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September 26, 1991

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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Arkansas Baptist



Where God is

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Vol. 90, No. 20

September 26, 1991

COVER STORY

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PraiSing!

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Arkansas Baptist

At a glance

8 Where would God be? Go find him there!
 "Jesus' life is our greatest example of how to live. His mission was to seek and save the lost, and often caring for their hurt bodies or broken spirits had to come first," says Tommy Goode, director of ABSC Church and Community Ministries. "Since we are Christ's body, we are here to carry on his work." This is the role of Christian Social Ministries. How to find, assess and deal with the needs are examined, as well as a model ministry in central Arkansas.

12 Girls, Gospel, Guatemala
 "Even though the girls (Acteens Activators) couldn't speak Spanish and most of the Guatemalan people couldn't speak English, we had a special bond of fellowship because we all serve the same God," declared Angela Lowe, Arkansas Acteens director. Five Acteens Activators and two adult leaders accompanied Lowe to Guatemala City July 5-14 in conjunction with the Arkansas-Guatemala partnership and Acteen Activators Abroad program.

14 'I will never leave thee'
 The familiar passage from Hebrews, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee," sustained Margaret Robertson of Dumas as her husband hung between life and death awaiting a heart transplant. Ken Robertson, former missionary to Senegal, West Africa, Army chaplain, and more recently a prison chaplain, suffered a massive heart attack in January virtually destroying his own coronary function. An artificial heart kept him alive until a suitable donor heart could be acquired. People around the world prayed for Robertson, and some Arkansas churches were praying around the clock during difficult days.

19 PraiSing!
 Southern Baptists have a lot to sing about these days. That's the opinion of Mark Blankenship, a member of the committee that chose the selections for the newest version of *The Baptist Hymnal*. Blankenship recently was in the state to lead PraiSings at Central Church, Jonesboro, and Second Church, Little Rock. He explained, "It's more into the melting pot of what Southern Baptist interests are. And I think this is the finest songbook ever produced by Southern Baptists, probably by any evangelical group."

1992 SBC Housing Form

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Cover story

Christian Life Commission photo



World Hunger 5

Observance of World Hunger Sunday is Oct. 13. Two realities collide in the war against hunger. One is fatigue; the other is the witness of Scripture. Compassion burnout is a common problem in the fight against hunger, but the Bible's message is crystal clear that the people of God are to care for the hungry. Let us renew our commitment to be faithful and make a world of difference in a hungry world.

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The rewards of work

J. EVERETT SNEED

"Work, work, work is all I ever do. If I ever manage to get rich, I'll never work again. Oh, how I wish I had more schooling so I wouldn't have to work."

How often have you heard these statements? They seem to imply that work is only for the stupid, ignorant or cursed. In reality none of these concepts are true.

Unfortunately, some adhere to the old idea that a lifetime of hard labor was the curse that God placed on Adam in the Garden of Eden. Even prior to the fall of man, God expected Adam to usefully employ himself. "And the Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it" (Ge. 2:15).

The Scripture further assures us that God had anticipated the labors of man before he created mankind. "... For the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground" (Ge. 2:5). No sooner had man come to life in the Garden of Eden, than God took him into his confidence and revealed his divine purpose for man's life, which was to "subdue" and "replenish" and to "have dominion over" everything on the earth.

It is noteworthy that God indicated this devotion to duty through his own personal example. "And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made" (Ge. 2:2). The formula of six parts toll and one part rest was divinely inspired.

It should be further remembered that man was made in God's image. Since God labored to provide a home for mankind, everyone is expected to do his part in securing the well being of himself and others. Though sin certainly did take the joy out of serving, work is not the result of disobedience. Rather, it is the means by which man relates himself to his maker.

Psychologists assure us that work of the right type and amount is, actually, therapeutic. The problem, then, is not with the job but with one's attitude toward it.

God intended that, through services to others, man would enjoy a sense of partnership with the Lord in his labors. Thus, the farmer, as he coaxes new life from the soil, is only one of many co-laborers who help to make man's life on earth a pleasant and rewarding experience.

It is imperative that everyone who feels his service is good give an honest measure for the price. Christ was employed as a



carpenter until he was 30 years of age. It would have been unthinkable for our Savior to have devoted less than his best to his labors.

The Scriptures tell us in Proverbs 16:3 that we are to commit our work to the

Lord. Again, we read, "And the king shall answer and say unto them, verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Mt. 25:40).

The Apostle Paul, both by word and example, taught a strong work ethic. In addressing servants (slaves), Paul admonished them to give an honest day of work. He said, "Servants, be obedient unto them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; Not with eye service, as men please; but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart" (Eph. 6:5-6).

This Scripture should not be interpreted as condoning slavery. However, the principle for today's world is that Christians are to give an honest day's work to their employers.

The apostle, also, personally demonstrated a strong work ethic. Paul was proud that he never was a burden to any person or church. He supported himself as a tentmaker. In the New Testament era every man who was trained as a rabbi, also learn-

ed a secular trade. This assured that the rabbi was acquainted with the problems and joys of the people he served.

The fact that Paul usually supported himself through his labor does not mean that ministers of the gospel are supposed to support themselves through secular employment. On the contrary, Paul said, "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel" (1 Co. 9:14).

Finally, it should be emphasized that man's vocation is not to occupy the whole of his earthly existence. Even as work is to be a part of every man's life-style, so is rest. Under the Mosaic Law, all labor was to cease on the Sabbath Day and everybody and every animal was to enjoy a day of rest.

The responsibility to place each area in its proper perspective is essential for the well balanced Christian. The family must work, play, rest, and worship together if they are to secure happiness and please God.

Perhaps one of the most difficult readjustments many Americans will have to make in the near future will be the proper use of leisure time. As shorter work weeks become a reality, many will have to reorientate themselves.

We must realize that man is not measured by his intellectual attainment, skill, fame, or compiled wealth, but by proper investment of his time under God. An old proverb conveys the ideal well: "One day for Jesus 'twill soon be passed. Only what is done for Christ will last."

The rich man in Luke 12 learned this lesson too late. As God said, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then who shall those things be, which thou hast possessed?"

Arkansas Baptist

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

Colleen Backus Production Manager
 Diane Fowler Production Artist (part-time)
 Erwin L. McDonald, Litt. D. Editor Emeritus

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DON MOORE

You'll Be Glad To Know



It is so easy for us to take for granted things that have become so familiar. We do it with family members. We do it with church leadership, and yes, we do it with church ministries and programs. Because Sunday School and Discipleship Training have been around a long time, we give halfhearted attention and support to them. All of the time they have been making most significant contributions to us and to our families. It may be even more true that the Cooperative Program has come to be taken for granted.

Can it be that the chief resource for home and foreign mission support would come to be ignored, neglected, and even misconstrued and abused? For a people who have come to be known as a missions people to come to the place of slighting the means by which they have come to that reputation, is truly shocking and regrettable.

My appeal to each of us is that we consider making October a month of education and emphasis on the Cooperative Program. We have numerous information pieces that could be used. From a sermon on the scriptural basis for the Cooperative Program, to Missionary Moments during the offertory, and an exact breakdown of where each dollar of the church's offering goes—these can be made available to you.

Southern Baptist churches are not only giving a smaller percent than ever to the Cooperative Program, for the first 10 months of the fiscal year they are giving a smaller dollar amount than the year before. It is not because Southern Baptists do not care. It is because they do not know enough about the Cooperative Program to be ardent supporters. The kingdom is being very negatively impacted because we have not been boldly leading our people. Let me challenge you to help your church make a difference. Help them to become knowledgeable and aggressive in mission support. I've never known a church to be weakened in local evangelism or financial strength from over-doing mission support.

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

Letters to the Editor

Not ordination

Ms. Carolyn Miller, new WMU president, needs corrected in her stated position of women and ordination in the SBC (ABN, 8-1-91).

It is one thing to believe in women being ordained as pastors; but it is quite another to say or insinuate that the Bible teaches it. Miller states that the SBC went backwards in 1984 when messengers passed a resolution "On Ordination and the Role of Women in Ministry." The resolution became necessary when people were not willing to accept what the Bible clearly teaches.

Miller states that God's original idea at creation was "that of a partnership" bet-

ween the sexes and that "Jesus involved women in all that he did" and "overruled the traditional culture which made women second class." But none of this has anything to do with pastoral ordination. It is very interesting and significant that Jesus did not choose a single woman as an Apostle.

Though some rant and rave about being put down by men, the truth of the matter is that the Bible does not allow for pastoral ordination of women. I know this is not "political correctness" and may be "religious culture," but, above all (even though many do not like it), it is biblical. There is no way that one can stretch the meaning of Paul in 1 Timothy 3:2 to include or mean a woman. There may be

'ONE for ALL—Sharing the Bible'

October is Cooperative Program Month

Many churches observe Cooperative Program Month in October. "ONE for ALL—Sharing the Bible" is the theme for Cooperative Month this year. The objective is to enable all Southern Baptists to cooperatively and more effectively witness to a lost world.

Cooperative Program Month is highlighted by a special church event scheduled for the last Sunday in October. The church event features a Cooperative Program Dedication Service and Parade of Flags.

The purpose of this event involves helping churches to focus on:

- The countries of the world and the states in the United States where Southern Baptist missionaries are serving.

- The church's financial support of missions through the Cooperative Program and the dedication of these funds.

- The importance of praying for missionaries.

- The need for continued personal commitment as partners in ministry.

The event takes place in a regular worship service and features a parade of flags, a responsive reading, giant Cooperative Program check, prayer for missionaries, a Cooperative Program testimony, special music and a suggested Cooperative Program mission support sermon.

The giant Cooperative Program check will serve as a dramatic portrayal of how much money the congregation gives through the Cooperative Program to sup-

port missions. The check also serves as a symbol of all the money given by the church for that year and years to come.

The parade of flags will remind church members of how many foreign countries have Southern Baptist missionaries or mission work. Members will also see how many states have home missionaries as represented by the state flags. The parade of flags will also serve as a reminder of how many countries do not have a Southern Baptist witness.

The suggested responsive reading allows the congregation to make a commitment or renew a commitment to support mission efforts supported through the Cooperative Program. "Missionary Moments" will be used in the prayer time to highlight one missionary and his work that is supported by Cooperative Program gifts.

The suggested sermon is entitled "Partners in Ministry," and the Scripture text is Romans 15:22-23. The sermon reminds the congregation of the purpose that holds Baptists together—missions. It also emphasizes that cooperation is necessary for Baptists to accomplish our mission goals. The sermon concludes with a call to commitment that requires vision and expresses itself in giving.

More information and materials for conducting Cooperative Program Month and the special church event are available from the Baptist Building, associate executive director's office.

legitimate argument over "wives of deacons" or "deaconesses" in 3:11, but verse 2—no!

Most people recognize the difference between a preacher and a pastor and an evangelist and a pastor. Every Christian is to be a proclaimer of the gospel. To speak or preach before a group should be the privilege of any Christian. Obviously, one needs the approval of the group. The problem with Scripture comes when those who speak begin to demand ordination. If ordination is the setting apart or appointing to special task, then every person whom God calls to "full-time special service" has the right to ordination—but not pastoral ordination. Ordination to the ministry (whatever the form) is as justifiable as pastoral ordination, but they

are not the same thing.—Herbert L. Stout, Mountainburg

No neutral law

I just received a letter from James Dunn of the Baptist Joint Committee. I believe most pastors in the SBC have also received a copy. Dunn wants the Southern Baptist Convention to know the BJC is still alive and will still be representing us, though the SBC no longer supports them. His letter disturbed me for the following reasons.

First, Dunn does not realize that Baptists have never supported a government which was antagonistic toward Christianity. For us, freedom does not mean that Christians remain silent while the government en-

courages the destruction of Christianity. Dunn referred to Isaac Backus and Roger Williams. They fought to preserve the freedom to be Christians. Dunn does not seem to realize we are in another battle for the same freedom today.

Second, Dunn includes an article by Hugh Wamble which reeks of unfounded innuendo. Wamble accuses the Christian Life Commission of supporting an accommodation between church and state. He strongly implies that the CLC, if it had its way, would approve having an ambassador to the Vatican, make Jerry Falwell an official spokesman for Baptists to the government, and accept government monitoring of church expenditures and spiritual activities. This appears to be libel. None of these accusations are documented. In some cases documentation directly contradicts his claims. Dunn and Wamble ought to apologize for these statements.

Further, Wamble's arguments reveal he stands with those who have systematically stripped Christians of their religious freedom over the last 50 years. Neither Wamble nor Dunn seems to understand that all law is an expression of someone's morality and religious beliefs. There is no neutral law. Consequently, the term "neutral" as used by Wamble becomes a smokescreen for anti-Christian laws.

Baptists have realized that Dunn and his ilk, under the guise of neutrality, have opposed Christ's cause. I pray for the day when no Baptist, and no state convention, will continue to fund the BJC's attempts to put a knife in the back of religious freedom.—Shafer Parker Jr., Marion

WORLD HUNGER SUNDAY OCT. 13

Realities in the war on hunger

"You shall open wide your hand."

(Dt. 15:11, RSV)

Two realities collide in the war against hunger. One is fatigue; the other is the witness of Scripture.

Compassion burnout or hunger fatigue is a common problem which human beings face in the daily battle to feed the hungry and to help the hungry feed themselves.

Christian foot soldiers in the war on hunger often become discouraged. Some have been involved literally at every level; others have worked in only one kind of anti-hunger effort. Through soup kitchens, night shelters, home building projects, letter-writing campaigns and monthly contributions, many Christians have faithfully sought to care for the hungry at home and abroad.

These Christians have done so much; they know so much more needs to be done. Sometimes their needs to be done wanes. They stop giving to support the hunger ministries of the Foreign and Home Mission boards. They drop out of mission action projects. They simply want the hungry to go away.

The second reality is the Bible's crystal-clear message that the people of God are to care for the hungry. The Old Testament makes this point with the anti-hunger strategies known as the law of gleaning (Lv. 19:9-10, Dt. 24:19-21, and Ru. 2:2-23) and the sabbatical year (Dt. 15:1-18). The New Testament highlights both interchurch (Acts 11:27-30, Ga. 2:10, Ro. 15:22-33) and intrachurch (Acts 2:44-45 and 6:1-7) hunger ministries.

Nowhere, however, is the message more unmistakable than in the words of Jesus.

Moving through the countryside, Jesus attracted large crowds among whom were many poor and handicapped (Mt. 15:30). The inability of these people to feed themselves bothered the disciples. The disciples even went to Jesus to persuade him to send them away. "Send the crowd away, to go into the villages and country round about, to lodge and get provisions," they urged.

Jesus replied, "You give them something to eat."

The disciples claimed they had too few resources for such a large crowd. Jesus ignored their arguments. He wanted the people fed (Lk. 9:10-17).

His statement is a reminder of another in the Old Testament, "You shall open wide your hand" (Dt. 15:11).

We, too, live in a hungry world. We, too, may see the needs as too great and our resources as too few. We grow tired of the task. But like the early disciples, we know that the biblical imperative requires that we find ways to feed the hungry and to help the hungry feed themselves.

Let us renew our commitment to be faithful to the witness of Scripture on World Hunger Day. Let us observe World Hunger Day in our churches. Let us make a world of difference in a hungry world!

This theme interpretation was produced by the staff of the SBC Christian Life Commission.

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LEGALIZED LOTTERY: LAST OF THREE INSTALLMENTS

Help reject a state lottery

On June 24 of this year, Attorney General Winston Bryant certified a proposed initiative constitutional amendment that would, if adopted by voters, repeal the state constitution's prohibition against a state-run lottery. 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.

The following are ways in which you can help reject a state lottery:

(1) Alert your pastor, family, friends, associates and co-workers that lottery supporters will be soliciting signatures on petitions. Encourage them not to sign the peti-

tion and to suggest the same to those within their sphere of influence.

(2) Call or write your state senator and representative and state your opposition to the lottery and encourage them not to sponsor or support any legislation that would establish a lottery, if in the next general election the voters adopt the amendment repealing the constitution's prohibition of the lottery.

(3) Attempt to inform the public about the need to reject the lottery by:

(a) Writing letters to the editor of your local newspaper(s).

(b) Asking your local Christian radio station(s) to run public service announcements about the lottery.

(c) Requesting that you or someone you can recruit be given time to address community or civic groups.

(4) Call or write the Christian Civic Foundation for copies of a Sunday School lesson entitled "Love Your Neighbor," which addresses the issue of the lottery. The address is 8300 Geyer Springs Road, Suite 201, Little Rock, AR 72209.

(5) Most importantly, we should pray that the Church will take a firm stand and defeat the lottery. It is felt by many that if we can beat it one more time, it will not be back. So pray, for we firmly believe James 5:16: "The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much."—**Larry Page, director, Christian Civic Foundation**

Bold Mission Prayer Thrust

Answered Prayer:

—Paul Roaten has been approved by the Executive Board as the new director of the Hope Migrant Mission Center. He will begin his ministry Nov. 1 pending appointment by the SBC Home Mission Board.

—Thanks for praying for the Acteens Activators Abroad team, who served in Guatemala City, July 5-14. The team consisted of five Acteens and three leaders from seven Arkansas churches.

Thank God for 650 girls and women who participated in WMU summer camp events at Camp Paron.

Thank God for three new Hispanic Ministries in Lowell, Rogers, and Siloam Springs that have been started by Manuel Villegas since June 1, 1991.

Prayer requests:

—Pray for preschool workers in Arkansas who will participate in the Mission Friends Leaders' Super Saturday, Nov. 9, that they will be trained, equipped, challenged, motivated and encouraged as they lead Mission Friends.

—Pray that the GAs who attended camp this summer will continue to seek an awareness and understanding of what God is doing in the World Missions through Southern Baptist Missions.

—Pray for the ONE for ALL Cooperative Program emphasis that begins this fall in many churches. Pray that God will use this emphasis to challenge churches to envision mission support through the Cooperative



Program.

—Pray for churches planning budgets for 1992 that mission support through the Cooperative Program will receive much prayer and attention.

—Pray for the Guatemala City emphasis *Hay Esperanza* (Here's Hope). The city has been divided into four sections with each having simultaneous evangelistic campaigns. Pray that God will lead 10 teams to respond to Guatemala for March 23-31; nine teams for June 22-30; and 10 teams for Sept. 14-22, 1992. Each team will include one preacher and two or three others to testify and witness.

—Pray for the city-wide campaign in Guatemala City, Oct. 29-Nov. 4, 1992. Nilson Fanlinic from Brazil will be the evangelist.

—Pray for the International Student Retreat at Camp Paron, Nov. 8-10 as students from 30 different countries attend. May God's Holy Spirit speak to their hearts during the retreat.

—Pray for a good dependable van for Hispanic work in DeQueen to be used to provide transportation for persons to attend church and Bible study.

TEACH THE BIBLE TO WIN

'Breakthrough to People'

"... Teach the Bible to Win" is a Bold Mission Thrust emphasis that prepares Sunday School workers to launch the 1991-92 year with a focus on teaching the Bible to win the lost. The plan combines Sunday School Preparation Week and October Outreach Month into one coordinated effort to launch a Breakthrough year in Sunday School work.

The prayer concerns are:

—that Sunday School workers will prepare to witness using God's Word.

—that Sunday School workers will faithfully study the Bible.

"Breakthrough to People" is a Bold Mission Thrust emphasis containing visitation promotions to be used to enhance the ongoing visitation work of a Sunday School. The promotions are designed to be used at a specific time during the year, but may lend themselves to use at any time needed. The promotions contain both ministry and evangelistic content, both high attendance and visitation promotions. Scripture distribution is an action in each of the plans.

The prayer concerns are:

—that teachers and members will have a desire to visit lost or unchurched people.

—that Scripture verses will be used during the visits.

—that ministry and evangelism needs will be discovered by the Sunday School visitors.

—that Sunday School workers and members will actively attempt to enroll new people in Bible study through visitation.

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A PERSPECTIVE ON CHRISTIAN SOCIAL MINISTRY

Where would God be? Go find him there!

"For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me drink; I was a stranger, and you invited me in."

(Mt. 25:35, NAS)

by Colleen Backus

Arkansas Baptist

All of us have known people who attracted others with their Christian walk; something inside them seemingly radiates outward in the truest imitation of Jesus. We can easily imagine them walking with the Lord in the dusty streets and ministering to people exactly where they were. Jesus had an ability to combine meeting basic human physical needs with fulfilling their spiritual longings. At our best as Christians, we strive to do the same. This is the role of Christian Social Ministries.

Fundamentally, "a Christian person knows or finds someone with a physical or social need and develops a response to that need—not just meeting the need, but doing so with a Christian emphasis," according to Tommy Goode, Arkansas Baptist State Convention's Church and Community Ministries director. "It becomes a missions endeavor when done for persons in the community, outside the church membership," he said.

"Jesus' life is our greatest example of how to live. His mission was to seek and to save the lost, and often caring for their hurt bodies or broken spirits had to come first," Goode said, "Since we are Christ's body, we are here to carry on his work."

But how? That's where the ABSC Missions Department comes in. Why do it in a programmatic way? Because very often, we as "comfortable" members of Southern Baptist congregations simply do not come into contact with the truly needy people, especially those who are poverty-stricken, Goode says. The Missions Department can get churches and associations to discover needs and

help develop an adequate response.

At the local church level, the challenge often becomes "how much of your resources are you going to dedicate to ministries to people who are never going to come to your church or contribute in any way," according to Goode. "Our job is to show churches that it doesn't have to be decided; often rebuilding a declining church can be done through these kinds of activities. It reidentifies the church with its demographic community."



Diana Lewis hands out an extra sandwich at the Dixsonville feeding ministry.

Often social ministry also takes place on a very personal level, Goode noted. "The sector of people we're most successful with is Baptist women; they have deep convictions. We just provide them with basic information on how to do ministry. God is calling people to this kind of ministry, and has spiritually gifted them for it.

"We also want to encourage Baptist folk who are working in human ser-

vices to see their jobs as occasions for ministry. There is hardly an office in Arkansas that is not touched by Southern Baptists—from case workers to physicians," Goode said.

These kinds of people, as well as local government officials, are resources when the Missions Department or local associations perform Hunger Needs Assessments. These studies seek to discern who in the community is at greatest risk, according to Goode, and who is not "making it" because of poverty.

At its most basic, Goode says, the essence of meeting these needs is to find out "where God would be and go join him there. That will inevitably take us to the poor."

A model: doing what you know

Just about an hour out of Little Rock near Malvern, off dirt roads, exists an isolated community called Dixsonville. Housing often consists of corrugated tin sheets nailed together or ancient, rusting trailers.

A 1988 needs assessment done by Central Association (Hot Spring County) pointed out the need for a summer feeding project in Malvern for children that depend on school lunches during the year; Dixsonville was mentioned just briefly by a government official. In the summer of 1989, a pilot feeding project was started in Malvern—a similar ministry in Dixsonville was still in the planning stage when the Hot Springs area flood of May 1990 struck.

The Dixsonville community was cut off, so volunteers from Central Association gathered 20 boxes of food with the intention of taking the supplies in by boat. The waters receded enough that they were able to access the community with high ground clearance, four wheel drive vehicles. They distributed all the food—and the Dixsonville ministry had begun.

In the summer of 1990, the

ABN photo / Colleen Backus



From the littlest . . .

volunteer feeding team added Dixonville to its Malvern feeding ministry. By the summer of 1991, volunteers from Central Association fed 20-30 children at each site for two weeks during the summer—all for only \$500 in hunger funds. They distributed more than 500 lunches.

Each morning of the summer feeding program volunteers from rotating churches in the association meet in a Malvern church to prepare sandwiches and sack the food for distribution. Each team accompanies a summer missionary, who leads the children in Bible stories, devotionals, prayers, and songs during the week. Sometimes puppet ministries or clowns perform out of the "Fun Wagon," a small trailer designed for such outings.

At Dixonville, even the big boys seem to enjoy the activities, singing with enthusiasm that matches the preschoolers. Smiles light up faces as summer missionaries tell Bible stories and hand out extra lunches to be taken home.

The ministry is co-ordinated by Diana Lewis, a volunteer in Central Association who is also a part-time employee of the ABSC Missions Department. The work at Dixonville is especially moving for her. "The

most important thing we are doing there is reaching the kids—but there were four moms that came regularly. I really think we're making a difference in the lives of those moms; it's not anything I can put my finger on . . . maybe if they learn not everybody in the world does something expecting

ABN photo / Colleen Backus



To the biggest . . .

something in return, they will understand a little bit about God's love. One thing I always say is 'We're here because God loves us and we want to share his love.' "

A more permanent ministry also has come as a result of the initial feeding program contact—the Dixonville Baptist Center. In September 1990, Central Association voted to purchase a mobile home for the community, with the help of the ABSC Missions Department. The trailer was brought to the site in November, and it took most of the winter to set it up; a well had to be drilled and septic tank set up. In January 1991, regular services were started.

The facility has a clothing closet run by Benton First Church volunteer Lane Parish, and also distributes food and hygiene items when needed.

If you or a group from your church want to get involved in Christian Social Ministries, call Tommy Goode in the ABSC Missions Department at 376-4791, ext. 5249.

"And Jesus was going about all the cities and the villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness. And seeing the multitudes, he felt compassion for them because they were distressed and downcast like sheep without a shepherd.

"Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.'" (Mt. 9:35-38, NAS)

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People

Jon Looney has resigned as pastor of Hagler Church near DeWitt.

Michael Billings is serving as pastor of Hagler Church near DeWitt.

Allen Peebles is serving as pastor of First Church in Gillett, going there from Tichnor Church.

Scott McKane is serving as interim youth director at Matthews Memorial Church in Pine Bluff. He is a student at Ouachita Baptist University.

David Furlow resigned Aug. 25 as minister of music at Calvary Church in Fort Smith.

Jim Bryant of Harrison and former missionary to Thailand has been unanimously called as director of missions of Cane Creek-Stoddard Association in Missouri, P.O. Box 1247, Poplar Bluff, MO 63901; telephone 314-686-1115 or 314-785-4303.

Hiram Wells has announced his retirement as pastor of Garland Church, following 13 years of service.

Roy Cook has announced his retirement as pastor of Faith Church in Texarkana, following 10 years of service.

Gary Glasgow has resigned as minister of education and outreach at Central Church in Magnolia to complete his master's degree at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Billy W. Bowle has accepted a call to join the staff of Osceola First Church as minister of music. He will move there from Amory, Miss., where he has served Meadowood Church as minister of music for four years. Bowle is a graduate of Mississippi College in Clinton, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Betty, have a son, Rodney.

Steve Harness has joined the staff of Grand Avenue Church in Hot Springs as youth director.

Carroll Evans recently observed his 19th anniversary of service as pastor of First Church in Hughes.

Del Stone has resigned as pastor of Cadron Ridge Church, Conway, following 12 years of service.

Dee and Kim Brown have joined the staff of Cross Road Church in Little Rock as youth directors. He is a graduate of Louisiana Tech in Ruston, La., and is employed in Little Rock.

John W. Perkins has joined the staff of Geyer Springs First Church in Little Rock as director of pastoral ministries, coming there from First Church in Bossier City, La., where he has been serving as assistant pastor of education and administration. In addition, he has served churches in Texas and Missouri. Perkins, a native of Missouri, is a graduate of the University of Missouri, Columbia, Mo., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Betty, are parents of four adult children.

Bob and Mary Sowell were honored Sept. 15 by First Church in Hot Springs in recognition of his 10 years of service as associate pastor of education.

Wally Strother is serving Boles Southern Church as pastor.

Harold Plunkett has resigned as pastor of Pleasant Grove II Church.

Price Neal is serving Bates Church, Waldron, as pastor.

David Applegate has resigned as pastor of First Church in London.

Bill Scaggs is serving as pastor of Harmony Church, Pollard.

Ed Heehler is serving as pastor of Two Mile Church, Mena.

Duke Eddie Lee Brown was ordained to the gospel ministry Aug. 25 by Grannis Church where he serves as pastor.

Tom Stringfellow is serving as part-time youth and children's director at Martindale Church in Little Rock.

Luke Flesher is serving as minister of pastoral care and missions at Park Hill Church in North Little Rock. He was called to the position on Aug. 25.

Kent Farris recently observed five years of service as business administrator at Park Hill Church in North Little Rock.

Larry Pillow, senior pastor of Second Church of Conway, will lead a retreat for adult children of dysfunctional families Oct. 18-20 at Helper Project International. The retreat theme is "Living Beyond" and will deal with issues such as pain, anger, and codependency. Pillow will be assisted by Jere Williams of Houston, Texas, Floyd

Ray of Conway, and a counselor from the Minirth-Meier-Rice Clinic in Little Rock.

Hal Dixon has resigned as pastor of Unity Church, Arkadelphia, to continue his education at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Jerry Ford has resigned as associate pastor of College Avenue Church, Fayetteville.

Rodney Brown has resigned as music director of Immanuel Church of Fayetteville.

Donald H. Travis recently retired from the ministry after serving churches as music and youth director and as pastor for 42 years, serving in Arkansas, Texas, Alabama, Tennessee, and Indiana. He was honored with a reception by Lawson Church where he had served as pastor for 12 years.

Bill Steeger, chairman of the department of religion at Ouachita Baptist University, began serving Sept. 9 as interim pastor of Hot Springs Second Church.

Paul Huskey is serving as pastor of Tomahawk Church, Saint Joe.

Howard James has resigned as pastor of Arkana Church, Mountain Home.

Bobby Pennington recently observed five years of service as pastor of First Church in Hamburg. He was presented with a monetary gift by the congregation.

James A. and Josie Copeland of Mount Ida will observe their 50th wedding anniversary Oct. 5 with a reception in the Mount Ida Civic Center. The couple, married Oct. 4, 1941, are the parents of five children, Danny Copeland of Watauga, Texas, David Copeland of Dallas, Texas, Marilyn Williams of Grand Prairie, Texas, Jean Owens of Redfield, and Martha Thomas of Mabelvale. They have five grandchildren. Copeland, a jewelry store owner, is a retired Baptist minister, having served for 37 years in Arkansas and Texas.

Ron Toon is serving as pastor of Joyce City Church, Smackover, going there from First Church, Luxora.

Denny Wright is serving as pastor of Parkers Chapel Church in El Dorado, going there from First Church, Bradley.

Jay Parrack is serving as music director of Joyce City Church, Smackover. He is a student at Ouachita Baptist University.

Doug Tippett is serving as pastor of Harmony Church, Thornton.

Ken Brown has resigned as pastor of Childress Church, Monette, to serve as a hospital chaplain in Atlanta, Ga.

Dennis Cherry is serving as pastor of First Church, North Crossett, coming there from West Point, Ky. He and his wife, Karen, have two sons, Aaron, and Daniel.

David McCoy has joined the staff of Third Street Church in Arkadelphia as minister of music and associate pastor. A native of Benton, he is a 1988 graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and a 1991 graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Dave McKinney will join the staff of Nettleton Church in Jonesboro Sept. 29 as minister of education and evangelism. He will move there from Rogers where he has been serving on the staff of First Church as youth and bus minister.

Briefly

Leslie First Church is sponsoring a mission at Fox with Doug Stewart serving as pastor.

Trinity Church at Malvern observed its 26th anniversary Aug. 18. Jack Gates, a former pastor and a current member, was speaker for the morning worship service that was followed by a noon meal. An afternoon program featured special music by quartets, solos, and congregational singing, as well as testimonies Terrell Wallace is pastor.

Baring Cross Church in North Little Rock has launched a women's ministry that will

meet the first Tuesday of each month at 10 a.m. in fellowship hall. Sharon Evans Bale was speaker for the Sept. 3 meeting, speaking on "Surviving the fall and '91 holiday season with blessings."

West Church in Batesville launched two morning worship services Sept. 8. These services will be held at 8:30 a.m. and 10:50 a.m. with Sunday School scheduled to convene at 9:45 a.m. A senior adult Bible conference is scheduled for Sept. 25-26 with Wilbur Herring, pastor emeritus of Central Church of Jonesboro, as speaker. Randy Maxwell is pastor.

Magnolia Church in Crossett observed its 80th anniversary Sept. 15 with activities that included Sunday School, a morning worship service, a noon people, fellowship, and a 1:30 p.m. program. Pastor Gene Thomas was worship speaker. The afternoon service included congregational singing, special music, testimonies, recognition of special guests, a brief history of the church's beginning, and a challenge for the future. Former pastor Vaughn Denton, now pastor of Parkway Church of Memphis, was afternoon speaker.

Levy Church in North Little Rock observed its 85th anniversary of service Sept. 15 when former pastor Al Sparkman was speaker for the morning worship service that was followed by a potluck luncheon. The 1:30 p.m. program featured the Jubilee Quartet who also sang at the morning worship hour. Otto J. Brown is pastor.

Danville First Church has voted to sponsor a mission at Briggsville.

J. Grace Memorial Church at Belleville will celebrate its 100th anniversary Oct. 6 with a 2 p.m. service. Traditional morning services and a noon meal also will be a part of the celebration. Ernest Ashcraft is pastor.

Piggott First Church ordained Ricky Wheat to the gospel ministry Sept. 1.

Emmanuel Church, Piggott, celebrated its 30th anniversary Aug. 25 with a noon meal and afternoon program that featured Gary Henson, Sue Self, Gus Cox, Dorris Cox, Al Williams, Clyde Spurgin, and Pastor Kim Bridges.

Shiloh Church at Corning observed its 125th anniversary Aug. 24-25 when Terry Martin was guest speaker. Special music was provided by The Gospel Connection.

Red River Association has formed a family ministry council composed of Bill Viser, David and Melissa Kesse, and Will Thompson.

Caddo Valley Church at Arkadelphia recently broke ground for a 200-seat sanctuary. Scott Duvall is pastor.

Pulaski Association Acteens leaders were honored Sept. 7 with a leadership appreciation banquet at Baptist Medical Center, Little Rock. Judy Wood, associational Acteens director, coordinated the event that featured Doris Nash of the Pines Apartment Ministry as speaker. Leaders planned the collection of school supplies for both the apartment ministry and Sunshine House as mission action projects. Promotional ideas highlighted were the Acteens Activators and Friend to Friend programs.

Rogers First Church broke ground Sept. 15 for a preschool and children's building.

Heber Springs First Church has voted to give monthly financial support for a new mission that is being launched in the Drasco community.

Jacksonville native appointed to US-2

Ava Stevens of Jacksonville was appointed to mission service by the SBC Home Mission Board in August.

Appointed as a US-2 missionary, Stevens will serve in church and community ministries in Knoxville, Tenn. Stevens is a graduate of Williams Baptist College in Walnut Ridge.

A US-2 missionary is a college graduate who works in home missions for two years.



Tupelo First Church members Mr. and Mrs. Jack Hardin Sr., pictured with Pastor Marvin Ogle, recently received a plaque commemorating their gift to the church enabling it to remodel its kitchen, bathroom, and fellowship hall. The gift was in memory of their son, Jack Jr., and Mr. Hardin's mother, Lillie J. Hardin.

Correction

The Sept. 12 ABN article "Volleyball tournament slated," should have listed the phone number to contact as 367-5358. The ABN regrets the error.

ACTEENS ACTIVATORS ABROAD

Girls, Gospel, Guatemala

by J. Everett Sneed
Editor, Arkansas Baptist

"Even though the girls (Acteens Activators) couldn't speak Spanish and most of the Guatemalan people couldn't speak English, we had a special bond of fellowship because we all serve the same God," declared Angela Lowe, Arkansas Acteens director. Five Acteens and two adult leaders accompanied Lowe to Guatemala City July 5-14. The group communicated the gospel through personal witnessing, clowning, distribution of materials, and Bibles.

The girls made presentations in five churches, four new mission sites, and three schools. This included 12 puppet presentations, two puppet clinics, and assistance in training Guatemalans to make hand held puppets so they could continue to present the gospel in their communities. This would allow Guatemalan young people to conduct Big A Clubs and vacation Bible schools, and share their own testimony with the use of hand held puppets.

The event that stands out most in Lowe's mind was in a mission. The pastor, a former alcoholic, had been a Christian for only three years. But, since his conversion he had led 27 people to the Lord.

The mission itself was extremely primitive. It had a tin roof and only one wall, made of sugar cane. In the center there was a single strand of bulbs that gave light to the congregation.

The Acteens did a puppet show and two girls were dressed in clown costumes. At the close of the presentation the pastor had all of the girls to stand in front of the small congregation. Through missionary Yvonne Helton he apologized for not having any money to give to the girls. He said, "I want to commend the girls for their sacrifice in coming to Guatemala."

The Acteens felt that it was the people in Guatemala who were really sacrificing. They learned that the average salary of a worker in Guatemala was only \$2 per day. Although the purchasing power of money is somewhat more in Guatemala than in the United States, \$2 will not buy much.

Another opportunity the Acteens had to share the gospel was at Nimajuyy Apartment Complex, Guatemala City. Guatemala Baptists have a mission in one of the apartments from the nearby Family of God Baptist Church. There are approximately 15,000 residents in the apartment complex. The Activators ministered to four quad units in a court yard that were surrounded by apartments.

Large speakers were set up so that the sound easily could be heard by many people in the apartments, as well as the children who attended. In addition to the puppet shows, the girls distributed witnessing tracts in both Spanish and English, gave out salvation bracelets, book markers with a Scripture verse both in English and

He translated for them and the workers that accompanied them. Freda Jones, an Acteens leader from Park Hill Church, North Little Rock, knew Spanish and was able to tell Bible stories to the children in Spanish. The girls also knew some Spanish and on one occasion when the Spanish puppet tape was of poor quality they were able to do a puppet script in Spanish.

In addition to the puppet shows and clowning, the Activators distributed many materials. This included: distribution of 1,000 salvation bracelets, 500 Spanish-



Acteens on the trip included Angela Cooper, member of First Church, West Memphis; Stepheny Darby, member of Clear Lake Church, Blytheville; Wendy Hoag, member of West Church, Batesville; Missy Jones, member of Park Hill Church, North Little Rock; Mrs. Freda Jones, a leader from Park Hill Church, North Little Rock; Mrs. Judy Wood, a leader from Cross Road Church, Little Rock, and Angela Lowe, Acteens director for Arkansas WMU.

Spanish, and distributed Bibles.

The salvation bracelet kits contained a leather cord and six beads which communicated the plan of salvation. The beads were black (representing sin), red (representing the blood of Christ), white (representing purity), green (representing Christian growth), and yellow (representing heaven). The kit also contained a tract explaining the meaning of each bead and the plan of salvation with appropriate Scriptures.

The Acteens also had the privilege of becoming acquainted with several foreign missionaries, missionary children, and journeyman. Lowe said, "This assisted the girls to see the missionaries as real people and to become acquainted with what it is like to serve the Lord on a foreign field of service."

Missionary Frank Johnson was assigned to assist the Acteens while in Guatemala.

English Scripture bookmarkers, 300 Use Me books in both Spanish and English, 70 puppets, and 25 Bibles. The girls left behind an additional 25 Bibles for distribution, as well as all other materials that were not used.

In order to be an Acteens Activator Abroad, a girl must be 16 years of age or have completed the 10th grade. She also must have been an Activator in the United States, as well as have a minimum of 50 hours of training. Lowe had led these girls in approximately 200 hours of training.

The training for an Activator includes Bible studies, personal witnessing, and numerous types of community action projects. The girls also studied numerous case studies that provided them with the skills to cope with a variety of situations.

In order to serve as an Acteens Activator Abroad, a girl must receive approval from



An Acteen goes to great lengths to band a tract to an apartment resident.

the state WMU office, the SBC WMU office, and the Foreign Mission Board.

Lowe's future plans for Acteens Activators include a team working in Iowa in 1992 as a part of the Arkansas-Iowa Partnership. There is the possibility of a trip in 1993 to either a home or foreign mission field for Acteens Activators.

Lowe said, "We want to continue the Activators experience. We could feel the presence of the power of the Holy Spirit everywhere we went."

Angela Cooper, an Acteen from First Church, West Memphis, summed it up for the girls as she said, "I gained an awareness of the needs of other people. I also learned the responsibility I have as a Christian. This trip increased my desire to be closer to the Lord and to do more for him."

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'I will never leave thee'

by Lynda Hollenbeck
Special to the Arkansas Baptist

A familiar Scripture sustained a minister's wife during the time her critically ill spouse wavered between life and death while awaiting a new heart.

That passage, from Hebrews, states: "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." And Margaret Robertson of Dumas found the words to be true.

Through the skills and knowledge of medical personnel at Vanderbilt University Medical Center, God did indeed sustain the life of former missionary to Senegal, West Africa, and Army chaplain Ken Robertson, who more recently has been engaged in a prison chaplaincy.

In fact, the Dumas man is considered something of a medical miracle. After a massive heart attack on Jan. 7 virtually destroyed his own coronary function, he became Vanderbilt's third patient to be placed on an artificial heart until a suitable donor heart could be acquired.

The couple discussed his illness and subsequent transplant surgery in a recent interview with the

Arkansas Baptist.

His heart could not keep him alive until he got a new one because his own was just gone," Margaret Robertson said. The artificial device that gave life to Ken Robertson for more than a month is actually a fist-sized pump that was sewn to the bottom of his falling heart.

Of the three persons to undergo this procedure there, he is the sole survivor, although the device has been successful in patients at a few other medical facilities. The Robertsons credit this machine with saving his life, but have no doubt that God's hands were also at work.

After suffering his heart attack, Ken Robertson was initially taken to a hospital in Dumas, then transferred to Baptist Medical Center in Little Rock. Within a short time, he was told a heart transplant would be his only hope for survival.

Choosing transplant surgery is an emotional decision, Margaret Robertson said, but she and her husband believe it was the right thing to do when it became clear it

was his only chance for life. They expected he would remain in the Little Rock area until his operation, but they hadn't counted on the intervention of world events.

A physician who was part of the transplant team at Baptist Medical center was called into active duty for Operation Desert Storm, which resulted in Ken Robertson's immediate transfer to Vanderbilt. Since no donor heart was immediately available, emergency measures were necessary to sustain his life.

The only choice was the artificial heart. This "bridge to transplant" has been approved for testing in 13 medical centers, but is considered experimental since it has yet to receive approval from the Food and Drug Administration, Margaret Robertson noted.

A week after the device was implanted, Ken Robertson developed pneumonia since the present arrangement does not allow the patient to be ambulatory. The couple experienced extreme fear during the days he hovered between life and death, but at no time did either truly believe he would not

Referring to a vision he had during his most critical time, Robertson described a cloud that took on the form of a dove, which he interpreted to be the symbol of the Holy Spirit.

And there were times when he would be alone in his room yet could feel someone's touch on his shoulder. "I would look up and no one would be there, at least no one you could see—but it was just as real as if someone visible had touched me."

Even though she knew her husband's condition was serious and was told several times he would not live through the night, Margaret Robertson never gave up hope. "I would spend all day in the waiting room except during the times I could visit him, but I would go to my room and could sleep at night. The doctors would tell me to go to my room and sleep and that they would call me if anything changed. And that's what I did. . . the Lord let me sleep, and then I'd wake up the next morning and know no one had called."

The only time her slumber was interrupted for medical bulletins were the two instances when Ken Robertson was temporarily returned to a respirator.

For 32 days before his transplant surgery, the electric device pulsed blood through Robertson's arteries until a donor heart became available from a 22-year-old Chattanooga victim. The life-saving pump that kept him alive before he received the new organ is called a left ventricular assist device, so named because it performs the work of the left ventricle, the heart's primary pumping chamber.

The pump is inserted into the chest cavity below the heart. Blood flows from the weakened heart through a dacron tube into the pump, which then thrusts it out again into the aorta, the body's major artery. Wires placed through the skin provide electricity from an external unit that powers the device and adjusts its rhythm to accommodate the changing needs of the body.

Future models are expected to be powered by a battery pack worn on the belt, which would allow patients to use the device for longer periods.

When Ken Robertson was dependent upon this device, the Robertsons' faith was tested, but they never wavered in their conviction that the Lord would take care of him. And they also drew strength from their circle of Christian friends that continued to grow in a strange city.

"People all over the world were praying for him and some churches in Arkansas were praying around the clock for many days," Margaret Robertson said. "Some of these we didn't know about until days later."

Word of Ken Robertson's arrival in



Margaret and Ken Robertson

live.

"It's hard to explain," said Ken Robertson, whose memories of those tumultuous days have lots of gaps, something medical personnel told his wife to anticipate. "I guess I knew I could die, but at no time did I ever really think I would. I felt like I was in God's hands. And during that time, I really learned a lot about the power of prayer in Psalms and old hymns."

Each time Margaret Robertson visited her husband, she took her Bible with her. And the passage she read over and over, sometimes in English, sometimes in French, was the 23rd Psalm.

ABN photo / Millie GR

Nashville quickly spread among Southern Baptists in the area. Pastors and lay members came to share their concerns and offer assistance, but one who became especially close to Margaret Robertson was Alma Mae Scarborough, who previously worked for the Baptist Sunday School Board, which is headquartered in Nashville.

In fact, Margaret Robertson was attending a Wednesday night service with her new-found friend the night her husband learned a donor heart had become available for him. Never suspecting the turn of events, she arrived routinely for her 8:30 p.m. visitation with her spouse.

"When I went in to see him, I found him smiling, sitting in a chair," she recalled. "The nurse said to me, 'He's getting a new heart.' I asked, 'When?'"

The nurse told her the surgery was for that very night, a plan quickly confirmed in a telephone call to his primary physician.

Ironically, it was earlier in the day that Ken Robertson had been allowed to get out of bed and walk to the door of his room, something Dr. William H. Frist had said he wanted to take place prior to surgery.

The surgical procedure went well, the Robertsons said. Several weeks of recuperation followed and a pacemaker was recently installed to correct a pacing problem, but there have been no signs of rejection.

The Robertsons are philosophical about this difficult time in their lives and say the Lord always provides the strength to handle life's emergencies. She learned that she could do things she never dreamed possible, such as providing medical care for her husband when he was placed in a self-care unit. And in spite of her earlier anxiety, she was able to conduct a waiting room ministry to others she found to be in situations worse even than her own.

Ken and Margaret Robertson urge people to think ahead and plan to donate their organs at death. She pointed out that one individual can provide organs for up to as many as 14 people and advised people to inform their children of their desire to provide donor organs.

"And that's why I wear a pin that says, 'Recycle Yourself: Be an Organ Donor.'"

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Promise House dedicates

by J. Everett Sneed

Editor, Arkansas Baptist

Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries dedicated Promise House, a home for unwed mothers, on Sept. 10. The El Dorado facility is a large four-bedroom plantation home that will house 12 young women. It also contains an apartment for houseparents. Directly behind the plantation home is a building that will be utilized as an education center for girls who are still in high school.

The dedicatory message was delivered by ABSC President Mike Huckabee. Huckabee praised Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries for developing the ministry. He said, "As we have all watched the unfolding of events in Wichita and viewed the efforts of 'Operation Rescue' to close down the doors of abortion clinics in that city, we have been made to realize how intense the abortion issue really is. With all due respect to those involved in 'Operation Rescue,' I think that it is important to recognize that their approach to the disgrace of abortion and that of Arkansas Baptists is dramatically different. Their goal is to close doors where young women go for an abortion; our goal is to open doors where young women can go and discover a positive alternative to abortion."

Huckabee expressed his joy over the opening of Promise House. He indicated that it gave him greater pleasure to participate in this event than in any other which he had attended as president of the state convention. He also deplored the tragedy of abortion. He said, "It is incredible to imagine a Bible believing Christian unable to recognize that abortion as a means of birth control violates God's standards of justice."

Huckabee condemned those who promote sexual promiscuity. He said, "Sadly, many of the proponents of abortion want to choose a life of sexual license, but want the rest of the world to remove the consequence of such a life."

President Huckabee also emphasized the forgiveness of God as he said, "Promise House will not only extend the ministries of Arkansas Baptists to un-



Mike Huckabee

wed mothers who need love, healing, and grace, but its assistance in the adoption process will mean that many a godly family will have the joy of bringing up a child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

In conclusion, Huckabee indicated that in dedicating the facility everyone could prayerfully join together in a common commitment that "We will promise to the Lord to continue finding ways to not only address the failures of humanity, but to answer the needs of hurting humanity."

Johnny Biggs, executive director of Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries, indicated that the new facility would provide redemption, reconciliation, and restoration for hurting young women. He expressed appreciation to the Melvyn Bell family who gave the plantation home for the new ministry. He also thanked the numerous churches that had provided furniture, furnishings, and endowments that are making the facility possible.

Recently, money was given that will enable Family Ministries to operate the facility for one year. By that time, it is believed, endowment will be in hand so that it can operate on a permanent basis.

Biggs expressed appreciation to the Harold Elmore who lived at the facility for a time and planned to serve as houseparents. Health problems made it necessary for the Elmore to resign.

Others on the program included: Tommy Robertson, director of missions for Liberty Association; John Ross, director of development for Family Ministries; Barbara Billingsley, director of the southwest area office for Family Ministries and director of Promise House; and ABSC Executive Director Don Moore, who delivered the closing dedicatory prayer.

Promise House will begin operation in the near future. Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries are now receiving applications from young women for housing in the facility. Such applications should be directed to Jennifer Cloyd, caseworker Promise House, P.O. Box 2036, El Dorado, AR 71730; telephone 501-862-0199.

SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

JUNE 9-11, 1992

INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Those needing hotel rooms for the Southern Baptist Convention Annual Meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana June 9-11, 1992 must use the attached SBC HOUSING REQUEST FORM. The SBC Housing Bureau will attempt to secure housing for all who request rooms using this form. Reservations will be made on a "first-come, first-served" basis until all hotel rooms in the SBC housing block are taken.

DUE DATES:

Forms must be postmarked on or after OCTOBER 1, 1991 (but NOT before). All forms received by the Housing Bureau will be held until October 15, 1991, to be sure that all October 1 requests have arrived. Forms will then be opened in order of the postmarked date. Any forms bearing a postmark dated before October 1st will be processed AFTER those with the required postmarked date. Also, forms should be mailed NO LATER THAN MAY 8, 1992.

DEPOSITS:

Do NOT mail a deposit with the Housing Request Form. When you receive your confirmation from the hotel, you will then be instructed to send the required deposit or credit card number to guarantee your room at the rate quoted. NOTE: Failure to comply with the hotel's room deposit policy within the allotted time will mean the loss of your reservation!

INSTRUCTIONS:

Use ONE (1) form for each room requested. NO MORE THAN TEN (10) FORMS MAY BE SENT IN ANY ONE ENVELOPE. Be sure to complete the entire form. Incomplete information will only delay your request.

Choose SIX (6) hotels from the accompanying two lists, listing them in order of your preference. Feel free to make photocopies of this form should you need any additional rooms (Limit: 10 forms per envelope).

FURTHER INFORMATION:

All Housing Requests will be processed by the SBC Housing Bureau in Indianapolis. For inquiries, questions, or changes, you may contact the Bureau (in writing or by Fax; no calls) at:

SBC HOUSING BUREAU
ONE HOOSIER DOME - SUITE 100
INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46225
(FAX) 317/684-2492

HANDICAPPED/SPECIAL NEEDS:

Handicapped persons needing special assistance in reserving a room should contact:

SBC HOUSING INFORMATION, SBC Executive Committee,
901 Commerce Street, Suite 750, Nashville, TN 37203.
615/244-2355 (Fax) 615/742-8919

HOTEL LIST

DOWNTOWN

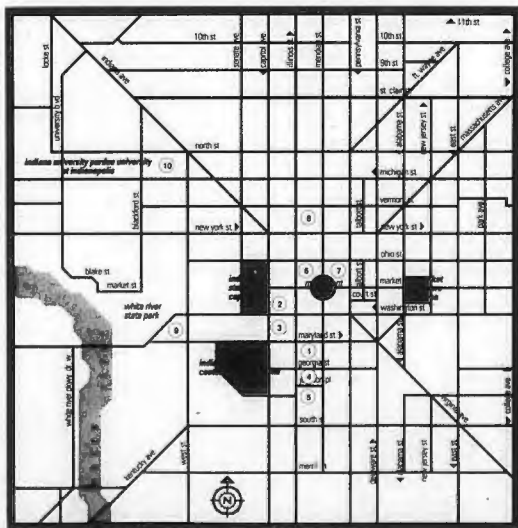
KEY	HOTEL	SGL	DBL
1	The Canterbury Hotel	\$115.00	\$115.00
2	Embassy Suites Hotel		
	Downtown (2 Rooms)	105.00	115.00
3	Hyatt Regency Hotel	89.00	89.00
4	Omni Severin Hotel	72.00	72.00
5	Holiday Inn Union Station	81.00	91.00
6	Hilton at the Circle	78.00	78.00
7	The Columbia Club	74.00	80.00
8	Indianapolis Athletic Club	79.00	85.00
9	Courtyard by Marriott		
	Downtown	72.00	72.00
10	University Place Conf Ctr & Hotel	76.00	94.00

NOTES:

- The Indiana Convention Center & Hoosier Dome is the site of the 1992 SBC Annual Meeting, the Woman's Missionary Union Meeting, and the Pastor's Conference.

- Because of the fewer number of available rooms per hotel, the Hyatt Regency, Omni Severin, and Hilton-On-The-Circle will all serve as Convention Hotels.

- The Holiday Inn Union Station will be the Headquarters Hotel for the Woman's Missionary Union.



Downtown Indianapolis

OFFICIAL HOUSING REQUEST FORM
SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION
JUNE 9-11, 1992 — INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

- PRINT OR TYPE ALL ITEMS TO ASSURE ACCURACY.
- COMPLETE EVERY ITEM BELOW IN DETAIL FOR CORRECT AND RAPID PROCESSING.
- SHOULD MORE THAN ONE ROOM BE NEEDED, USE A SECOND FORM.
- ALL CONFIRMATIONS WILL BE SENT TO INDIVIDUAL WHOSE NAME APPEARS ON THIS FORM.

NAME OF PERSON REQUESTING ROOM (NOTE: This person must be one of the individuals who will be occupying the room):

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE (____) _____

Select six hotels/motels of your choice:

FIRST CHOICE _____ FOURTH CHOICE _____

SECOND CHOICE _____ FIFTH CHOICE _____

THIRD CHOICE _____ SIXTH CHOICE _____

When making your selections which is more important to you: PRICE or LOCATION?

Arrival Date _____ Departure Date _____

Arrival Time _____

Check type of room desired:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Single (1 bed/1 person) | <input type="checkbox"/> Triple (2 beds/3 persons) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Double (1 bed/2 persons) | <input type="checkbox"/> Quad (2 beds/4 persons) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Twin (2 beds/2 persons) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____ |

Names of all persons occupying the room, including the person making this request:

1 _____ 3 _____
2 _____ 4 _____

IMPORTANT: No phone orders will be accepted. Hotel locations are shown on accompanying maps. Make a photocopy of this form for your files. SBC Housing Bureau processes reservations in order of date mailed. Confirmations will come directly from your hotel. **DO NOT SEND DEPOSITS WITH RESERVATIONS.** If rooms are not available at hotels of your choice, comparable reservations will be made at another cooperating hotel. If rate requested is not available, next available rate will be assigned. Changes or cancellations should be sent in writing, or by Fax to the SBC Housing Bureau:

MAIL TO:
SBC Housing Bureau
One Hoosier Dome - Suite 100
Indianapolis, IN 46225
(FAX) 317/684-2492

ABN photo / J. Everett Sneed

B. T. L.



Pictured (left to right) are Carl Frein, Lew Sorrells, Pastor Jim McDaniel, Bob Kemmer, Lehman Fowler, Bob Jones, Sam Spencer of Batesville Truck Line, and Jodie Ellis.

Rice for Soviet Union

Members of First Baptist Church, Brinkley, and their friends have given a partial truck load of rice as a food project to a province in the Soviet Union. This rice will be in addition to other rice, food, and medical supplies that are being sent by Cooperative Services International, a

Southern Baptist relief organization based in Richmond, Va.

Lehman Fowler, president of Southern Rice Marketing, said that members of First Church, Brinkley, came up with the idea of donating rice for a hunger project after

learning that CSI had a food project for the Kazakhstan Province. Several Arkansas Baptists went to the province earlier this year as a part of a cultural festival.

The rice, donated by members of First Church, Brinkley, is in addition to a 40 foot container of rice (approximately the amount of rice carried by an 18-wheeler), a 40 foot container of medical supplies, and another 20 foot container of rice. The food will be distributed by the Central Asia Foundation, a nonprofit foundation with work in Kazakhstan.

'We wanted them to know we care about their well-being'

Fowler said, "Although this is a token amount of food that is needed for the upcoming winter, we wanted the people of the Soviet Union to know that we care about their well being." Fowler also observed there was the possibility that they might be able to sell rice at a later date to the Soviet Union.

The rice was shipped, free of charge, by the Batesville Truck Line who moved the rice to Houston, Texas, where it joined the other supplies that CSI is sending to the Soviet province.

It was indicated that additional shipments of rice may be made to the Soviet Union if adequate rice and money are given to make this possible.



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FUNERAL HOME

Hot Springs

PEOPLE TO DEPEND ON

BiVo/SMC conference slated

This year the BiVo/SMC Conference is taking a new direction. Major spots on the program are given to BiVo/SMC pastors with the knowledge that these gifted men are well qualified to speak to the needs of their peers.

Dale Cook, pastor of Cocklebur Church in Ward, will bring the closing message. Leon Minick, pastor of Aisup Church in Bay, and Sam Moore, pastor of Twelve Corners Church in Garfield will share testimonies of what the Lord has been doing in their churches.

Other conference features will include:

—Wives Conference, led by Ruby Kite, DOM wife from Ashley Association, and Nancy Jordan, conference leader and homemaker.

—Opening conference message by Rex Horne, pastor of Immanuel Church, Little Rock.

—Music by Kenny McKay, minister of music at First Church, New Boston, Texas.

Pastors' Conference led by Charles Belt, Baptist Sunday School Board.

The subject matter to be dealt with in the pastors' sessions will include (1) How to get a great start in your church, (2) How to know when to move, and (3) Practical ideas to use in making a transition.

The conference will be held Oct. 4-5, at First Southern Baptist Church, 606 South Reynolds Road, Bryant. The Friday evening session will begin at 7 p.m. and close at 9:15 p.m. The Saturday morning session will begin at 8:30 a.m. and close at noon.

A room allowance of \$20 for double occupancy room, plus 10 cents per mile, round trip travel, will be provided for out-of-town participants. To request lodging, please contact the Holiday Inn City Center, 617 S. Broadway, Little Rock; telephone 501-376-2071. Specify Arkansas Baptist State Convention when making your reservation.

For more information, contact the Church Leadership Support Department at 376-4791, ext. 5148.

Praising!

by Linda Hollenbeck
Special to the Arkansas Baptist

Southern Baptists have a lot to sing about these days.

That's the opinion of Mark Blankenship, a member of the committee that chose the selections for a recently released Southern Baptist hymnal.

Entitled *The Baptist Hymnal*, this version has something for everyone, according to Blankenship, who was in the state recently to lead Praising at Central Church, Jonesboro, and Second Church, Little Rock.

Blankenship serves as senior manager of the Church Music Department of the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville, Tenn.

Another hymnal workshop at University Church, Fayetteville, was led by another committee member, Blankenship said in a recent interview with the *Arkansas Baptist*.

Blankenship contends the latest hymnbook stays "true to hymnody," while still incorporating favorite Baptist hymns with contemporary selections, praise choruses, and ethnic material.

"It's more into the melting pot of what Southern Baptist interests are," he explained. "And I think this is the finest songbook ever produced by Southern Baptists, probably by any evangelical group."

The enthusiastic committee member contends the 1991 hymnal is an outstanding publication "that can meet the needs of both large and small churches" because it's the "result of a good, diverse committee as far as job assignment and theological positions in the (Southern Baptist) Convention."

Comprising the committee were lay people, pastors, ministers of music, and professors representing small and large cities, Blankenship said.

While pointing out that some songs he personally favored were rejected, as were suggestions from other committee members, Blankenship says the strength of the hymnal comes from the fact that "no one on the committee had a hidden agenda."

He compared the hymnbook with earlier hymnals, including the Broadman version and others released in 1956 and 1975. While it's still possible to purchase the 1956 and 1975 versions, this won't be the case soon. When the current stock of the 1956 version is depleted, it will no longer be published, he said.

"Actually, we took a lot of material out



Mark Blankenship directs participants in selections from the new "Baptist Hymnal."

of the '56 and the old Broadman book that didn't make it into the '75," he said. "A lot of this material is still being sung in many smaller congregations and a lot of the material is well-known among senior adults who have grown up in Southern Baptist churches."

As examples he mentioned "Wonderful Grace of Jesus" from the *Broadman Hymnal* and "Take Time to Be Holy," which was included in the 1956 hymnbook. "Neither of these is in the '75, but we brought them back for this hymnal. And there are a lot of new, first-time compositions."

Among the newer works are "Worthy of Worship," written by Terry York and Blankenship; "Be Strong in the Lord," a composition of Tom Fetke and Linda Lee Jones; and "Lord, Here Am I," which is based on an old Fanny Crosby text.

The Crosby text actually "started out as an anthem, but worked well into hymnody," Blankenship said. "It's based on the Isaiah passage and Southern Baptists are gonna love it. It has a wonderfully singable melody—it's very gospel-songish."

Another strength of the new publication is its topical organization which Blankenship says, "relates to the Baptist Faith and Message. This is a very strong addition to the hymnal because we tried to include hymns for areas not addressed before, like the Security of the Believer."

The hymnbook offers a greater variety of material that will help build worship experiences for both the trained and part-time or lay volunteer directors in small churches, Blankenship said.

An extensive family of companion materials is available with this hymnal.

Among these are: full orchestrations; a book designed just for the pianist; a book designed just for the organist; a simplified piano version; a choir supplement; and a minister of music supplement.

"All of these extra materials are available to help aid in the worship process," he explained.

For example, the simplified piano version includes less difficult arrangements of 200 favorite Baptist hymns. These are arranged in keys that require less hand manipulation and primarily includes songs written in flats, which are more easily played. "Only about half a dozen are in the key of A, which has three sharps, and none are in the key of E, which has four sharps. Not all that many are in D, which has two sharps."

The approximately 600 selections in the latest hymnal represents 55-60 percent new material, Blankenship said. "At least it's new to the hymnal, in variance to the '75 version. After considering between 4,000 and 5,000 songs, the committee automatically took the top 200 hymns out of the '75."

When the 1956 hymnal was compiled, it was done at a period when gospel music, such as that written by John W. Peterson, was viewed somewhat negatively, Blankenship said. "This was at a time when we were into developing an educational approach to teaching children and youth."

Enhanced awareness of youth needs came about through the many changes seen in the late '60s and early '70s, he noted. "The committee started seeing a need for more contemporary material that youth enjoy—the need for a more congregational book."

CLC, BJCPA clash

Funds, observers in dispute

NASHVILLE—The Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission has asked for nearly \$400,000 in funds at the Southern Baptist Foundation which the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs contends was earmarked two decades ago for its use in Washington.

On Sept. 11, CLC trustees asked the SBC Executive Committee to allocate the money to the CLC for a new building in Washington. BJC General Council Oliver S. Thomas labeled the CLC request as "unethical, illegal" and as "pilfering our account."

The BJC, however, has signed a contract to purchase property in Washington and has asked the Baptist Foundation for money it says the agency has invested for the BJC.

The BJC and the Foundation, questioned by Baptist Press, confirmed a purchase agreement had been signed on Sept. 9. Although details of the building at 511 C Street NE, in Washington, were lacking, the purchase price is \$345,000 and a \$100 deposit was given by the BJC.

At stake is an account at the Foundation which contained \$381,927, as of Aug. 1.

The account was established in 1964 using a \$300,000 allocation from a capital needs budget approved by the SBC in Atlantic City. A footnote to that allocation says, "The \$300,000 allocation to the Public Affairs Committee to be subject to conditions approved by the Executive Committee or the Southern Baptist Convention."

CLC trustees say the reference to the public affairs committee means the money was to be held by the Southern Baptist trustees on the BJC, not the BJC itself. Those trustees in recent years became known as the Public Affairs Committee, which has been absorbed by the CLC, and PAC members claim the money should come with them to the CLC.

BJC Counsel Thomas believes Southern Baptists used the words "public affairs committee" and "Baptist Joint Committee" interchangeably at the time the allocation was made. Since 1969, the BJC has received interest amounting to \$534,951 from the disputed account, and has made investment decisions about the money held at the Foundation.

In a related action, the SBC Executive Committee, meeting in Nashville, Tenn., on Sept. 16-18, voted to terminate the convention's participation in the BJCPA, but did not restrict the CLC from relating to the religious liberty organization. The Ex-

ecutive Committee will ask messengers to the 1992 convention to approve the recommendation.

The committee also took action on two other referrals related to the BJC. They will (1) study what to do with the disputed funds, and (2) recommend to the 1992 messengers a policy that will allow the BJC an exhibit at the annual meeting as a "secondary exhibitor."

In another dispute, the CLC will send on a Washington-based staff member as an

observer to the BJC meeting in Washington in October. The decision came after a CLC trustees' administrative committee decided not to send any CLC trustees as trustees to the BJC board meeting because the BJC has declined to pay the customary travel costs for them.

After being defunded by the SBC, the BJC implemented a policy stating that member bodies were entitled to pay for travel expenses, unless the body makes a reasonable budget pledge.

The CLC board approved any CLC commissioners who wish to attend at their own expense to go as observers but not as official trustees.

(Compiled from Baptist Press releases.)

The Arkansas Baptist's

CHURCH SERVICES DIRECTORY

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Baptist Book Store (SBC)

9101 W. Markham
Little Rock, AR 72205
501-250-8009

Cemeteries

Roselawn Memorial Park

2801 Asher Avenue, Little Rock
Phone 501-663-0248
Ark. Largest Perpetual Care Fund

Electrical Contractors

Concord Electric Co.

6114 Alma Highway
Van Buren, AR 72958
Hm: 501-474-9232; Off: 474-3792

Harvill-Byrd Electric Co., Inc.

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Little Rock, AR 72202
501-663-8345

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673-2081

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Convention Uniform*Obeying God's plan*

by Bob Parsley, First Church, Dandanele

Basic passage: Acts 16:9-23

Focal passage: Acts 16:9-12, 16-23

Central truth: Be prepared to face opposition when doing God's will for your life.

Paul and his partners in ministry had made plans to see Asia, or modern Turkey. Paul's heart was turned toward the city of Ephesus in Asia. A vision from God turned the missionaries in another direction, to the needy area of Macedonia, or modern Greece. Modern geography concerning Asia and Europe should be ignored to understand the vision. Paul had no doubt the "call from Macedonia" was divine in origin. He and his party immediately changed their itinerary for Philippi in Macedonia.

In Philippi, one of the first big confrontations with paganism is found in the New Testament. A poor slave girl was demon possessed and had the power of fortune telling. Her owners made a handsome living out of her ability. She followed the missionaries all over Philippi for many days and pestered them with her pronouncements (v. 17).

Paul cast out her demon in the name of Jesus. She was soon freed from its clutches, but lost her fortune telling powers. The slave girl's owners became furious. They accused Paul and Silas of disturbing the peace and teaching illegal customs (v. 21). The magistrates or town rulers ordered them beaten with rods and thrown in prison. "And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely" (Ac. 9:23). The missionaries were placed in stocks, a torture device, while there. The lesson ends with these men of faith in that horrible place.

Notice they were faithful to follow the Lord's direction for their lives. Paul and Silas changed their own plans in order to obey God. They encountered stiff resistance in Macedonia, but never tried to "second-guess" the Lord. The real battle in Philippi was money and not ministry. When Christians impact the pocketbooks of the world, then we get the same kind of harsh treatment Paul and Silas got. Let us also be faithful, even in the hard places. We ought to remember a wonderful church soon grew there.

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

Life and Work*The inspiration of Scripture*

by Bob Berry, First Church, Benton
Basic passage: 2 Timothy 3:14-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21; Matthew 5:17-19

Focal passage: 2 Timothy 3:14-17

Central truth: The Inspiration of Scripture is basic for faith.

Is the inspiration of Scripture solely a doctrine debated by scholars? Is God's perfect Word simply a theological fact? According to Paul, the inspiration of Scripture is no mere theological dogma. In 2 Timothy 3:14-17 Paul not only states the reality of the inspiration, he shows how it is a basis for faith.

This passage is in a context detailing "difficult times." Paul describes a society which claims to be godly, but whose lifestyle is totally godless (2 Ti. 3:1-5). It is a world with much learning, yet without a knowledge of the truth. People are easily and willingly deceived. Evil abounds. It is a world where godliness makes challenging demands on believers (2 Ti. 3:7-13).

Paul is describing a world like our own. We live in "difficult times." To people being deceived, who no longer know what to believe, God gives his inspired Word. God's Word has never been more relevant, because it is intended for "difficult times." The Bible is God's solution for days such as these.

Paul begins his message to Timothy by saying "but you . . ." (2 Ti. 3:10, 14). This is a strong call away from the godless world. The Bible is for those who desire to be different. It is for those who want to know God. Scripture tells the lost how to be saved and the saved how to live (2 Ti. 3:15). Salvation and godliness are essential for a relationship with God and for a believer to live a complete life (2 Ti. 3:17).

God's Word is sure because God breathed it (2 Ti. 3:16). Although delivered by human intermediaries, it is directly from him (2 P. 1:20-21). In a world that prefers shifting values, God's absolutes remain. They remain because he inspired his Word. Relative values end in despair. God's inspired Word gives hope. The Bible is truth because it came from God.

The inspiration of Scripture is a vibrant doctrine. It is vibrant because God's Word is specifically designed for our time. It is vibrant because God's Word tells how to know God and obey him in times like these. It is vibrant because God's inspiration confirms the truth of the Bible.

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Bible Book*Divisions in the church*

by Zane Chesser, First Church, Malvern
Basic passage: 1 Corinthians 1:10-13, 18-21; 2:1-5, 9-10

Focal passage: 1 Corinthians 1:10-13, 18-21

Central truth: There should be oneness of spirit in the church.

Word had reached Paul of divisions in the Corinthian Church. Paul named the groups that had formed around himself, Apollos, Cephas, and even Christ (1 Co. 1:12). Unfortunately, such a party spirit is not isolated to the Corinthian congregation of New Testament times. All churches in any age carry the potential for divisions because they are made up of imperfect human beings. The point of disparity is all too often centered around personalities, as in the Corinthian Church.

In the face of such divisions in the church which threatened its unity, Paul made a tender appeal for agreement among the different groups (1 Co. 1:10-11). He called his readers, "brothers," reminding them they belonged to the same family. He urged them to come to an agreement in purpose and in words so that the divisions, like a tear in a fishing net, or a fracture in a bone, would be mended (1 Co. 1:10).

Paul's question, "Is Christ divided?" (1 Co. 1:13), shows how illogical it is for a church to be splintered. Christ is one, and the church as his body must be one. Christians can not be agreed in everything, but God provides his Spirit which brings the body of Christ together and allows it to fulfill its function.

In (1 Co. 1:18-21), Paul targets one of the great reasons for the church's party spirit. Some had embraced the false wisdom of men rather than the wisdom of God revealed in the gospel message. The result is always divisive.

In the context of these divisions, the apostle defends his ministry in the church (1 Co. 2:1-5). He made clear that his preaching was not in human cleverness. He had proclaimed a message centered in Christ and his crucifixion.

The Scripture lesson concludes in (1 Co. 2:9-10) as the apostle underscored the vast wisdom that God can give to man that can never be grasped by human resources alone. Thus, their divisions and misunderstandings could not be healed until they permitted the Holy Spirit to enlighten their minds and hearts.

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Convention Uniform

Keeping calm for Christ

by Bob Parsley, First Church, Dardanelle

Basic passage: Acts 16:25-39

Focal passage: Acts 16:25-39

Central truth: Paul stayed calm during a miracle and was able to lead an entire family to the Lord as a result.

God intended for the gospel to be spread in the face of persecution and hardships. After Paul and Silas were thrown into a Philippian prison cell they continued to minister. At midnight they were in prayer and making praise unto the Lord. The other men in prison, including their jailor, listened intently. God made a miracle to free Paul and Silas. He sent an earthquake to shake the foundation of the prison and all the inmates' chains were loosened.

The air must have been thick with dust and happiness as all these men, both the innocent and guilty, found themselves free. Paul seized control over the situation and called for all the prisoners to remain there. The jailor felt humiliated for a jail escape of this magnitude. He thought suicide to be the only honorable way out of his dilemma. Paul cried out a word to the jailor which prevented any desperate action. "Sir, what must I do to be saved?" was the jailor's spiritual response (v. 30). He had listened to the prayers of his prisoners and knew he needed what they had.

Paul gave the gospel message in its simplest form, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved" (v. 31). The jailor took Paul to his home for further instruction. The entire family came to know Jesus as a result. They were baptized that very night because the missionaries knew their time was short in Philippi.

The town ruler asked for Paul and his companions to leave town quietly the next day. Paul protested his treatment based on Roman citizenship, which should have prevented the imprisonment. He chose to take that step so that the believers left behind in Philippi would not be embarrassed by the false charge that Paul and Silas were criminals. They took their time leaving the city, only after a formal and personal apology delivered by the town rulers.

Paul and Silas could have "lost their heads" in the confusion of the earthquake or in their dealings with officials. Instead, with Paul's calm thinking, an entire family came to Christ and a new church gained respect.

This lesson treatment is based on the International Bible Lesson for Southern Baptists Teaching, Uniflow Series. Copyright International Council of Education. Used by permission.

Life and Work

The power of the Word

by Bob Berry, First Church, Benton

Basic passage: Isaiah 55:10-11; Hebrews 4:12-14; 1 Peter 1:22-25

Focal passage: Hebrews 4:12-13

Central truth: God's Word has power to transform lives.

Anyone who has been around a child knows the struggles they face learning to carry on a conversation. As the child talks aimlessly, adding irrelevant facts, never seeming to reach a conclusion, the adult must constantly fight the temptation to interrupt and say, "Get to the point!"

The Word of God needs no such prodding; it is all too direct. As Hebrews 4:12-13 graphically shows, the Bible "gets to the point." It delves into the deepest recesses of thoughts, will, and motivations, exposing those areas to the searching light of God's standards. God's Word shows man what he is: a sinner.

Understanding God's Word has not been a problem for those to whom God has revealed himself. The writer of Hebrews shows that the sin of Israel after the Exodus was unbelief (He. 4:2). God's power was plain to those wandering Hebrews; they chose not to obey. Refusal to obey and unbelief are synonymous.

God's Word is middleless and divisive. Jesus the Incarnate Word made people uncomfortable because he was so direct. His teaching was too powerful to be refuted or ignored. Jesus only allowed two choices: believe him or reject him.

Just like the Incarnate Word, God's written Word exposes sinful actions. The Bible also reveals sinful intentions (He. 4:12). The individual is left with clear choices: repent and change, or ignore God and go on.

God's Word causes discomfort because it reveals sin. Many choose to avoid the discomfort by ignoring God's Word. Ignoring sin only hurts the sinner, for God already knows our sins (He. 4:13). Only when the truth of Scripture is combined with belief is it profitable (He. 4:2).

Being confronted by the truth of the Bible is not meant to lead to guilt, discomfort, or despair. God's Word is powerful because it can lead a person to faith, and to a relationship with God. The power of Scripture is the love and hope it reveals from God through history and through Jesus Christ. The Bible gets to the point so God can remove the sin obstacles between you and him.

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Bible Book

Toward spiritual maturity

by Zane Chesser, First Church, Malvern

Basic passage: 1 Corinthians 3:1-13; 4:1-14

Focal passage: 1 Corinthians 3:1-13

Central truth: It is normal for Christians to experience spiritual growth.

The strife and factions in the Corinthian Church were symptomatic of a lack of spiritual growth among certain members. Paul identifies these as "carnal," and "babes in Christ" (1 Co. 3:1). Both expressions aim at the same thing. A "carnal" believer is not spiritual, but rather controlled by the spirit of their old nature. A "babe in Christ" describes one who has not grown beyond spiritual infancy.

Physical and mental growth is natural for a child. It is equally normal for a Christian to develop and mature. For either to fail in moving beyond the infantile stage is a cause of great concern. The actions of some Corinthian members presented a graphic denial of Christian growth. Jealousy and strife were the wrong fruit (1 Co. 3:3). The natural fruit of a Christian is found in the "fruits of the Spirit" (Ga. 5:22-23).

Just as God created and provided for the growth of our bodies, so has he made possible our spiritual development. The apostle reminded his readers that their spiritual leaders existed for that very purpose. These leaders were not to be seen as competitors vying for the believer's loyalty. They were to be understood as God's servants carrying out different roles. The Corinthians were considered as God's field and God's building while Paul and other leaders were simply being used to till the field and construct the buildings.

God was the central source of increase of the field and Christ was the singular foundation of the building (1 Co. 3:4-11).

In (1 Co. 4:1-4), Paul exhorts the Corinthians for a more mature consideration of himself and the other spiritual leaders. As servants of Christ they were primarily accountable to him for their services. Hence, the final word of judgment could never come from the critics of Paul and the other men. Even though every person who does God's work will face the scrutiny of others, no one but God knows all the circumstances and is qualified to judge a life.

We can all reflect a more spiritually mature attitude when we leave judgment to the only one really capable of such action—God (1 Co. 4:1-14).

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Across the Country

CLC board approves Mitchell

NASHVILLE—Trustees of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission have unanimously approved the nomination of Ben Mitchell as the agency's director of biomedical and life issues. Mitchell, 36, will assume his new duties on Feb. 1.

Mitchell currently is pursuing a Ph.D. in biomedical ethics at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville. For the past year he was interim pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church in Knoxville.

Art Toalston elected Baptist Press editor

NASHVILLE—Southern Baptist Journalist Art Toalston Jr. has been named editor of Baptist Press.

He was elected to the position at the Southern Baptist Convention news agency by the SBC Executive Committee's Administrative Subcommittee Sept. 17. The action was reported to the full Executive Committee later that day.

As editor, Toalston, 41, will be responsible for day-to-day operation of Baptist Press. He will assume the position on or before Jan. 1, 1992.

California names new editor

FRESNO, Calif.—Mark A. Wyatt, director of public relations for the California Southern Baptist Convention, has been named editor and general manager of *The California Southern Baptist*, newjournal of the California Southern Baptist Convention.

Wyatt, 39, had been interim editor since former editor Herb Hollinger resigned to become vice president for Baptist Press Mar. 1. He is a graduate of Valdosta (Ga.) State College, Ga., and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

Missouri Baptist College trustees fire president

ST. LOUIS—Trustees of Missouri Baptist College fired J. Edwin Hewlett Jr. as president Aug. 29 ending a two-month struggle between Hewlett and the trustees.

Hewlett was dismissed in a vote of 11-10 during an executive session of the regularly scheduled August trustee meeting. The vote came despite a report from a special presidential oversight committee which suggested taking no action.

According to *Word and Way*, newjournal of the Missouri Baptist Convention, the firing came after two months of tension at the Missouri Baptist Convention school. Hewlett was elected president of Missouri Baptist College April 4 after having served as interim president since Nov. 16, 1990.

Genevox Group undergoes restructuring

NASHVILLE—A change in leadership and reduction of staff have resulted from a restructuring of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's music publishing group, according to a board official.

Four of the five production positions at Genevox Music Group were deleted and an interim manager appointed as implementation began in the first phase of a business plan approved by Sunday School Board trustees at their Aug. 19-21 meeting, said Dessel Aderholt, publishing analysis director for the board's office of general publishing.

Earlier, Mark Blankenship was named interim manager, and will assume the role of directing the day-to-day operations. Blankenship takes up the work of Fes Robertson, a 24-year employee of the board, who elected to retire effective Oct. 1.

Texas board OKs Baylor, budget proposals

DALLAS—At its quarterly meeting in Dallas Sept. 10, the Texas Baptist executive board voted to recommend to the annual meeting of the Baptist General Convention of Texas in November a new relationship agreement with Baylor University and a \$68.8 million budget for missionary, educational and benevolent causes.

The board also approved the release of escrowed 1991 funds for Baylor University according to a new funding formula, and it agreed to a new policy concerning which church gifts are classified as part of the Cooperative Program unified budget.

After considerable discussion, the BGCT executive board voted 110 to 36 to approve a proposal that potentially could end a controversy over the state convention's relationship to Baylor University.

Fellowship receipts \$2.6 million

ATLANTA (BP)—The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship reports more than \$2.6 million in receipts the first eight months of this year, according to a financial statement distributed during the fellowship's coordinating council meeting in Atlanta Sept. 12-14.

The financial statement shows \$2,653,365 in receipts from Jan. 1 to Aug. 31.

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Hunger budget drained

ATLANTA (BP)—Southern Baptists' national hunger relief program is like a good news, bad news joke without the humor.

The good news is more churches and associations are discovering and trying to meet needs in their communities, says Nathan Porter, assistant director of the Home Mission Board church and community ministries department.

The bad news is escalating requests for financial assistance have drained hunger relief resources.

Currently, most petitions are granted at only half the amount requested, says Paul Adkins, HMB vice president for ministry. Donations to domestic hunger relief have kept pace with recent years, but they have not kept up with inflation or increased requests, Adkins notes. This year's receipts through Aug. 31 total \$655,115, compared to \$651,044 for the same period in 1990 and \$629,523 for the first eight months of 1989.

Adkins predicts the status quo level of giving will not be enough to meet future demands.

"We're going to see more requests for hunger funds this winter because of the recession," Adkins says. "Unless our economy changes, we're going to see a greater need than ever."

Undesignated donations to the Southern Baptist world hunger program are split 80 percent to the Foreign Mission Board and 20 percent to the HMB. In the United States, churches or associations channel requests for funds through a state coordinator who requests money from the HMB hunger relief fund.

Bob Nowlin, director of church and community ministries for St. Louis Baptist Association, is already experiencing affects of the recession and cutbacks in hunger relief funds.

"The number of people coming to our food pantries has drastically increased," Nowlin says. "More people are being laid off, and the jobs that are available are lower paying jobs. Also, the increase in the cost of housing and utilities means a family has less money for food."

Yet Nowlin says in 1989 he received \$19,000 in hunger relief funds. In 1990, he received \$9,000. So far this year, he has received \$5,000.

Nowlin uses hunger relief funds primarily to stock food pantries at the association's four cooperative ministry centers and individual churches. The pantries typically give people enough food to prepare three meals a day for three days.

"We've had to tell (the ministry centers) to cut back, to somehow reduce the

number of people they're feeding," Nowlin says.

Brenda Forlines, director of church and community ministries for the Florida Baptist Convention, says the amount of money she requests from the hunger relief fund is up because more churches are requesting assistance. Many of her requests are used to support ministries with migrants and ethnic residents of south Florida.

Adkins hopes Baptists will be generous in giving to hunger relief as a result of observing World Hunger Day, Oct. 13.

Adkins also suggests ways for churches and associations to be involved in hunger relief projects without depending on hunger relief funds.

His suggestions include teaching people how to budget funds and how to make thrifty food purchases and providing transportation to wholesale supermarkets where items are typically less expensive than neighborhood stores.

"I'm concerned that Southern Baptists see hunger relief from the biblical standpoint that we don't own anything," Adkins says. "What we have is given to us that we might help our brothers and sisters. We are mere stewards."

Chapman calls for prayer alert

NASHVILLE (BP)—Using the prayer ministry of a Florida church as a model, Southern Baptist Convention President Morris Chapman has issued a call for Southern Baptist churches to enlist in a national prayer ministry for 1992.

Called Watchman On The Wall National Prayer Alert, Chapman made his plea during his address to the SBC Executive Committee meeting in Nashville Sept. 16-18.

"Upon my election 15 months ago, I felt in my soul that God wanted me to call Southern Baptists to pray for spiritual awakening in America," Chapman told the Monday night session of the meeting. "We did so during the convention in Atlanta. Now I believe God is leading me to call all Southern Baptist churches, large and small, to enlist in a national prayer ministry for 1992."

Chapman cited the Watchman Prayer Ministry of First Baptist Church, Merritt Island, Fla. where a vision for a prayer ministry was given the pastor in 1989. Chapman asked Larry Thompson, pastor of the Florida church in 1989 but now at Dauphin Way Baptist Church, Mobile, Ala. to be the National Director of the Prayer Alert.