my 40th birthday, and began stretching my arms out in order to read. Thanks to my glasses, I can function as a literate person. Many times an incident that happened in West Africa in the late 70s comes to mind, which gave me a deeper compassion for those individuals who do not read and write.

We held ladies' meeting in homes. I ran our nine-passenger van to pick up the women. The day was hot and sultry as we were seated in the dirt courtyard on chairs and stools that our hostess had borrowed from her neighbors. After generous servings of

like, "We will get you into our upcoming literacy program." There seemed to be no appropriate answer for the deep longing she had humbled herself to share.

An African sister broke the silence, "We will teach you Scripture songs, and it will be like reading God's Word." Immediately they proceeded to learn and sing Scripture back to the Lord in grateful and loving adoration. Those animistic rituals based on fear and superstition had been replaced by worship of the true and living God.

African food and a typical meeting, one young mother in her mid-twenties said, "Those of you who can read say how much you are encouraged by reading God's Word every day. What about those of us who can't read?" She was speaking for the majority of the women there.

I wanted this young woman to know that I really cared without giving her some impersonal answer

Sherry Holt is a member of Central Church in Jonesboro, where her husband, Rex, is pastor. A former missionary to Togo, West Africa, she is the mother of three children.

Letters to the Editor

Asking Graham

I am asking Arkansas Baptists to begin a "grass roots" movement to restore peace to our denomination. I believe that there is only one person among us who is so well-respected that he could be elected to lead us in a two-year "cooling off" period.

Now is the time for Dr. Billy Graham to come to the aid of his own denomination. We have understood that in the early years of his ministry he needed to avoid being too closely identified with any one denomination. His ministry is now so well established that it should not be a hindrance for him to render leadership to his own church family.

I realize that not all Southern Baptists agree with every doctrinal statement made

by Dr. Graham. However, I do believe that more of us have more confidence in his personal integrity than we do in any other person within our ranks. For this reason, and for this reason alone, I believe that he is the only person whom God may still be able to use in preventing the self destruction of our beloved denomination.

I am not an active part of any political wing or group within our convention, and I hope to get this request into print before any of these groups can make it obvious whom they have selected to carry their banner in 1992.

Although I have never met Dr. Graham, I feel sure that only God, as he speaks through his Spirit and his people, can persuade Dr. Graham to accept this responsibility. I am therefore, asking that all con-

cerned Arkansas Baptists take the time to write Dr. Billy Graham, P.O. Box 937, Montreat, NC 28757. Ask him to please allow his name to be placed in nomination for the presidency of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1992. If elected, ask that he grant the same request for 1993.

Please join me in prayer, that our Lord will lead Dr. Graham to come home and help his own family.—Dennis J. Davis, Jonesboro

Following men?

Southern Baptists must make up their mind as to whether they are simply going to follow the traditions of men, or the holy Scriptures. As the prophet Isaiah asked, "Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?"

Our "report" has been watered-down long enough. It is time for real men and women of God to stand for truth. That is what the real love of Jesus is about; not being men-pleasers.

Every Christian denomination is the turmoil over various facets of which Scriptures they think are relevant. Are you as an individual, going to obey God or men? Think about it beloved. Is Jesus truly Lord in your life? Is he your first love?

Without the Father's mercy, love, and redemption through the shedding of Jesus' blood, man would never have a restored relationship to him. Man must be born-again of the Spirit (Jn. 3:3-7). Until man comes to Jesus in repentance, asking forgiveness, and is truly saved, he is in enmity with God, and condemned (Jn. 3:18) to die in his sins, because he rejects Jesus. How many have forgotten this?

How many of our churches preach a humanistic pep-talk? Our faith is either founded upon God's Word, or it will be mixed with philosophies, psychology, or other forms of secular humanism. These are vehemently opposed to the Kingdom of God, do not be deceived. We can only trust in Jesus, and his Word (Jn. 5:39).

Is Jesus the truth? Or is he just a good moralist? A believer loves the truth, and is not ashamed of the gospel. Only unbelief is what keeps people doubting the infallible Word of God. And then continue their futile search for truth in the world. My point is that Jesus came to make us free from sin and death, and the most damning organization is one that says it offers salvation... but says its instruction book is faulty. There is nothing wrong with the KJV Bible, it is man!—Mark K. Estes, White Hall

MIKE HUCKABEE

The President's Corner

Called to the same gospel



Pastors get a lot of credit for a church's seeming success when it is on the grow. (They also tend to get the blame when the church is on the skids!) As important as the leadership of the pastor is, we in the Baptist life often overlook the strategic role of the layman.

It's been my assertion for a long time that laypersons have a much more dramatic impact in personal witnessing because the person being witnessed to knows that the layperson doesn't have to do it. A witness from a "paid preacher" is viewed by the cynic as "self-serving" and the result of vocational obligation on the part of the pastor.

Laymen have probably taught me more about the kingdom than I have taught them. Elder statesmen in churches I've been privileged to pastor often imparted great wisdom from years of walking with God and dealing with people. In years past, some of my youthful exuberance was lovingly tempered by the counsel of a godly layperson.

The dichotomy of clergy/laity that we have developed is not only unfortunate, it's not biblical! Some pastors feel that a call to preach an infallible Bible is a confirmation of an infallible life. And some laypersons feel that only the "preacher" is capable of making a

hospital visit, witness to a lost man, or even lead in prayer at a church banquet! God has called each of us to different roles within the church but not to a different Gospel or standards of behavior.

Those of us who are vocational ministers tend to view our moves from one church to another as "God's leading me to a new work." A wise layman once said to me, "Do you preachers think you're the only ones God can move around? Why is it when a preacher goes to another church it's 'God's will,' but when a layman moves to another church, he's a 'church hopper'?" That conversation turned out to be a great help to me. As people come or go at our church, I've learned not to take it so personally. If they can say that they have come because the Spirit of God led them, or that they have left for the same reason, then we are all there by the same hand of the same God.

The most important issue is not whether we are employed full time by the church, but whether we are confident that we are where we are by divine destiny.

Mike Huckabee, pastor of Texarkana Beech Street Church, is president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

Bearing one another's burden

The road to recovery: last in a series on dysfunctional families

by Larry Pillow

Special to the Arkansas Baptist

The goal of ministry to Adult Children from Dysfunctional Families is summarized in an *Autobiography in Five Short Chapters* by Portia Nelson.

"Chapter One. I walk down the street. There is a deep hole in the sidewalk. I fall in. I am lost. I am hopeless. It isn't my fault. It takes forever to find a way out.

"Chapter Two. I walk down the same street. There is a deep hole in the sidewalk. I pretend I don't see it. I fall in again. I can't believe I am in the same place. But it isn't my fault. I still takes a long time to get out.

"Chapter Three. I walk down the same street. There is a deep hole in the sidewalk. I see it is there. I still fall in. . . it's a habit. My eyes are open. I know where I am. It is my fault. I get out immediately.

"Chapter Four. I walk down the same street. There is a deep hole in the sidewalk. I walk around it.

"Chapter Five. I walk down another street."

The goal of recovery ministry is to teach people to go down a different street. The means for doing that is a process rather than an event. The process is often unpredictable and always painful.

Typically, the number one obstacle in the process is denial. Denial means we are unwilling to face reality. Author Keith Miller states in his book *Hope in the Fast Lane*, "Denial is a form of repression through which people block out certain aspects of their own behavior." An alcoholic may go on a two-day drinking binge and honestly believe and say that he only "had a couple of drinks." The workaholic regularly states and believes that he is just working "extra-hard" temporarily and will slack off when the project is completed. Children who were sexually abused frequently cannot admit it until middle age. That's a long time to live in denial, but it's the rule rather than the exception. Such is the power of denial. Miller concludes that person living in denial "rationalizes addictive

and abnormal behavior as being necessary, right, or even unselfish."

Another form of denial is refusing to admit that we cannot solve our problems by ourselves. We are unable or unwilling to receive help from others in the body of Christ. The following story illustrates our need for helping and being helped by others.

A Jewish rabbi was asked the difference in heaven and hell. "Hell," he said, "is like a large group of people sitting around a large bowl of soup who are starving because the spoons they have are too long and they cannot feed themselves."

"Heaven," the rabbi said, "is the same group of people sitting around the same large bowl of soup with the same long spoons except this time the people are very healthy. They have discovered that while their spoons are too long for them to feed themselves, they are just right to feed one another."

*A person living in denial
rationalizes abnormal
behavior as being
necessary, right, or
even unselfish.*

Recovery begins when we give and receive help from other Christians. Emotional healing and spiritual change for Christians is not meant to take place "Lone Ranger" style. The phrase "one another," occurs over 30 times in the New Testament. "Bear one another's burdens," "love one another," "exhort one another," and "confess your faults one to the other" are just a few examples of our responsibility to one another.

Support groups are one way the church can give people an opportunity to flesh out these "one another" commands. My eyes were opened to the need for and the effectiveness of support groups when I did a brief internship in the Minirth-Meier-Rice psychiatric unit at Baptist Memorial Hospital in North Little Rock. I discovered two things during my in-

ternship. Much to my surprise most of the people on the unit were committed Christians just like we worship with every Sunday morning. Secondly, I discovered the patients were helping each other tremendously by listening, encouraging, confronting, and modeling appropriate behavior.

Most church members do not need and cannot afford psychiatric treatment, but a majority would benefit by participating in a support group. A support group represents a "safe place with safe people" who can honestly tell their story, feel their pain, and experience unconditional acceptance of others. Participants also discover new insights about God, his grace, and their own pain. Most important, support groups provide a place to be with people who will compassionately and courageously help us learn how to walk down a different street.

It's a challenge to introduce this kind of ministry into the church. People have a tendency to be like porcupines in Alaska. They either remain too far apart and freeze or they get too close together and prick themselves to death. As Christians we frequently ignore our own issues and try to "fix" everybody else's problems. Two verses in Galatians 6 illustrate the tension and balance we need. In Galatians 6:5 Paul instructs us that "every man shall bear his own burden." The word for "burden" is "knapsack." John Townsend, co-author of *Secret of your Family Tree*, writes, "Our individual knapsacks include such things as our thoughts, attitudes, opinions, beliefs, needs, choices, feelings, values, time, possessions, money, gifts, talents, behavior, and bodies." For these, we are responsible.

The converse is also true. Just as we are to take care of the things in our lives for which we are responsible, we are not to try to take care of things in somebody else's life for which they are responsible. When we try to do that we deprive them of the opportunity to grow and mature. We are to take care of what's in our knapsack and leave the other guy's knapsack alone.

In Galatians 6:5 we are told, "bear ye one another's burdens." In the original language this word for burden means "boulder" or "large rock." Such burdens could include present-day crises or the enormous pain we have gone through in our family of origin that we don't know how to handle. This is where a support group or recovery ministry assists the "adult child" in applying the principles of the Serenity Prayer.

*God grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change,
the courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference.*

Christian psychologist and author Larry Crabb, suggests that there's a lot of pain in church members "below the water line." Most of our preaching and teaching is directed at the pain above the water line. Crabb illustrates in his book, *Understanding People*, that we are like a naive sea captain who steers his vessel around the tip of the iceberg with no awareness that there is a mountain of ice beneath the surface that could wreck his ship. My plea is for us to help people surface their pain below the water line and then help them find healing for it.

One obvious way to help people discover and deal with their inner pain is for the pastor to model this in his own life. Appropriate transparency in the pulpit translates to honesty in the pew. Honesty hurts but it also heals. A second and even more effective way to help people who are hurting is to start support groups. Rapha Ministries is known and trusted by many Southern Baptist leaders. They have excellent resources for starting a recovery ministry including curriculum materials, leadership training on video, and other helpful resources. Write to them at 8876 Gulf Freeway, Suite 360, Houston, TX 77017 or call 1-800-383-HOPE.

Larry Pillow has served as pastor of Second Church in Conway for the past nine years. He is completing his doctor of ministry studies at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City with an emphasis on ministry to Adult Children of Dysfunctional Families.

YOUTH/ADULT DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING WORKSHOPS

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Park Hill Baptist Church, North Little Rock
First Baptist Church, Rogers
Wynne Baptist Church, Wynne

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3
Southside Baptist Church, Pine Bluff
Westside Baptist Church, El Dorado
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Arkansas All Over

MILLIE GILL

People

Jeffrey W. Smith, pastor of Searcy County Church, Marshall, was ordained Aug. 25 by the church to the ministry. L.B. Atchison, director of missions for North Arkansas Association, moderated the ordination, as well as preaching the ordination message. Mark Kelly of Little Rock led the prayer of ordination. Others participating were David Treat, Nolan Brisco, Ronnie Warren, and Stan Chadwick. Wanda Hamilton directed congregational singing and The Gospel Strings presented special music.

David C. Strawn has joined the staff of Second Church in Little Rock as minister of education, coming there from Plymouth Park Church in Irving, Texas, where he had served in a similar position since 1984. He is a graduate of Howard Payne University in Brownwood, Texas, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, where he currently is working on his doctor of education degree. Strawn and his wife, Kathy, have two children, Kayla, and Stephen, both high school students.

J.W. Whitely has completed a six month interim pastorate with Claud Road Church, Pine Bluff. He is residing at 9110 East Sardis Road, Mabelvale, AR 72103; telephone 501-557-2540.

Mackie Hawkins is serving as pastor of Hilldale Church, Alexander.

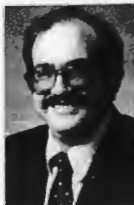
Doug White has resigned as pastor of First Church in Hoxie.

Lester O. Tuberville of Little Rock, a retired Baptist minister and salesman, died Aug. 18 at age 75. He was a member of Immanuel Church in Little Rock. Survivors are his wife, Ruanah Cain Tuberville; two sons, Robert Tuberville of Little Rock and Bill Tuberville of Knoxville, Tenn.; a daughter, Becky Clark of Little Rock; a brother; a sister; and four grandchildren. Memorials may be made to Immanuel Church building fund.

Steve Jenkins is serving as interim youth director for Life Line Church in Little Rock.

Raymond Baker has resigned as pastor of Mary's Chapel, Armored.

Aubrey Turner resigned Aug. 18 as pastor of Yarbrough Church to serve as pastor of Corner's Chapel Church in Payneaway.



Smith



Strawn

David King is serving as pastor of Ridgecrest Church in Blytheville.

Doug Cotter has resigned as pastor of Spradra Church at Clarksville to serve as pastor of Climax Springs Church in Missouri.

Claris A. Johnson Sr. of Paragould died Aug. 18 at age 84. He was a former director of missions for Mississippi County Association and had pastored churches for 52 years, serving in Arkansas, Mississippi, Louisiana, Oklahoma, California and Michigan. Survivors are his wife, Patti Johnson; two sons, C.A. Johnson Jr. of Paragould, director of missions for Greene County Association, and Kenneth Johnson of Memphis; two daughters, Iris Peters of Woodbridge, Va., and Elsie Turner of St. Louis; a brother; two sisters; eight grandchildren; and 12 great-grandchildren.

Rick Porter has resigned as pastor of Lakeshore Heights Church in Hot Springs to serve as pastor of Riverside Church in Dallas, Texas.

Reg Fowler joined the staff of Elaine First Church Aug. 1 as minister of youth and music. He recently graduated from Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary with a master of divinity degree.

Scott Sasser has joined the staff of First Church in Hope as a bi-vocational member, serving as minister of youth.

Jim Munns recently observed five years of service as minister of music and administration for Pulaski Heights Church in Little Rock.

Briefly

Cross Road Church in Little Rock, as a part of the Arkansas Baptist WMU's "Friend to Friend" challenge of organizing new Acteens organizations, has launched two groups in Pulaski Association. Those organized have been at Crystal Hill and Pleasant Grove Churches. Judy Wood serves as both leader and director of the Cross Road Acteens chapter, as well as Pulaski Association Acteens director.



Music Arkansas, a youth camp sponsored by the ABCS Church Music Department held July 22-26 on the OBU campus, presented the world premiere of the musical "Live It to the Max II." The premiere was directed by its composer, Dennis Allen. Pictured is the french born section of the camp band. The 1991 Star Camper Awards were given to Lee Crouse of Magnolia and Bryan Dyles of Asdown First Church.

Indian Springs Church in Bryant recently held a vacation Bible school that resulted in an enrollment of 340, a high attendance of 289, and 38 professions of faith. The Student Ministry also conducted training during this week with 65 students participating. Benny Grant is pastor.

Southside Mission at Alma recently dedicated a new building. Participating in the service were Pastor Tom Steward; Bob Shelton, pastor of/sponsoring church, Alma First Church; Dee Ann Harris; Jackie Gregory; George Domerese, director of missions for Clear Creek Association; and Jack Ramsey, ASBC director of church extension.

Springdale First Church launched "Great Commission Night" Sept. 3 that will be a weekly 1991-92 program for contacting prospects, guests, and members. The program will include personal visitation and witnessing, a telephone bank, and letter writing.

Hot Springs First Church recently began sponsorship of New Life Fellowship, the ninth black Baptist congregation to become affiliated with Southern Baptists in Arkansas. Donald Crossley Sr. is serving as pastor of the fellowship that began meeting in April and is a joint effort between Arkansas Baptist State Convention, Central Association, and First Church, which is pastored by Jerry W. Mixon.

Clarksville First Church held an installation service Aug. 18, honoring Robert L. Brown who began serving as pastor July 22. Tom Logue of Little Rock brought the installation message, and Rusty Bushong of Fort Smith was recognized for his past year of service as interim pastor.

Helena First Church will observe homecoming Oct. 20 by celebrating 140 years of service with activities that include a 10 a.m. morning worship service and a noon meal. Ted J. Witchen currently is pastor of the congregation which has had 35 pastors in its 140 years of service.

Amazing Grace Church of Bentonville that began meeting June 16 will constitute as a church Sept. 15 at 2 p.m. The church, located west of Highway 71 on West 102 and currently meeting in the former Bentonville Christian Academy, is averaging approximately 150 in worship services. A recent revival, led by Johnny Jackson of Little Rock, resulted in 39 decisions with 13 professions of faith. Jerry Holcomb is pastor and Brenda Woodard is minister of music.

MISSISSIPPI RIVER MINISTRY

Area convocation called

A Convocation on the Mississippi River Ministry has been called by the missions directors of seven states along the lower Mississippi River. In a planning conference held on Aug. 19-20 in West Memphis, missions leaders from Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, Arkansas, Missouri, Kentucky, and Illinois met to discuss the needs of 210 counties along their borders and the Mississippi River. Responding to the President's Commission on the Lower Mississippi River Delta, the conference considered how Baptist churches, associations, and conventions could be involved in reaching people through ministries directed toward what has been described as "among the neediest counties in America."

The astonishing information presented included an unemployment rate of 24.86 percent in some areas (over four times the national average), per capita income near-

ly 25 percent below the national average, and an infant mortality rate for some counties higher than that of Chile, Cuba, Malaysia, or French Guiana. Illiteracy was another problem that was discussed, with some areas of the target counties experiencing over 60 percent functional illiteracy. Other discussion areas included the school drop-out rate, housing, volunteerism, health care, and leadership development.

The Convocation on the Mississippi River Ministry will be held on Aug. 7-8, 1992, at the Eurdora Baptist Church in Memphis, Tenn. Attendance is open to pastors, lay persons, mission workers, associational director of missions, Brotherhood and WMU leaders and the general public. Interested persons should contact the state missions office at 376-4791, ext. 5139, for further information about registration.



Photo / Mike Skinner

South Highland Church in Little Rock observed its 75th anniversary Aug. 18 with a 10:45 a.m. worship service, a noon meal, and a 2 p.m. "Diamond Jubilee" program that featured Don Cooper, interim pastor; Bernard Sharp, anniversary committee chairman; former pastor Ray Branscum, and Glen Hickey, director of missions for Pulaski Association, as speakers. Alan Moore, minister of music and youth, and former staff members Jerry Miller and Rob Wright directed the musical program that featured special music by the Jubilee Choir and individuals. South Highland Church, launched in 1913 as a mission of Immanuel Church of Little Rock, was organized as an independent church in December 1916 with a membership of 30, affiliating itself with the Southern Baptist Convention, Pulaski Association, and the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. Since its organization it has been both an evangelistic and mission-minded congregation, allotting a certain percentage of its funds to associational missions and the Cooperative Program. Above, the inscription from the church's original cornerstone is studied by Katie Page.

Plumerville centennial

by J. Everett Sneed
Editor, Arkansas Baptist

First Church, Plumerville, held its centennial Aug. 18. The major speaker for the morning service was former pastor Bill Brown, now pastor of First Church, Morrilton. There were more than 250 in attendance for the morning service.

Brown took his sermon from Matthew 16:13-18. His subject was "The Absolute Indestructibility of Christ's Church." He gave six reasons why the church is indestructible. These are: (1) the power of the Word of God, (2) the presence of the Son of God, (3) the presence of the Holy Spirit, (4) the peculiarity of God's love, (5) the promise of missions as Jesus said, "Go," and (6) the prospect of our hope.

During the afternoon service several groups presented special music and a number of members and former members recalled the impact the church had on their lives. Editor J. Everett Sneed brought greetings from the Baptist Building employees.

Pastor Fred Holst gave a brief challenge to the members concerning the future of the church. He said, "It is a time to move out to reach people. It is not a time to retire, but a time to work and to move forward."

He challenged the church to provide ministries that would prevent young people from being caught up in the things of the world and provide a good beginning for the children of the community. He noted that, "To do this it will require commitment on the part of our membership."

First Church, Plumerville, was constituted Aug. 25, 1891. Four ministers were present for the organization of the church and since it was the first Baptist church in the area it was given the name First Baptist Church. The church has retained the name across the years.

M.S. Kirkland was called as the first pastor. The congregation voted to have regular services on the fourth Saturday and Sunday of each month.

During the first two months of the church's history, 40 people were baptized into the fellowship of the congregation.

The first building was a one room frame structure erected in 1892. This building stood for 33 years, but was destroyed by fire on Feb. 4, 1925.

The congregation has maintained a great deal of memorabilia from the past. Among the items on display during the centennial was a clapper from the bell of the first building. The heat from the fire was so intense that when the bell tower fell the impact of the fall bent the clapper of the bell.



Pastor Fred Holst and W.G. Bean, the oldest living member of the congregation.

W.D. Kirkland, a blind member of the church, built a case for the bell clapper.

Under the leadership of Pastor C.P. McGraw a new building was erected in less than seven months after the old building had burned.

On March 3, 1929, the congregation dedicated the new house of worship. Several noted individuals were present. Among these were: J.S. Rogers, general secretary of Arkansas Baptist State Convention; J.S. Comper, editor of the *Baptist Advance* (the forerunner of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*); and E.P.J. Garrett, pastor of First Church, Conway.

As the church grew and prospered, it purchased a new pastor's home, and in 1960 a new educational building was constructed. In 1959 the sanctuary of the church was renovated. A number of improvements have been added to the sanctuary. Among these are carpeting and the installation of central heat and air conditioning.

Other improvements included: a colonial porch added to the front of the church, a steeple placed on the top of the sanctuary, the addition of 50 feet on the south end of the sanctuary, the addition of five new Sunday School rooms, and a new sound system.

Following the deaths of W.D. Kirkland and Miss Glenn Kirkland, the church

receives a percentage of their estate each year. In 1983, the church voted to use a portion of this money to establish a scholarship fund for college students. Another portion of the money is placed in a building fund for enrichment of the church grounds and buildings. A number of improvements have been made on the buildings and grounds as a result of this money.

Pastor Holst who has served the congregation since December, 1990 feels that the church has a bright future. He said, "Our community is growing and in the seven months that I have served the church we have had 11 additions by baptism and 10 by letter. We also have had an excellent vacation Bible school. We are experiencing rapid growth among our young married people. Hence, we are ending our first 100 years with an exciting spirit and a bright future."

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Executive Board meets

by J. Everett Sneed

Editor, Arkansas Baptist

The Executive Board of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention dealt with a number of important items during the August 27 meeting that convened at the Little Rock Baptist Medical Center.

Items adopted included the 1992 proposed budget, a study of the status of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*, the employment of a director at Hope Migrant Mission Center, 1992 department goals, Arkansas-Iowa Partnership, a budget formula for 1993-97, and a 1995 evangelistic project.

The Executive Board approved a \$14,624,000 proposed budget for 1992. This budget, which represents a 4 percent increase over the 1991 budget, will be on the slate of recommendations submitted to messengers at the 1991 state convention that will convene Nov. 19-20 in Geyer Springs First Church, Little Rock.

A motion was presented by Ken Lilly, a Fort Smith physician, that the Executive Board study the feasibility of placing the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* back under the executive director and the Executive Board. The motion to study passed with 37 of the board members voting for it and 22 against it.

Jerre Mitchell, chairman of the Finance Committee and pastor of First Church, Fayetteville, presented a recommendation for a plan of payment developed by the trustees of the ABN for a deficit incurred by the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*. He also recommended that the deficit be approved by the Executive Board in accordance with the ABCS constitution.

Editor Sneed reported to the Finance Committee that two factors have primarily impacted the *Newsmagazine*. These are: dramatic increases in both postage and insurance (see ABN articles of May 23 and June 6, 1991).

Sneed also reported that after the *Newsmagazine* accrued an indebtedness of something more than \$50,000, a loan was negotiated with Twin City Printing and Litho, Inc. for that amount. The loan payments are \$1,521.05 a month at 6 percent interest. The loan is to be paid out in 36 months. The only outstanding bill the *Newsmagazine* has or has had is with the printing company.

The *Newsmagazine* has now taken several steps to alleviate the budget deficit. Among these are: a loan with Twin City Printing and Litho, Inc. of \$50,000, printing only 26 issues of the *Newsmagazine*, rather than 48 issues, negotiation of a new

contract with the computer company that prints the mailing labels, and not replacing three individuals who have chosen to leave the employment of the *Newsmagazine*.

Editor Sneed observed that the steps taken to reduce the *Newsmagazine's* deficit, and to gain a surplus in the operating budget are working. The first six months of 1991 were ended with a surplus of approximately \$9,500. Slightly more than 20 percent of the deficit has been paid to Twin City Printing and Litho, Inc.

The Executive Board voted to approve the payment plan for the deficit. This will be presented to the messengers of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention attending the annual session in November.

The Executive Board voted unanimously to employ Paul Roatan as the director of the Hope Migrant Mission Center. Since he is dually employed by the Executive Board and the Home Mission Board, he cannot begin serving until the HMB has taken action. Both he and Linda Osborne, who previously had been elected BSU associate at Arkansas State University, gave their testimonies to the Executive Board.

The Executive Board also approved a budget formula that will divide the monies for all state causes and the Southern Baptist Convention for the years of 1993-1997. The primary difference between the present formula and the proposed formula is that the present formula automatically provides for .25 of 1.0 percent increase for SBC causes regardless of the undesignated gifts from Arkansas churches. The proposed formula ties the increase to SBC programs directly to percentage of Cooperative Program increase in undesignated gifts reported by churches during the previous year. If churches fail to increase their gift percentage, there will be no increase for SBC programs. The increase to SBC causes can be up to 1 percent, but in no year will the percentage be decreased. This proposal also must be approved by messengers attending the annual session of the ABCS.

The Executive Board also unanimously approved a recommendation from the convention Nominating Committee that the Ministry of Crisis Support Committee be discontinued. It was observed that after a number of years of staffing the committee that no practical function had been found for them. It seemed that it was an unnecessary expenditure of time and money for this group to continue to meet for no particular purpose. This recommendation also will be presented to the state convention messengers.

A partnership between Arkansas and Iowa was approved for recommendation to the messengers. If adopted, this partnership will be in effect from January 1, 1992, to December 31, 1996.

An evangelistic project entitled "Here's Hope, Jesus Cares for You/Share Jesus Now" was approved for presentation to messengers. The project, originally developed by the SBC, is designed to help churches to begin to grow and to reduce the number of baptismless churches. The design calls for the training of 1,500,000 individuals committed to presenting the plan of salvation to at least one lost person each day for 60 days between Jan. 9 and March 10, 1995. It also calls for 80 percent of the local churches to participate in statewide simultaneous revivals between March 10 and Sept. 30, 1995.

Other items that were approved by the Executive Board to be brought to the 1991 Arkansas Baptist State Convention messengers included: 1992 department goals and projects, task force on church conflict and forced termination, and a family ministry task force.

Volleyball tournament slated

An all-day Youth Coed Volleyball Tournament will be held Saturday, Oct. 12, at the Arkansas Baptist Home for Children in Monticello. There will be divisions for junior and senior high; registration is \$50 per team. Proceeds will go to the capitol fund drive for Siloam Springs and the Children's Home. For more information, contact Mark Halley at 501-267-5358.

New Orleans graduate

David L. Griffin of Cabot received the master of divinity degree on July 26 at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisiana.

Griffin, married to the former Vicki McRaney of Tylertown, Miss., is the son of Betty and the late Paul Griffin of Cabot.

Griffin is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia.

Correction

The Aug. 29 ABN "Arkansas All Over" section should have reported that Don Bishop is serving as pastor of Trinity Church in Fort Smith.

Jesus loves all the people

Season of Prayer for State Missions Sept. 15-22

by Jimmy Barrentine
Special to the Arkansas Baptist

In the *State Missions Study for Children*, author Diana Lewis calls upon the children to sing, "Jesus Loves the Little Children" with the lyrics adjusted to the heartbeat of missions in Arkansas.

"Jesus loves all the people
All the people in our state.
Red and yellow, black and white
They are precious in his sight,
Jesus loves all the people in our state."

With bright eyes shining and treble voices ringing, children will sing and believe that simple song. Jesus loves all the people. Of course he does. The problem is that not all the people know that God loves them.

The 1991 State Missions Study will focus on three areas of missions that seek to tell everybody in Arkansas that Jesus loves all the people.

Church and Community Ministries,
Tommy Goode, program director

This state missions program seeks to communicate the love of Jesus to those in need of what is frequently called Christian social ministries. Included in this program's assignment are the Migrant Missions Centers at Hope and Hermitage and an ever-expanding network of other ministries done in cooperation with churches and associations throughout the state.

It is not always easy to communicate God's love to people in need, but the opportunities to do so are limitless in our state. One of every three children in Arkansas lives in poverty. One out of three adults is unable to read a Sunday School lesson or even a simplified translation of God's Word with any significant understanding. Almost half of the senior adults in our state live in poverty. For people in need, it is easier for them to believe God loves them



Does she know that Jesus loves her?

after we have given them a cup of ice cream or a bowl of rice.

Language Missions, Elias Pantoja,
program director

If a cup of ice cream can tell a child that she is loved, then the sound of one's own language can do the same for the ethnic. A smile, a touch on the arm or a sign from a trained hand can do the same for the deaf. Nine new language missions have been started this year, same as 1989-90. Currently, there are 70 congregations

among deaf, Koreans, Vietnamese, Hispanics, Internationals, Chinese, Filipino and Laotian. For the future, the goal is 25 new units the next five years. With an ethnic population that has increased 113 percent since 1980, language missions has an open door to an extension of God's family in Arkansas.

Church Extension, Jack Ramsey,
program director

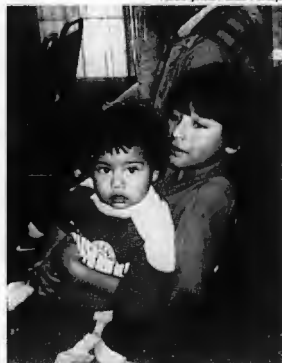
This is the third year in a row in which over 20 new predominantly anglo or black

congregations have been started. Some have been started among the state's poor; some among the state's economic mid-line; a few among the Arkansas wealthy; 14 meet in mobile home parks, the highest rate of reaching mobile home park residents in the nation.

Foundational strategy

The local church is the foundational strategy for extending God's family for it is there that we learn to worship, to study the Bible, to involve ourselves in ministry, missions and evangelism; but the foundational strategy is on the decline. Jack Ramsey stresses the fact that in 1975 there was a church for every 1,500 Arkansans. Today, Arkansas Baptists have one church for every 2,000 people. Given the uneven distribution of existing churches, many Arkansans are beyond the reach of a local church.

ABSC photo / Elias Pantoja



They need to know that Jesus loves all the people.

If God's family is to be extended, a local church must be established within the cultural, language, geographic and social reach of every person in the state. The Season of Prayer for State Missions is Sept. 15-22. The Dixie Jackson Offering goal is \$591,000. Pray that all of us might give ourselves anew to an Arkansas missions strategy that is biblically mandated, God-empowered, local church based, driven by a zeal for evangelism and directed toward the ministry needs of those who do not yet know that Jesus loves all the people.

Jimmy Barrentine is director of the Missions Department of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.



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'I can do all things...'

The victim of a tragic accident returns home

by J. Everett Sneed

Editor, Arkansas Baptist

"I'm so glad to be alive and the reason that I am getting better is because of the prayers of so many Christian people," declared Beth Ann Reynolds who was comatose for many months as a result of a head-on accident. She and her husband, Teddy, are active members of First Church, Hot Springs.

On Saturday January 19, 1991, Beth Ann was on her way to the University of Central Arkansas, Conway, to register for the new semester when she was involved in a head-on automobile accident. Beth Ann was working on her master's degree in speech pathology.

For a number of days, it was uncertain as to whether Beth Ann would live. Her brain pressure was ranging up to 45. Normally the brain pressure is from 0 to 15. If it remains above 20 for as much as five minutes the brain will hemorrhage and the individual will die.

The Reynolds' family, husband Teddy and in-laws Marvin and Beth, called on their Christian friends to pray for Beth Ann. Marvin Reynolds, former director of missions for Black River Association, is currently the director of missions for Mississippi County Association. Previously he and his wife were missionaries to Botswana for 13 years.

While at Baptist Medical Center in Little Rock, Beth Ann's condition began to stabilize, but she remained in a totally non-responsive condition. After approximately six weeks she opened her eyes, but still did not acknowledge anyone or respond to any activity around her. The immediate crisis passed, but the question remained, "would she always be in a vegetated condition?"

On March 14, Beth Ann was moved to Baylor's Institute of Rehabilitation in Dallas, Texas. Here a variety of types of therapy was begun for Beth Ann. This included: individuals talking to her, singing to her, talking her hands and playing notes on keyboard instruments, and a variety of exercises. There still was no visible response to the therapy until June 4 when Robbie, Beth Ann's brother-in-law, was spelling her name to her. Robbie said, "B-E-T" and Beth Ann whispered, "H."

By June 10, Beth Ann was whispering the words to the song "God Is So Good." Teddy has this recorded on video tape.

It was only a month ago that Beth Ann began to remember the events that were oc-



Teddy and Beth Ann Reynolds

curring around her. The period of the comatose condition is blocked from her mind. But, remarkably the events prior to the accident and everything since are clear in her mind. The medical staff is overwhelmed by her recovery. William Parker, chief of staff at the Baylor Rehabilitation Institute said, "The recovery of Beth Ann is a miracle." There will still be considerable therapy involved in order for her right leg to function properly. She can walk with the use of a brace on her right leg and crutches.

For approximately one month a cast was placed on Beth Ann's right leg to straighten it. Although the leg was not injured in the accident, because of brain function the leg had drawn up against her abdomen. The straightening of the leg has produced tendinitis and it only is with great difficulty that the leg can be straightened.

Beth Ann returned to her Hot Springs home Aug. 17. There were approximately 75 friends present to welcome her home.

Beth Ann's favorite verse of Scripture is Philippians 4:13 which says, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." This verse and a gigantic sign saying, "Welcome Home" were on the side of the house as she returned.

When Beth Ann reached the outskirts of Hot Springs, she rolled down the window and whispered as loud as possible, "Hot

Springs, I am back." Beth Ann cannot speak loudly at the present. The physicians tell her that when she is ambulatory her voice will return.

Teddy said, "I have learned how God works through our faith. It really doesn't take much faith at all."

On the first night after the accident, Teddy went to the chapel at Baptist Medical Center. In his prayer, he committed Beth Ann to God. He said, "If Beth Ann dies, I will continue to praise and serve you."

The following night he again returned to the chapel. While in the chapel Wanda Admire, Beth Ann's sister-in-law and a physical therapist, entered the chapel. Teddy asked her to describe to him what it is like to care for an individual in a vegetated condition. She told him there were three options. One would be for him to drop Beth Ann off at a day care center as he went to work and in the evening feed her through the stomach, change her diaper and turn her every two hours to prevent bed sores. Second, get a nurse to stay with her in the daytime and use the same procedure as in the evenings. The third option would be to place her in a nursing home and visit her on weekends.

Teddy again prayed. In his prayer this time he told God, "If Beth Ann lives in a vegetated condition, I will continue to serve you and praise you."

Beth Ann and Teddy are looking forward to again being active at First Church, Hot Springs. The two contributed greatly to the formation of a new young married couples (up to age 30) Sunday School department, which now has 30 active participants.

Mrs. Marvin Reynolds wishes to express appreciation to all of the people who have prayed for Beth Ann. She observed, "There have been so many people who have assisted us that it is impossible for us to enumerate them. This includes all kinds of medical people, those who have prayed, and others who have offered services."

During the first week that Beth Ann was home First Church, Hot Springs, provided all of the food for the family. Mrs. Reynolds and Robbie stayed with Beth Ann. Three friends from First Church, Hot Springs, have agreed to stay with Beth Ann. These are: Sindy Eaton, Linda Meighan, Gall Raabe.

Teddy expressed his appreciation to Weyerhaeuser Real Estate Company, where he is an assistant project manager in land sales. He said, "The company has been far more gracious than I could have expected them to be."

Teddy hopes that through this experience he and Beth Ann can help strengthen the faith of others. He said, "I have learned that a small amount of faith truly can move mountains."

Training provides leadership

The Associational Discipleship Training Leadership Conference drew 95 leaders from 28 associations across the state to Park Hill Church in North Little Rock on Aug. 23-24. The purpose of the conference was to train leaders to assist local churches.

The Baptist Sunday School Board provided four leaders from its staff, who in addition to training the conference participants also informed them of product changes. These changes include an updated children's curriculum and, for the first

time, preschool discipleship training materials. A study leader for adult teachers also is proving to be a helpful resource.

Only one state has a larger conference of this type, according to Bob Holley, ABS Discipleship Training director, and that is North Carolina, where the conference is held at the Ridgecrest Conference Center. "We continue to feel that the associational work is very significant in all of our work and is a prime tool for helping to reach the churches," Holley commented.

Three couples appointed

Three couples with Arkansas ties were among 40 people named missionaries by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board Aug. 13 at Colonial Heights Church in Virginia.

C. Gregory and Laura McKenzie will live in Spain, where he will develop a discipleship training ministry.

Born in Dermott, McKenzie is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles O. McKenzie of Memphis, Tenn. While growing up he lived in Pine Bluff, and is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

A South Carolina native, Mrs. McKenzie, the former Laura Roper, is a graduate of Erskine College in Due West, S.C.

Curtis L. Sergeant, son of Southern Baptist missionaries, and his wife, Debra, have been named representatives of Cooperative Services International, the Southern Baptist agency that assists nations where missionaries do not work.

The Sergeants will live in East Asia, where they will use their skills in development of CSI-related projects in the developing nations of East Asia.

Born in Kansas, Sergeant is the son of Mr. and Mrs. William L. Sergeant, missionaries

in Taiwan. He considers Fayetteville First Church his home church. He is a graduate of the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He was also a BSU staff worker at the Fayetteville campus.

Born in Massachusetts, Mrs. Sergeant, the former Debra Bowser, is a graduate of John Brown University in Siloam Springs and the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville.

She has been a living skills instructor for Life Styles Inc. and a home economics instructor at the University of Arkansas, both in Fayetteville.

The Sergeants have one child, Nathan. Mel A. and Nancy Skinner will live in Eastern Europe where he will start and develop churches.

A native of Missouri, Skinner is a graduate of Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Mo., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Born in Colorado, Mrs. Skinner, the former Nancy Pelley, considers Mena her hometown. She is a graduate of the University of Oklahoma in Norman.

The Skinners have one child, Sarah. The families will go to Rockville, Va., in October for a seven-week orientation before leaving for the field.

Looking Ahead

September

- 12 Brotherhood Blitz, *North Pulaski Association, North Little Rock (Bbd)*
- 12 Arkansas Praising Celebration, *Fayetteville University Church (M)*
- 12 Bivocational/Small Church Evangelism Conference, *Mena Dallas Avenue Church (Ev)*
- 12 IMPACT 91 Meeting, *Texarkana Cornerstone Church (WMU)*
- 20-21 Heartlands Sunday School Conference, *Fayetteville First Church (SS)*
- 22 Baptist Men's Jail Ministry Sunday (Bbd)
- 23 IMPACT 91 Meeting, *Little Rock Markham Street Church (WMU)*
- 23-24 Church Music Workshop, *Ouachita Baptist University (M)*
- 24-25 IMPACT 91 Meeting, *Forrest City First Baptist (WMU)*
- 26 IMPACT 91 Meeting, *Jonesboro Central Church (WMU)*
- 26 Baptist Men's Golf Tournament, *Little Rock Rebsamen Park (Bbd)*
- 26-27 Bi-Polar Seminar, *Baptist Building, Little Rock (Ad)*
- 30 Youth-Adult Workshops, *Fayetteville University Church, Blytheville First Church, Mountain Home First Church (DT)*
- 30-10/3 National CWT Seminar, *Jonesboro Walnut Street Baptist (Ev)*

October

- 1 Area Youth Adult Workshop, *Wynne Church, Wynne (DT)*
- 1 Area Youth Adult Workshop, *Lifeline Church, Little Rock (DT)*
- 1 Area Youth Adult Workshop, *Park Hill, North Little Rock (DT)*
- 1 Area Youth Adult Workshop, *First Baptist, Rogers (DT)*
- 3 Area Youth Adult Workshop, *Beech Street, Texarkana (DT)*

Abbreviations:

Ad - Administration; Bbd - Brotherhood; CL - Church Leadership; DT - Discipleship Training; Ev - Evangelism; M - Music; Min - Missions; SS - Sunday School; SA - Stewardship/Annunty; Stu - Student; WMU - Woman's Missionary Union



The McKenzies



The Sergeants



The Skinners

BAPTIST SUNDAY SCHOOL BOARD

Budget exceeds \$200 million

Literature price increase canceled

by Charles Willis

Baptist Sunday School Board

NASHVILLE (BP)—Trustees of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board approved a 1991-92 budget exceeding \$200 million during their Aug. 19-21 semiannual meeting in Nashville.

They also approved an administration request by cancelling a 1992 dated church literature price increase, approved in their February 1991 meeting, in favor of a standardized shipping and handling charge for all retail orders from the board.

The three-day meeting was highlighted by the Aug. 20 inauguration of James T. Draper Jr. as the eighth president of the board.

The proposed operating budget of \$205.3 million makes the church programs and publishing board the first Southern Baptist Convention agency to exceed a \$200 million budget. The amount is \$14.8 million above the current operating budget and almost \$12 million above the projected 1990-91 income.

A decade ago, the board surpassed the \$100 million mark with an annual 1980-81 budget of \$107.6 million.

In a step designed to standardize shipping charges and simplify order forms, trustees approved a 6 percent shipping and handling charge for all retail orders through all Sunday School Board ordering channels, effective Jan. 1, 1992.

At the same time, they canceled a planned 5 percent increase in dated church literature products which would have been effective with the April-May-June 1992 publications. A shipping charge range of a minimum of \$2.50 per order and a maximum of \$50 was approved.

Certain designated large supplies, such as steeples and baptistries will be shipped at actual freight cost, and rush shipments and special handling requested by customers will be charged the costs of the service, according to trustee action.

The standardized charges "will simplify the church literature order form on which four different shipping policies now appear and will facilitate development of a corporate distribution system which will permit products from different product lines to be shipped together," said Jimmy D. Edwards, vice president for marketing and distribution.

In other action, business plans and organizational changes related to Genevox Music Group, the audio/video and church supplies department, and the Church In-

formation System department were approved to consolidate resources and improve business performance.

Meanwhile, trustee Chairman Bill Anderson, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church of Clearwater, Fla., appointed a 5-person committee to work with Draper to search for an executive vice president to succeed James D. Williams who has resigned to become president of the SBC Brotherhood Commission.

Search committee members are Dan Collins, an attorney from Taylors, S.C.; Al Jackson, pastor of Lakeview Baptist Church of Auburn, Ala.; Kirk Humphreys, businessman from Oklahoma City; Rick Forrester, businessman from Lawrenceville, Ga.; and Frank Palmer, pastor of Forest Avenue Baptist Church, Redmond, Ore.

"We're in the process of searching for an executive vice president, someone to help us with operations," Draper said in his inaugural address. "That search will continue, and that will be a priority and at the very top of my agenda."

Reports were given on product sales of more than 11,000 copies of the first volume of *The New American Commentary* released in June, more than 16,000 copies of the *Holman Bible Dictionary* and more than one million copies of *The Baptist Hymnal*. The second commentary volume is scheduled for a September release.

Harry Piland, director of the Sunday school division, reported Breakthrough Sunday school literature is being shipped to churches for the fall quarter and that plans to train Breakthrough consultants across the country are on schedule.

A financial report for the first nine months of the current fiscal year showed an increase of 4.7 percent above budget and 9.3 percent above the previous year.

Gains were shown in Baptist Book Stores, Holman and Broadman publishing and Convention Press. Church literature sales were reported at 4.4 percent above last year, but 0.8 percent below budget, with an estimated actual decline of 1.3 percent in unit sales.

Declines in sales were reported in the areas of Genevox music and Church Information Systems. Revenue from operation of conference centers, while 0.9 percent above last year, continued to be 1.9 percent below budget. The report said improvements in accounting and distribution operations will save the board more than \$900,000 annually.

Two motions from the floor were ap-

proved dealing with a study to downsize the trustee board and to place a plaque in the agency's lobby.

Ondra Black, pastor of Hope Baptist Church of Flanders, N.J., requested a study to downsize the trustee board from its current 93 members and to evaluate the practice of naming a high percentage of trustees from Tennessee to the trustee executive committee.

T.C. French Jr., pastor of Jefferson Baptist Church of Baton Rouge, La., requested a plaque bearing a statement from the board's founder, J.M. Frost, be placed in the board's lobby. The plaque will quote an introduction by Frost from the book, *Baptist Why or Why Not*, published in 1900, in which Frost affirmed the infallibility, inerrancy and sole authority of the Bible.

In other actions, trustees supported administrative recommendations by approving:

— Norm Finney, manager of the technical services section in the financial and technical services department, to assume the additional position of secretary of the corporation.

— A conference center rate increase of 4.8 percent, effective with the 1992 summer conferences.

— Deletion of a quarterly periodical, "Equipping Youth," due to declining sales. The last issue will be July 1992.

— A change to quarterly, rather than monthly, publication of "Discipleship Training" magazine, effective January 1993.

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TEXAS

Anti-lottery campaign launched

DALLAS (BP)—Texas lottery opponents are shifting their focus from the statehouse to the church house after Labor Day.

Anti-lottery activists suffered a major setback when Texas lawmakers voted during the summer special session to approve a referendum on lottery legalization. But opponents have pledged an all-out campaign to defeat the government-run numbers game on the statewide Nov. 5 ballot.

The Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission, Texas IMPACT, Texas Conference of Churches and other religious organizations are providing leadership for the campaign under the direction of Texans Who Care.

Organizers hope to involve at least 15,000 Texas churches of all denominations in the anti-gambling campaign, commented Weston Ware, CLC citizenship associate.

"Churches are our singular most important weapon in this fight," said Sue Cox, executive director of Texans Who Care.

The first of several local organizational meetings for a church-based anti-lottery campaign was slated for Sept. 3 in Dallas.

And in a letter mailed to all Texas Baptist pastors, Ware outlined the strategy for an October church-based campaign against lotteries.

The church-based campaign is one aspect of the overall Texans Who Care plan that includes a network of local grassroots organizations, press conferences, editorial board meetings and targeted broadcast advertisements, he noted.

By Oct. 1, Ware explained, all pastors will receive an anti-lottery campaign packet including sermon resources, church training discussion materials, documented information about lotteries, instructions on mobilizing voters and a request for a one-time offering to help finance the campaign.

August CP gifts up 10 percent

NASHVILLE (BP)—Cooperative Program unified gifts received by the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee for the month of August were up nearly 10 percent compared to last year, according to Harold C. Bennett, Executive Committee president/treasurer.

The August gifts totaled \$12,165,114 for August compared to last year of \$11,106,229, or a 9.53 percent increase of \$1,058,884. The required basic budget monthly figure is \$11,444,377.



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*First Baptist Church
El Dorado, \$23,488*

*Park Hill Baptist Church
North Little Rock, \$21,636*

*Central Baptist Church
Magnolia, \$15,061*

*Geyer Springs First Baptist Church
Little Rock, \$14,653*

*First Baptist Church
Little Rock, \$11,992*

*First Baptist Church
Fort Smith, \$11,066*

*Immanuel Baptist Church
El Dorado, \$10,972*

*Baring Cross Baptist Church
North Little Rock, \$10,514*

*Grand Avenue Baptist Church
Fort Smith, \$10,225*

HIGHEST PER CAPITA GIVING

*Pinnacle Baptist Church
Little Rock, \$48.38*

*First Baptist Church
Sparkman, \$27.24*

*First Baptist Church
El Dorado, \$25.64*

*First Baptist Church
Columbus, \$16.09*

*Bayou Mason Baptist Church
Lake Village, \$14.56*

*First Baptist Church
Stuttgart, \$14.41*

*First Baptist Church
Judsonia, \$13.15*

*Barceloma Road Baptist Church
Hot Springs Village, \$12.96*

*Park Hill Baptist Church
Arkadelphia, \$12.86*

*First Baptist Church
Bella Vista, \$12.14*

HMB HOME MISSION BOARD, SBC

A Southern Baptist Convention agency supported by the Cooperative Program and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering

SOUTHERN SEMINARY

Provost urges 'inclusion'

by Pat Cole
Southern Seminary

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)—Declaring the Southern Baptist Convention denominational battle is over, new Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Provost Larry L. McSwain urged the school to expand its role as an institution of "denominational inclusion."

During Aug. 27 convocation services opening the fall semester at the Louisville, Ky., school, McSwain said anyone who doubts conservatives have won the 12-year fight for control of the SBC should "take a high school course in political science." Still, he maintained Southern Seminary must be a place that includes all Southern Baptists regardless of their theological/political persuasion, educational attainment, economic background, ethnic origin or gender.

The school should pursue a future of "excellence without arrogance," McSwain emphasized. "What must be maintained in this place is the reality that the brightest and most resourceful do have at least one place in this convention, but never as a snobbish elite that excludes any with the willingness to learn."

McSwain, who became provost Aug. 1, formally was installed during convocation by seminary President Roy L. Honeycutt. A member of the Southern Seminary faculty since 1970, McSwain had been dean of

the School of Theology for three years.

McSwain expressed his commitment to implement the "Covenant Renewal" document approved by the seminary's faculty and trustees earlier this year. He insisted the seminary will not sacrifice academic excellence by abiding by the covenant's provision that future faculty openings be filled by conservative evangelical scholars. Rather, he said the covenant can help "broaden the perspectives" of the faculty.

"I have never understood how you can claim academic freedom as a value and exclude conservative views from the educational experience any more than I believe you can claim academic freedom in an institution that refuses to teach its students liberation theology or feminist theology," he said.

The seminary's faculty always has been fully committed to the authority of Scripture, McSwain said. "The covenant spells out what some have misunderstood. This faculty has stood and continues to stand unreserved in its commitment to the full and complete authority of Scripture as the norm for faith and practice."

McSwain described the Southern Seminary classroom as "a marketplace of ideas, where every current of contemporary thought can be explored and where students are challenged to know the theological foundations on which they stand and are given freedom to think for

themselves."

The classroom must remain the central focus of the seminary's mission, he said: "The heart of Southern Seminary is what happens when a professor walks into (the classroom) and begins the magical experience of interaction with a group of students who want to learn. As long as we have that, we can lose everything else and still have a dream."

In addition to traditional learning opportunities, McSwain challenged the seminary to be an "increasingly international" school. New openings in Eastern Europe and the "explosion of Baptist life in Latin America and the Pacific Rim" demand the seminary step up its global awareness, he said.

The seminary must be vigilant to build a nurturing community that cares for itself, McSwain stressed. "The most important understanding of Christian discipleship in every arena of life is that people matter," he said. "The excellence of the Christian life is one with God at the center, self-affirmed as accepted in love by the God who created us and all that exists, and others cared for as equals in God's concern."

During convocation, three professors signed the Abstract of Principles, the seminary's confessional statement since its founding in 1859. Signing the original copy of the document were Leigh Conyer, associate professor of psychology of religion and pastoral care; Craig Loscalzo, assistant professor of Christian preaching; and Jon Rainbow, assistant professor of social work.

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Observe World Hunger Sunday Oct. 13

Arkansas Baptist World Hunger Committee

Moody presidential nominee

Californian 'reluctantly' agrees to SBC nomination

by Herb Hollinger
Baptist Press

NASHVILLE (BP)—Mississippi comedian Jerry Clower will nominate California pastor Jess Moody for president of the Southern Baptist Convention as the result of a campaign begun by an ad hoc group of Florida pastors.

Moody, pastor of Shepherd of the Hills Church in Van Nuys, said he seeks to bring the convention together in what, he termed, may be the "last hope for the Southern Baptist Convention." Moody, 66, was president of the SBC Pastors' Conference in 1965 and an unsuccessful candidate for president in 1966.

Moody said he "reluctantly" agreed to be nominated, would not actively pursue the nomination, and would bow out by December if he felt there were not an enthusiastic response to the announcement.

The ad hoc committee is led by Don Letzring, pastor of Wellswood Baptist Church in Tampa, Fla. In letters sent to Baptist leaders in a number of state conventions, Letzring was identified as chairman of the steering committee of "Convention Effort." The letters, sent in July, indicate Moody would be nominated and gave eight reasons why he could be elected.

According to the letters, Letzring wrote "(1) we are being very low-key. No fighting with any group; (2) we are quietly organizing in every association; (3) we have a nominator par excellence in Jerry Clower; (4) we are going to have large representa-

tion from Tennessee, Kentucky and Virginia; (5) the Fundamentalists are weakening because of their insistence in pastor control of the church;

"(6) for the first time, we are picking up large numbers of very conservative Baptists who have, up to this point, not been involved; (7) we have almost 1,000 retired missionaries who are supporting our efforts; and (8) more churches are going to have their full contingent of messengers in Indianapolis. The laymen and women will be in Indianapolis. This is the key. Our lay people, when they understand what is happening, are for the return."

There is a "mushrooming swell" of people who believe the election in Indianapolis in 1992 can be won, said Letzring. "Despite the feeling of some that our convention is lost to the control of a few," wrote Letzring in the letters.

The letters asked for the names of pastors and laymen to be coordinators for each association.

"There is only one way this will fall and that is for good people to do nothing," wrote Letzring.

Richard Jackson, pastor of North Phoenix Baptist Church in Phoenix, Ariz., was also identified as a candidate from the group for president of the SBC Pastor's Conference. However, he has declined the invitation.

"We are asking thousands of pastors to quietly show up for the Pastor's Conference to vote for Richard and bring the

(conference) back to its original purpose of being a conference where the wide spectrum of preaching is presented and not a 'pep rally' for a particular political agenda," Letzring said in the letters.

Moody went to the California pastorate in 1976 from Florida where he was pastor of First Baptist Church of West Palm Beach. He also founded and was president of Palm Beach Atlantic College, now a part of the Florida Baptist Convention.

BP editor recommended

NASHVILLE (BP)—Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board staff writer Art Toalston, Jr. will be recommended to fill the new position of Editor at Baptist Press, according to Harold C. Bennett, president of the SBC Executive Committee.

Bennett's recommendation, which has been affirmed by the committee's officers, will be considered by the administrative subcommittee of the Executive Committee when it meets Sept. 17 in Nashville.

If approved, Toalston, 40, would begin no later than Jan. 2, 1992.

Toalston has been with the FMB in Richmond, Va. since January 1985 following positions with a number of newspapers as a religion editor/writer.

As staff writer/secular news coordinator at the FMB, Toalston is responsible for coverage of missions news in Europe, the Middle East, North Africa as well as coordinating news releases to secular news media, including television and radio.

Toalston and his wife, Karen, have one child, a daughter born June 19.

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Dad, the Family Shepherd will be held at *Immanuel Baptist Church (Little Rock)*,

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\$45 per man before October 7. Includes two books, lunch, refreshment breaks and follow up newsletter.

For brochure or promotional material call 758-5537.

Drillers needed in Iraq

Recruiting manpower to give Kurds clean water

by Art Toalston

SBC Foreign Mission Board

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—Well-drilling specialists are needed to provide clean water for 10 villages in Iraq where some 35,000 Kurdish refugees have settled.

The specialists should be skilled in operating a rotary drilling rig with mud pumps and in repairing water systems, said Tim Brendle, who heads the Persian Gulf Response Unit of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in Richmond. "The need is urgent," Brendle said. A mud-drilling rig purchased in Turkey with \$125,000 in Southern Baptist relief funds was to be transported into Iraq Aug. 30, he noted. Water systems operated in numerous villages inhabited by Arabs in northern Iraq until the recent Kurdish uprising forced them to flee. They ransacked their water sources as part of their angry exodus. Now displaced Kurds moving into the villages have no clean water.

Minimum commitments of three weeks are needed by the volunteer well drillers, and a series of specialists may be needed for up to six months, Brendle said. The project may expand to provide clean water to more than 100,000 Kurds settling in northern Iraq.

The volunteers will work in two-member teams, assisted by a worker fluent

in English and Kurdish. The specialists also will train Kurdish workers to operate the equipment and ultimately take charge of the project.

Mud-drilling expertise is needed because of sandy soil and stones common to the region and similar to limited parts of the United States.

Two Southern Baptist volunteers — Buddy Kelleit of Simpsonville, S.C., and Ed Brentham of Belton, Texas — helped save a considerable amount of money by negotiating the \$125,000 purchase of the well-drilling equipment in Turkey. Initially, the board had planned to buy it in Texas for \$250,000, along with \$150,000 in related supplies, and airlift it to Iraq. The villages the Kurds are resettling are in a region where thousands of ancestral Kurdish villages were destroyed by the government in a 30-year campaign against the sizable Kurdish minority.

In razing the Kurdish villages, the Iraqi government forced tens of thousands of Kurds into exile from their homeland.

The onslaught also claimed nearly 2,500 mosques and churches, including 13 that were more than 1,000 years old, according to one report. Then the government built new villages of small concrete block houses for Arabs who were transported in from elsewhere in Iraq.

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Fall Information Forum

Saturday, Sept. 21....12:30-3:00 p.m.
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Keynote Address: James Dunn

Director, Baptist Joint Committee for Public Affairs
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- 1) Priesthood of the believer
- 2) Separation of church and state
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Ski Trip—Wanted youth/singles to join existing church group(s) to Crested Butte, Colorado over Thanksgiving. Lots of other locations available for spring break trips! Kimberling Kids Travel, 227-8447. 9/12

Service—20 yrs exp. piano tuner. Central Ark. 1-800-487-8025. 10/10

Wanted—Part-time youth director. Send resume to Marshall Road Baptist Church, P.O. Box 728, Jacksonville, AR 72078. 9/12

Position Available—Part-time Minister of Music wanted. Send resume to First Baptist Church, 201 E. Haywood, England, AR 72046-1843. 10/10

Notice—Evangelist Shelby Bittle may be reached at 362-6135 or 103 W. Quitman St., Heber Springs, AR 72543. 10/10

Attention—Music Directors. Free Demo Tape of original new songs. Sound tracks available in any key desired. Call or write: Carolyn McLean, Rt. 5, Box 378, Hope, AR 71801; 771-1477. 9/12

Position Available—First Baptist Church of Los Alamos New Mexico is seeking a full-time Minister of Education and Youth. Resumes should be sent to: The Minister of Education and Youth Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 2200 Diamond Drive, Los Alamos, NM 87544. 9/28

Position Available—Part-time Music Director. Lead choir and congregational singing. Send resume to Gethsemane Baptist Church, 5301 Summertree, N. Little Rock, AR 72116. 9/12

For Sale—32 Pews 15' long, (2) 6' Prayer benches, (2) 3 1/2' pulpit pews and 1 podium. Will seat over 300 people, \$8,000. Nettleton Baptist Church, Jonesboro, AR. Call 501-932-4960. 9/12

Position Available—Fairfield Bay Baptist Church is seeking a part-time music/youth minister. Interested persons should send resume to Fairfield Bay Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1029, Fairfield Bay, AR 72088. 10/10

Position Available—Minister of Youth wanted. Send resume to First Baptist Church, 201 E. Haywood, England, AR 72046-1843. 10/10

Wanted—Owensville Church, Saline County, Hwy. 5, needs pianist, salary negotiable. Call 221-1764. 9/12

LESSONS FOR LIVING

Convention Uniform

Lystra: Paul and Barnabas

by Bob Parsley, First Church, Dardanelle

Basic passage: Acts 14:1-28

Focal passage: Acts 14:8-18

Central truth: People often misunderstand the work of God.

Healing has been associated with Christianity from the very beginning of the ministry of Jesus (Lk. 4:18-19). It should come as no surprise that the missionaries, Paul and Barnabas, were given the ability to speak of God's healing and demonstrate it on their first journey into the Gentile world. After a wonderful response to the gospel in Iconium, heavy resistance developed there. The missionaries were forced to move on into Lystra. Apparently, there were not enough Jews in Lystra to form a synagogue, so they abandoned their usual practice of beginning outreach in the Jewish house of worship.

In the crowd sat a man who had a congenital crippling disease. Luke was careful to repeat in three different ways that the man had never walked (14:8). This story of healing is similar to the one recorded involving Peter at the Jerusalem temple gate (3:1-8). Paul noticed the intense interest in the lame man's face and saw the faith necessary to be healed. Paul gave the command to stand and immediately the man sprang to his feet, leaping and walking. The ignorant Gentile crowd was very impressed. Paul could not explain divine healing in the same way Peter addressed the temple crowd. The Lystrans called them gods. Their reaction can be understood based on a local legend of their gods coming to visit their country only to be turned away. The people of Lystra were not going to miss their gods again.

Paul and Barnabas could not believe their eyes and tore their clothing in anguish. Paul proclaimed they were merely men with an important message from the one creator God. The people still wanted to make gods of the missionaries because they couldn't comprehend the healing power of God. Healing remains a confusing thing for many people in our modern time. There is a tendency even today to deify the man and forget God. As a sad footnote to this event in Lystra, troublemakers arrived from Iconium and led those who once wanted to enthroned Paul to stone him. Paul and Barnabas were faithful in their witness despite being misunderstood.

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Life and Work

The willingness to pray

by Bob Harper, First Church, White Hall

Basic passage: Matthew 5:43-45, 9:36-38; Luke 22:31-32; 23:33-34

Focal passage: Luke 23:34

Central truth: God never wants us to fall, but to grow fruitful and faithful through our prayer lives.

All of us, as children of God, should keep a list of people and things we are praying for. Taking the time to write down your prayer requests and their answers will become a terrific blessing for you. In our Scripture passage, Jesus is calling us to remember to pray for the needs of others, especially those we are least likely to pray for. It's easy to remember to lift up those needs that are close and dear to us and "convenient" to forget those things in life that irritate us.

But Jesus instructs us to love and pray for those who persecute us. Sometimes that is all we can do, but we should remember that it also is the most important thing we can do! The Illustration of the "fairness" of God in Matthew 5:45 encourages us to be more willing to pray and work to aid the righteous and good forces to overcome the unrighteous and evil ones of our world.

Not only should we pray for those who trouble us, but also for more workers to go into the harvest fields. As God's people become more aware of the needs of others around them, they are often encouraged to help meet that need. Jesus prayed for Simon to have a faith that would not fail, so he could turn back and strengthen his brothers. Our missionaries realize the importance of praying for the laborers and the harvest and are constantly calling on us to pray as the number one source of aid for them. If all of us could get a sense of the urgency of the harvest, and the willingness of these who want to discover Christ for themselves, it would strongly encourage us in our prayer lives to ask God for more laborers. And we would certainly want him to begin with sending us to our respective mission field.

The best example of our need to pray for others is found in Luke 22:34. What a forgiving, caring attitude Jesus left for us to follow! If we would maintain this type of attitude in our own hearts, reconciliation would often be achieved. Jesus had a forgiving attitude toward those who were sinners—we must do the same!

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Bible Book

God encourages his servant

by R.V. Haygood, First Church, Garfield

Basic passage: 1 Kings 19

Focal passage: 1 Kings 19:1-12, 15-19

Central truth: God is at work even when we see nothing happening.

Elijah was discouraged. He had just exercised great faith and risked death by a personal, direct challenge of the prophets of Baal. God had responded by sending fire from heaven. Elijah had completed the victory by killing all of the prophets of Baal. When Queen Jezebel heard this, she threatened his life.

Acting impulsively, Elijah ran for his life. He traveled into the wilderness far to the south, crawled under a juniper tree in defeat, and asked to die. He had been completely drained of strength, first, by the spiritual battle and then by the journey. It was there God sent an angel with food and water and allowed time for sleep (vv. 5-8a). One cannot work out spiritual problems very successfully when physically exhausted.

God then provided the spiritual help Elijah needed. He was led to Horeb, the mountain where God had spoken to his people through Moses. It is often necessary for us to draw away from the stressful situations of everyday life before we can hear what God wants to say to us and regain our spiritual perspective.

It was in this holy place, alone in the presence of God, that God asked Elijah to define his problem. Elijah expressed his disillusionment. He had exercised great faith and served God wholeheartedly while all others had turned from him. Now, he was the only one left and felt defeated. The implication is that God's cause would fail if Elijah were to be killed.

God answered Elijah with a spectacular display of his power in a raging storm, an earthquake, and a fire. No doubt, Elijah was excited and expected God to speak through these things. He did not. Rather, he spoke in a still, small voice. Elijah needed to learn that the real victory is not won by fire coming down from heaven, but in quiet, unostentatious ways as God works in individual lives.

Elijah was not going to be allowed to give up in defeat. God informed him that there were 7,000 others who were still faithful and sent him back to anoint the leaders who would succeed him.

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Lesson
Date: Sept. 29

LESSONS FOR LIVING

Convention Uniform

Overcoming differences

by Bob Parsley, First Church, Dardenelle

Basic passage: Acts 15:1-35

Focal passage: Acts 15:1-12

Central truth: Problems between Christians can be resolved with the love of God.

The agreement to allow Gentile believers into the Christian family was crucial and pivotal to the spread of the gospel in the first century. The compromise came with much effort and prayer when leaders from Antioch and Jerusalem met to resolve the thorny issue of keeping the Jewish traditions in the Christian era. Perhaps legalistic Jewish Christians thought converted Gentiles would dominate the faith begun by a Jewish rabbi named Jesus of Nazareth. If Gentile men had been forced to submit to circumcision, then a division would have cut the young church into two pieces.

The entire church was represented and key leaders spoke of the controversy. Peter's speech expressed freedom from the law in a bold way. He stated emphatically that all are saved by the grace of Jesus Christ (v. 11). Paul and Barnabas told of their experiences on the mission field. They made a convincing testimony of the power of God at work among Gentiles with whom they worked (v. 12).

James, the half brother of Jesus and leader of the church at Jerusalem, presided over the entire meeting. He concluded that the Gentiles should not be troubled or hindered from following God with Jewish tradition (v. 19). There remained the practical issue of fellowship. How could Gentile and Jewish Christians continue their partnership in the gospel with their differences?

A letter was composed and sent to the Gentile believers which outlined the compromise agreed to by the leaders at Jerusalem. It was received with great joy in Antioch (vv. 30-35). The four items the Gentiles were asked to do were: (1) forbidden to eat meat offered to idols; (2) forbidden to engage in immoral sexual acts; (3) forbidden to eat meat from strangled animals; and (4) forbidden to eat blood. These last two stressed the Jewish ideal of life being a part of the blood of created things. The great lessons of this event are all come to Christ by faith alone and that Christians can work out even the most troubling differences we have.

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Life and Work

God's power will never fail

by Bob Harper, First Church, White Hall

Basic passage: Matthew 26:36-46

Focal passage: Matthew 26:41

Central truth: A sustained prayer life is an essential ingredient to a successful Christian life.

Common sense has taught us that when a telephone rings there is another person (or machine) on the other end of the line that wants to share some information with us. Thus, when a telephone rings close by to us, we all will respond in some fashion. We are either eager to talk or somewhat reluctant.

Our prayer lives can be illustrated quite effectively with the use of a phone. One end of the phone is for talking, and the other is for listening. This same principle is true in prayer. We must be willing to talk and listen to God.

In this passage of Scripture there are many great biblical truths, but for our lesson we want to focus on the strength we gain from God in prayer. The Scripture points out that as Jesus was verifying the will of God for this high hour of his life, he asked all his disciples to sit with him and pray. Then he picked Peter, James, and John to pray with him for this overwhelming burden. Men who had fished all night could surely pray with the Master for one hour! But they fell asleep!

The response of Jesus in discovering them sleeping teaches us a great lesson about falling asleep in our own prayer lives.

When we fail to watch and pray, we limit the power God can give us for our lives. The problem is not that God runs short on strength, but rather that we fail to capitalize on what God is really offering to us everyday through prayer. God never fails us, but we fail to stay in touch with him.

In this Scripture, we see the beauty of the Master as he seeks out the will of God and follows it, and we also see the confidence that Jesus gains through sincere communication with the Father. Because of his preparation in the garden Jesus is the one in control of the coming events.

The example of God's power in Jesus' life proves that God will never fail. He will always strengthen us as we communicate with him. Falling asleep physically is one of the best "rests" we will ever gain, yet falling asleep spiritually will be devastating.

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Bible Book

Ahab refused the Lord

by R.V. Haygood, First Church, Garfield

Basic passage: 1 Kings 20:1-22:38

Focal passage: 1 Kings 20:1, 13, 20-23, 42-43; 21:16-21a; 22:37-38

Central truth: God has universal power and we must respond to him in obedience or face judgement.

Ben-Hadad, King of Syria, threatened to annihilate Israel (1 K. 20:1-13). A prophet came to Ahab, king of Israel, and predicted that God would deliver the far superior army of Ben-Hadad into Ahab's hands as proof to Ahab that he is the Lord.

Israel's army attacked and inflicted heavy losses upon Ben-Hadad's army, but the king escaped with some of his horsemen. The Syrian king's officials explained their defeat by saying, "Their gods are gods of the hills; therefore they were stronger than we; but let us fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they" (1 K. 20:23). So Ben-Hadad rebuilt his army and prepared to attack again.

The conflict was no longer a test of the strength of one army of men over another. It was a test of the power of the Lord God of Israel over the false gods of the Syrians. God said, "Because the Syrians have said, he is not God of the valleys... I will deliver all this great multitude into thine hand, and ye shall know that I am the Lord" (1 K. 20:28). Although Israel was vastly outnumbered, they killed 100,000 of the Syrians. The rest fled to the city of Aphek, where a wall fell on 27,000 others. God proved himself to have universal power by accomplishing that which was humanly impossible.

Ben-Hadad was defeated, but Ahab made a treaty with him and set him free. God then sent his prophet to Ahab with the message that his life and the lives of his people would be taken because he had set free a man whom God had determined should be utterly destroyed (1 K. 20:35-41). Ahab refused to recognize the the one true God and serve him obediently.

Ahab responded to this by becoming sullen and angry and continued his life of rebellion and sin. God sent Elijah to repeat the message of destruction "because thou has sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord" (1 K. 21:17-21a). A little more than three years later, Ahab was killed in battle and the dogs licked up his blood as God had said (1 K. 21:19; 22:37-38).

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SOVIET UNION

Religious freedom boost?

by Erich Bridges
SBC Foreign Mission Board

MOSCOW (BP)—The failure of communist hard-liners to destroy the Soviet Union's move toward democracy will give religious freedom there another major boost, observers believe.

Soviet Baptist leaders in Moscow were "ecstatic" about the collapse of the coup Aug. 22, according to Southern Baptist missionary George Lozuk, who participated in an impromptu prayer meeting at Moscow Baptist offices that day.

As the takeover attempt was crumbling a day earlier, Soviet Baptists issued a statement to world Baptists asking for prayer and calling for continued "liberalization and democratization" in the country. They also asked for prayers that they could avoid bloodshed and civil war, return to stability, continue in growth of religious freedom and show boldness to preach the gospel.

Russian Orthodox leaders were demanding, meanwhile, that the new leaders allow Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev to address the nation. Aleksey II, Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church, questioned the legitimacy of the coup leaders and called on Soviet soldiers to "restrain themselves" as they confronted citizens in Moscow.

"God is with you!" declared dissident priest Gleb Yakunin, now a Russian Parliament member, to citizens protecting the parliament building.

When the coup failed, believers joined other citizens in celebration. "I just saw on the TV a great gathering at Red Square with (Russian President Boris) Yeltsin," reported Southern Baptist missionary Veda Rae Lozuk Aug. 22 from Moscow. "The Russian Orthodox leader was there, and he was

praising God and telling the people it was God's will that Russia was going to be free."

One thing is sure, Soviet Baptists believe: the churches will never return to the old days of repression.

"The church leaders have told us in times past that it's gone so far, the freedom they've given the church, that (the communists) can never take that away again," Lozuk said. "There is the freedom to organize churches. There is the freedom to worship. Young people are in the churches now. I don't know what else the Lord might have in store for us."

The rule of law in the Soviet Union has gained profound strength with the coup's collapse, and the law now guarantees religious freedom. The transfer of power from the Soviet central government to the 15 republics also will accelerate in the wake of the failed coup. That trend could aid religious believers as well, according to Isam Ballenger, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's vice president for Europe, the Middle East and North Africa.

"If the republics come to have authority over church relations, then there could be several developments, some of them good and some of them bad," Ballenger said. "Certainly in the more western republics this could be a good development—freedom in the Baltic states and the Ukraine. It could be disadvantageous for (Christians) in the Islamic republics. There's a good bit of tension in some of these republics against the minority Russians (who are associated with Russian Orthodox Christianity by Muslims).

Further, with more freedom and the potential collapse of the Communist Party, Christianity will have new competitors in the Soviet marketplace of ideas: Islam, other religions and cults, the appeal of Western materialism.

"I don't think it's going to be completely smooth sailing ahead for us," Ballenger said. "It never has been for the church as far as that goes. So where communism will decline in influence and perhaps even be removed completely, there will be other barriers and hurdles to overcome. We've got a lot of work to do ahead of us. But it's an exciting time. The developments are extraordinary."

Three days that shook the world

MOSCOW (BP)—How does it feel to be in Moscow during what may be the most important days since the 1917 communist revolution?

"It feels kind of amazing to be right here, like you can't really comprehend everything that's going on," admitted Southern Baptist missionary Veda Rae Lozuk in an Aug. 22 telephone interview.

Lozuk and her husband, George, the son of Russian and Polish immigrants to the United States, were Southern Baptists' first missionaries assigned to the Soviet Union. The Lozuks of Fort Worth and Corpus Christi, Texas, arrived in Moscow earlier this year to work with Soviet Baptists, hardly realizing tanks would roll through the streets before summer's end in a failed attempt to overthrow Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and his reforms.

"We asked a friend who was over at our house yesterday, 'Has there ever been a thing like this in the history of Russia?' And he said, 'No, nothing like this, where the people surrounded a leader they loved (Russian President Boris Yeltsin) and wouldn't let the army get to him.'" Lozuk related. "This is a tremendous thing."

The Lozuks joined Russian believers at a small Baptist church Aug. 19, the first full day of the coup attempt, to pray. No

one knew exactly what would happen at that moment, but the future looked bleak. But the Christians praying in that small church weren't afraid.

"They just said, 'Let's worship God, let's continue,'" Lozuk reported. "They were resigned to what was happening and yet there was a determination—a resignation and determination at the same time, if you can imagine that—on the faces of the people, that they're going on."

Some Russian Baptists joined Russian Orthodox believers and tens of thousands of other citizens outside the Russian parliament building where Boris Yeltsin defied hard-line coup leaders and their tanks, she said.

"All of these 150,000 people just gathered around, and I think it was a tremendous testimony of wanting their self-determination. They had elected him, and they wanted him to serve."

When the tanks rolled out of Moscow and the people had won the day, "joy and thankfulness to the Lord" broke out among Russian Christians, she added. Her husband, who met with Soviet Baptist leader Gregori Komendant at the Moscow Baptist offices Aug. 22, said the Baptist leadership is "ecstatic" about the triumph of democracy and new opportunities for spreading the gospel.

**Beware of
aid requests**

Any church or person receiving requests for money to ball a foreign missionary out of an emergency situation should contact the SBC Foreign Mission Board. A variety of names and fictitious emergency situations have been used. An Arkansas church was contacted during August, and fortunately investigated the claim, which proved to be fraudulent. In the event of such a request, contact the SBC Foreign Mission Board at 1-800-999-3113 or 804-353-0151.

Subscriber Services

The *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* offers subscription plans at three rates:

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Missionary Notes

David and Suzanne Adams, Baptist representatives to Germany, have arrived on the field to begin their first term to service (address: Deutsch Herenstr. 73, 5300 Bonn 2, Federal Republic of West Germany). He considers Rogers his hometown. The former Suzanne Heifner, she considers Kirkwood, Mo., her hometown. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1991.

Clarence and Alta Allison, missionaries since 1960, have retired from active missionary service. They served in Tanzania, Kenya, France, South Africa and in Botswana since 1982. They are natives of Arkansas. He was born in Walnut Ridge and lived there and in surrounding communities while growing up. She is the former Alta Brasell of Pine Bluff. They may be addressed at OBU, Box 3749, Arkadelphia, AR 71923.

Jim and Louise Brillhart, missionaries to Togo, are in the States (address: 601 S. Hughes, Little Rock, AR 72205). Both consider Little Rock, their hometown. She is the former Louise Bowen. They were appointed in 1986.

John and Claudia Brown, missionaries to Mozambique, are on the field (address: Rua Castanheira No. 24, Maputo, Mozambique). A native of Arkansas, he was born in Pine Bluff and considers Star City his hometown. The former Claudia Tenney, she considers Jackson, Miss., her hometown. They were appointed in 1987.

Charles and Nancy Browning, representatives to Jordan, are on the field (address: Box 1, Ajloun, Jordan). He is a native of Judsonia, and she is the former Nancy Woodward of Lonoke. They were appointed in 1983.

Calvin and Margaret Fox, missionaries to the Philippines, are on the field (address: Box 94, Davao City, Philippines 8000). They are natives of Arkansas. He is from Gentry, and she is the former Margaret Cotton of Paris. They were appointed in 1967.

James and Kathryn Ingram, missionaries to France, are on the field (address: 3 Rue Honore de Balzac, LeVald'Or, 91160 Longjumeau, France). He is a native of Virginia. The former Kathryn Wadley of Arkansas, she was born in Paragould and considers Searcy her hometown. They were appointed in 1989.

WORLD

Gregory and Jackie Meeks, missionaries to Taiwan, are in the States (address: 1402 Linden, Denton, TX 76201). They are natives of Arkansas. He was born in Arkadelphia and considers Hot Springs his hometown. She is the former Jackie Hunter of Paragould. They were appointed in 1981.

Dennis and Nita Murray, Baptist representative to Israel, are in the States (address: 2400 Callon Rd. 37, El Dorado, AR 71730). They are natives of Arkansas. He was born in Arkadelphia, and she, the former Bonita Pettus, in Magnolia. Both consider El Dorado their hometown. They were appointed in 1985.

Gary and Pamela Nipper, missionaries to Senegal, are in the States (address: Geyer Springs FBC, Mission House, 5805 W. 56th St., Little Rock, AR 72209). A native of Arkansas, he was born in Clarendon and considers Beebe his hometown. The former Pamela Stark, she considers Heber Springs her hometown. They were appointed in 1987.

Hugh and Brenda Provost, Baptist representatives to Yemen are in the States (address: 2017 Howard Dr., Pine Bluff, AR 71603). He was born in Jonesboro, and lived in West Memphis while growing up. She is the former Brenda Bryles of Pine Bluff. They were appointed in 1981.

Hugh and Debbie Redmon, missionaries to Venezuela, are in the States (address: First Baptist Church, 1719 Robinson, Conway, AR 72032). He is the son of Southern Baptist missionaries in Costa Rica; she is the daughter of missionaries to the Ivory Coast. They were appointed in 1984.

John and Jeanie Seale, missionaries to Brazil, are on the field (address: Caixa Postal 4752, 40.162 Salvador, BA, Brazil). He was born in Hope. She is the former Jeanie Cates of Texas. They were appointed in 1986.

Cynthia Ashcraft, Baptist representative to Yemen, has arrived on the field to begin her first term of service (address: Box 70080, Ibb, Yemen). A native of Arkansas, she was born in Pine Bluff and considers White Hall her hometown. She was appointed in 1990.

Emmett and La Nell Barnes, Baptist representatives living in Cyprus, are in the States (address: 822 W. Washington, Jonesboro, AR 72401). He is a native of Missouri. She is the former La Nell Taylor of Monnetie. They were appointed in 1966.

Robert and Nancy Calvert, missionaries to Kenya, are on the field (address: P.O. Box 47735, Nairobi, Kenya). He is a native of Little Rock and she is the former Nancy Felts of Georgia. They were appointed in 1990.