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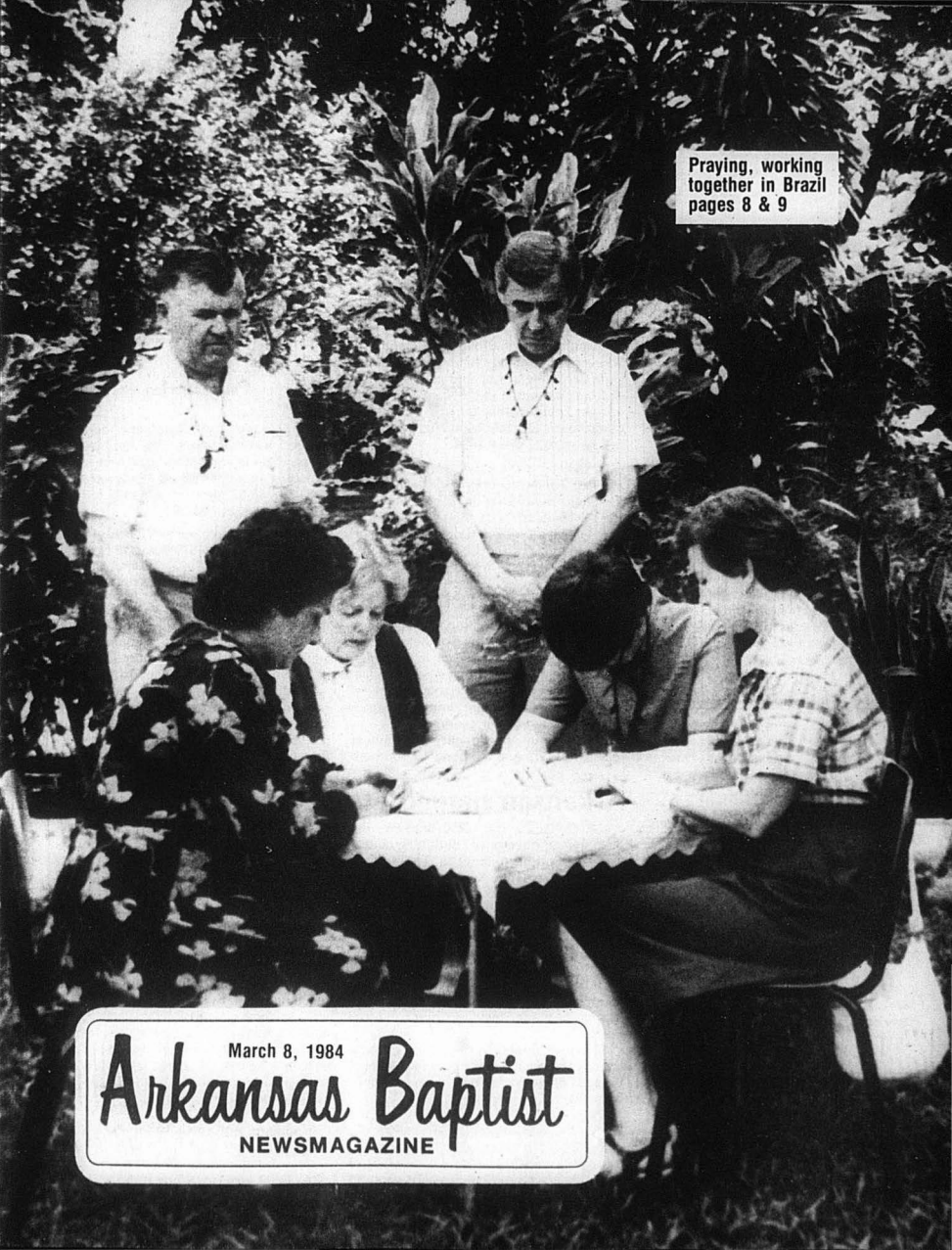
March 8, 1984

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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Praying, working
together in Brazil
pages 8 & 9

March 8, 1984

Arkansas Baptist
NEWSMAGAZINE



ABN photo/J. Everett Sneed

Arkansas and Brazilian Baptists join in prayer for the Bold Mission partnership being forged between Arkansas and the Brazilian Baptist conventions of Amazonas-Roraima and Para-Amapa. Six Arkansans visited Brazil in February. Seated are (l to r) Celia Reis, Amazonas Convention music director; Lynn Almstead, missionary; Julia Ketner, ABSC WMU director; Katsy McAlister, Arkansas WMU board member; (standing) Russell Miller, Arkansas Baptist Men president; and Jim Adams, pastor, Beech Street First Church, Texarkana.

In this issue

7 '...and in Jerusalem'

At a meeting in Little Rock, Baptist Student Union directors from across the nation voted to emphasize the problem of domestic hunger by supporting the Home Mission Board's new "Jerusalem Projects".

14 join hands

SBC President Jimmy Draper told the convention's Executive Committee he wants Southern Baptists to emphasize the things "we can join our hands and hearts on", rather than their differences.

1984-85 SBC budget expects lower increase

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—The upward spiral in operating budgets of Southern Baptist Convention agencies will slow dramatically in 1984-85.

The annual meeting of the 14.1-million member denomination this June will consider a national Cooperative Program budget for its next fiscal year of \$130 million, with \$118 million designated as operating budgets for the agencies of the convention.

That compares to a \$125 million budget for 1983-84 (\$114.5 million operating).

"This was more than an agonizing decision—it was gut-wrenching," said John Sullivan, pastor of Broadmoor Church in Shreveport, La., and chairman of the program and budget subcommittee of the Executive Committee of the convention. He told the February meeting of the Executive Committee, "Our best hope is that everyone will be equally dissatisfied."

To that end, the subcommittee recommended that the majority of the agencies get the same percentage increase over their 1983-84 budgets—2.79. The six seminaries will receive a block amount which equals 2.79 percent but the funds are pro rated

among the schools on the basis of a complex formula so the increase will vary from campus to campus.

The Foreign Mission Board, which will receive 50 percent of the Cooperative Program budget, was given a 3.06 percent increase over the current fiscal year.

"We certainly don't desire that this (the same increases for everyone regardless of budget requests) become a precedent for future budgets but felt in these circumstances it was the fairest thing we could do," Sullivan explained.

When the program and budget subcommittee met in January to work out the details of the budget, they had known for four months projected income was almost \$21 million below the budget requests from the agencies.

The Cooperative Program operating budget had increased by double-digit percentages in eight of the past nine years, including increases of 18.49 percent for 1983-84; 15.87 percent for 1982-83 and 10.67 percent in 1981-82.

The 1984-85 three percent increase is the smallest in 15 years (1970's was 2.2 percent).

Arkansans remain in Lebanon

Two Arkansas natives, serving in Lebanon as representatives of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, remain in that country despite the fierce struggle between factions of that country's civil war and the recent evacuation of eight Southern Baptist missionaries and their children.

LaNell Barnes, of Monette, and Frances Fuller, of Wynne, are among 13 Southern

Baptist representatives still in the country. Mrs. Barnes is a church and home worker and Mrs. Fuller is a publications worker. Both live in Monsouriyeh, east of Beirut.

Another Arkansas native assigned to Lebanon, Ruth Spence of Byron, is on furlough in Knightdale, N.C. She is under appointment as a secondary teacher in west Beirut.

Arkansan named at Southern Seminary

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)—Ross Brummett has been named director of continuing education at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. He replaces Dan Francis who resigned earlier to accept the

pastorate at Central Church, Winchester, Ky.

Brummett, a native of Barton, Ark., holds the BA degree from Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia, Ark., and the M.Div. degree from Southern Seminary.

First black Mississippi SBC mission sponsored

MOSS POINT, Miss. (BP)—The first black Southern Baptist mission of Mississippi Baptists has begun in Pineview Church in Moss Point.

All black churches in the state previously have been affiliated either with the National Baptist Convention or one of several other black Baptist conventions.

Allen Webb, director of missions of the Jackson County Association, called the establishment of the mission "a major breakthrough in missions. It shows the walls of prejudice have crumbled in Mississippi in

the interest of doing maximum work toward reaching the state for Christ.

"It balances our mission perspective," he added. "Previously we have given great attention to missions abroad, but have done so little to help reach a large segment of our population at home. It re-emphasizes the fact we believe 'God is no respecter of persons.'"

In addition to the association, the mission jointly is sponsored by Ingalls Avenue Church in Pascagoula, Pineview Church in Moss Point and First Church in Jackson.

A debt of gratitude

The editor's page

J. Everett Sneed



Baptists owe a debt of gratitude to pastors who must work at a second job in order to support their families. Too often the contributions of these men are not properly recognized. It is evident that Southern Baptists could not have progressed as we have without the work and dedication of these noble servants of God.

In the past, many bi-vocational pastors served churches which were able to have services only one or two Sundays a month. These pioneer preachers did a remarkable job in spreading the gospel and training leadership despite the limited time they had with any given congregation.

Today most, if not all, of our Arkansas churches have full-time preaching services. Yet, we still have over 800 churches averaging less than 100 in Sunday School. Many of these churches do not have enough financial resources to provide full support for a pastor and his family. Therefore, the bi-vocational pastor still plays a vital role in our work.

The contribution of the bi-vocational pastor is evident all across the Southern Baptist Convention, since we have, currently, more than 10,000 serving our churches. This is approximately one-third of all of our Southern Baptist pastors. Although we do not have exact statistics for Arkansas, it is evident that our state is well above the national average.

The value of the bi-vocational pastor to the cause of Christ and his church is shown by the fact that denominations that have chosen not to use these men have not grown as Southern Baptists have. Many of our large metropolitan churches were founded by bi-vocational pastors. Most rural congregations were at one time served by bi-vocational pastors. Without them we would be much smaller numerically and much weaker spiritually.

Bi-vocational pastors will be essential to the future of Southern Baptists. There are currently 504 counties in the United States which do not have a Southern Baptist congregation. Our seminaries are overflowing with young people whom God has called to the ministry. Some of these will need to serve in pioneer areas as bi-vocational pastors.

Bi-vocational pastors have a noble heritage. The apostle Paul, for example, was skilled in a second occupation — tent making. He was pleased to have never been a burden to anyone. He said, "Neither did we eat any man's bread for naught, but wrought with labor and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you" (I Thess. 3:8; 2:9; II Cor. 11:9).

Paul, through his tent making, located some excellent helpers in carrying the gospel. It appears that the husband and wife team,

Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18:1-4), were already committed Christians. But their mutual occupation, as well as their commitment to the gospel, drew them together at a time when Paul needed help.

Another benefit derived from a preacher's working at a secular vocation is the fact that he always knows what the life of the "working man" is like. This was one of the reasons the Jewish rabbis were required to be bi-vocational. Rabbi Gamaiel III said, "All study of the Torah (law) which is not combined with work will ultimately be futile and lead to sin" (Bruce, *The Book of Acts*, p.367).

Obviously, however, there are many drawbacks to the pastor's being bi-vocational. There is the constant strain on his time and energy. He can not devote his full time and thought to the spread of the gospel and the developing of his church members. Sometimes his secular work may make it impossible for him to minister to people in times of illness or grief.

Every church should provide full support for its pastor, as soon as it has adequate resources to do so. Church members need to realize the most important person in guiding the congregation is the pastor. Paul emphasized the obligation of the church to its pastor as he said, "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel" (I Cor. 9:14).

Contrary to what some people may think, bi-vocational pastors are often well-trained. Many are college graduates and hold seminary degrees. Many ordained ministers, like this editor's own father, who held both the bachelor's and the master's degree, have chosen to serve as bi-vocational pastors. If needs are to be met in our pioneer areas, others must serve in this manner.

There are several positive steps which should be taken toward recognizing the importance of the bi-vocational pastor. First, let us re-emphasize the fact that there are no big and little churches. Any New Testament congregation which is in God's will is big, regardless of its attendance. Every pastor is important and valuable to God, if he is serving where God wants him to serve.

More bi-vocational pastors should be included on boards and committees. This is often a problem because, of the difficulty of being away from a secular job. But these men have a great deal to contribute and they should be included.

Finally, we should thank God for these men and their dedication. They are a mighty force in spreading the gospel through our land. If this country is to be confronted with the gospel, every God-called person must be employed to this end.

Arkansas Baptist

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Analysis: Moral Majority omits prayer at its meetings

by J. Marse Grant

Now it's out. The Moral Majority, which is trying to restore prayer as a customary practice in the public schools, does not open its own meetings with prayer, according to Leon McBeth, professor of church history at Southwestern Seminary at Fort Worth.

Why? The organization is made up of Protestants, Jews, Roman Catholics, Mormons and some who claim no religious affiliation at all.

The question arises as to what kind of prayer would be used in a body with such a religious diversion. I agree with McBeth, who continues, "I have no complaints about this practice. . . . I just wish (the Moral Majority) could see that this should also be extended into other areas of life, particularly the public schools. Most public school classrooms are far more diverse than Moral Majority meetings, and meaningful prayer would be even more difficult."

Since it is a political organization instead of religious, as its supporters often point out,

the absence of prayer should not be surprising.

Writing in the *Baptist Message of Louisiana*, McBeth contends, "Since World War II the public schools have become ever more secular. Many of us feel the courts have gone to unwarranted extremes to prevent even the voluntary expression of Christian values. However, we put more burdens on the schools than can be bear. . . . How can the schools be expected to infuse morality and religious values into the new generation when the churches, whose task it is, has failed to achieve these goals?"

This gets to the heart of the matter. The teaching of religion, by example and precept, should take place in the home and in the church or synagogue. It's true that some children don't have those two strong bases of learning and that's sad; however, that may be the choice of their parents or guardians who have that freedom.

Government-mandated prayers were rul-

ed unconstitutional by the U. S. Supreme Court more than 20 years ago. It's easy to understand when one considers the religious pluralism in America.

There's one public school in New York City which has students from nearly 50 religious and ethnic backgrounds. How could anyone come up with a prayer that's acceptable to all of them? How could teachers and principals deal with a situation like that? It would be impossible.

Outside a huge metropolitan area still other problems arise. In Utah, Nevada or perhaps Idaho, the majority group would be Mormons. In the South and Southwest, it could be Baptists or Methodists. In Chicago, the largest Roman Catholic diocese in America, children of that faith would be in the majority.

In Chicago and other strongholds of Catholicism, there are hundreds of private schools—and if parents prefer those schools, fine. Religious schools are for the purpose of teaching doctrines and beliefs of the sponsoring denomination or faith, but the public schools are the educational workhorses of America. Religion is not their job.

A closing thought: prayer is too personal to be politicized, whether it opens a meeting of the Moral Majority or another day in P.S. 180 in New York City. With another election year approaching, keep a close eye on that volatile mixture of classroom prayer and politics. There's very little true religion in it.

Grant is editor emeritus of North Carolina's *Biblical Recorder*. Reprinted by permission from the *Charlotte Observer*.



The Southern accent

D. Jack Nicholas

A trend which started in some states in the Northeast to replenish sagging state treasuries by lottery has caught the attention of every state in the nation, including Arkansas. To states hard pressed by inadequate revenues from legitimate sources, the state lottery with its phenomenal success is viewed by many to be the most convenient "quick fix" for strained state budgets.

One wonders why some enterprising but not very astute politician has not expanded the concept for the state to take over not only gambling but prostitution and the illegal drug trade as well. It would be unseemly to suggest take-over of any other of the darker activities of humanity because the underworld must be left with something with which to support itself. Fair is fair, and the state is entitled only to its fair share of the exploitation of the frailty of humankind.

The risk taken with such a suggestion is that some may not find it absurd and repugnant. But the fact is that gambling is in the same company with the illegal drug trade, prostitution, and other human vices with regard to its immorality and its adverse effects upon the race. They all demean, debase, and dehumanize man.

The idea that a government may appropriately resort to lottery for part of its support is patently offensive. Revenue from such a source may indeed help to finance government, but revenue from such a unsavory source may not be long expected to sustain good government. It is inevitable that a

government supported in part by such tainted income will, in time, become tainted itself.

It is unthinkable that our government should actually encourage its citizens to gamble. It seems logical that the next step would be that the government should encourage its citizens to participate in state sponsored prostitution and drug abuse, etc. all for the sake of enriching the state treasury, of course.

By way of making the state lottery palatable, there is an effort to sanitize the lottery from all moral implications. Dewayne V. Burke, director of the Public Gaming Research Institute in Rockville, Md., stated, "States are realizing that a lottery ticket is simply a consumer product." We are in desperate trouble if the general population has come to look upon a lottery as having no more moral implication than a loaf of bread, but that is the intention of those pushing the concept. The advocates project a future where lottery gaming in the form of video electronic machines may become as commonplace as Pac Man machines. Think of the possibilities for solving the revenue problems of the state government. But, then think — for a very long time — of the implications of this for our civilization: a rich state treasury in a morally bankrupt society.

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

missionary notes

Mr. and Mrs. J. Fred Spann, missionaries to Brazil, have completed furlough and returned to the field. Their address is: Caixa Postal 221, 50000 Recife, PE, Brazil. He is a native of Levy. The former Bettey Brawner, she was born in Colt and lived in Wynne while growing up. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1962.

Goal exceeded

Arkansas Baptists exceeded their 1983 Dixie Jackson State Missions Offering goal by 5.6 percent, according to Conway Sawyers, State Missions Department director.

Churches gave \$336,864.80, nearly \$18,000 above the goal.

Money given above the goal will be placed in the Missions Department Disaster Fund, to be available when the next disaster occurs, Sawyers said.

You'll be glad to know...

Don Moore

...Of one happy recipient of our trademark! He was not born into a Southern Baptist family. He didn't find a Southern Baptist church. The little Southern Baptist church found him. Mrs. Myers kept coming to Frank and saying, "We want you to be in R.A.'s; we want to talk to you about being an Ambassador for Christ." Mr. Claude Hedges would drive four miles to pick Frank up and take him to Sunday School. "He had that special way of sharing and crying that won me to Jesus Christ."



Moore

This is the testimony I heard when that same Frank, Frank Pollard, was inaugurated as president of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary. Perhaps Mrs. Myers and Mr. Hedges have left the earthly scene by now. But what tremendous returns are being realized on their investment of time and effort. They likely never dreamed they were a part of something so consequential as working with God to prepare a seminary president. They were just obeying the Lord.

... **Finding people**—that was our trademark for decades past. Aggressive evangelism that takes literally "going into the highways and hedges," this is what God honored in making Southern Baptists a mighty force.

Today, there is a great temptation to make our buildings, programs and personnel so attractive and inviting that folk will come seeking the Lord. They are staying away in droves. An average of one conversion for each 36 or so church members indicates we have to a large extent departed from our historic tradition of finding people.

The statistic used to report our stewardship of the gospel has been alarming. How many baptisms are of people actually saved in another denomination? How many baptisms are repeated experiences of those who interpret their first experience to have been invalid? How many baptisms are those of children being brought up in regular Sunday School and church attendance? Subtract all of those and we could see what kind of dent we are making in our community. There would not be many saved and baptized as a result of aggressively "finding the people."

Let's go after the people — one of them may be the next Bill Graham, Lottie Moon or Frank Pollard.

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



Food and fellowship

Virginia Kirk and Jane Purtle

Tenth anniversary

Ten years ago this month, Virginia and I began this column in the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*. We were motivated by our interest in cooking and our belief that food was an important part of Baptist life. Initially, we wondered if we would have enough worthwhile topics to write about and enough really good recipes. We've never run out of either.

Through the years we have learned a lot about cooking and food from each other and from our readers. We thank each of you who have taken the time to write. We had the largest response to our offer of recipes for Master Mix. Almost a hundred readers responded to that column. Many of you have told us personally how you appreciated a particular column or recipe. Every recipe we have printed was tested by us or some trusted cook.

As we look toward the future, we hope to compile and publish a book containing our recipes and thoughts about food as it relates to Baptist life. We've become convinced of the central place that food holds in our church and home life, as well as in the Biblical stories. It is often the center of the fellowship we share with our friends at home and church. In the Lord's Supper, it is the center of the life we share with Jesus Christ and the Father.

Good meals and good recipes are wonderful gifts. We hope you will keep sharing them with us. We welcome suggestions for the cookbook, future columns, and new recipes. Please write us at 910 College St., Batesville, AR 72501.

Virginia and I are always looking for a new, unusual, simple dessert to serve a small group or take to church supper. Both of these are extremely easy to prepare and very tasty.

Cranberry Cake

Spread in bottom of 9x9 baking dish: 2 cups cranberries, ½ cup sugar, ½ cup nuts. Beat together 1 cup sugar, 1 cup flour, 2 eggs, ½ cup soft margarine, ½ cup shortening. Pour over cranberry mixture. Bake at 350 degrees for 40 minutes.

Goosey Butter Cake

Mix together 1 box yellow cake mix, 1 stick softened butter (real butter, if possible), 1 egg. Pat into bottom of greased 9x12 baking dish.

Beat well 1 egg, 2 cups powdered sugar, 8 ounces softened cream cheese. Spread over above mixture. Sprinkle with nuts. Bake at 350 degrees for 30-40 minutes.

Virginia Kirk, professor emerita at Arkansas College, is a member of Batesville First Church. Jane Purtle is on the staff of Christian Counseling and Teaching Center in Syria, Va. They have enjoyed cooking together for several years.

Letter to the editor

Look at the record

Newspapers from time to time carry articles by people who are atheists. Everything they say is to tear down what we and our forefathers have spent our lives building. They want to find fault instead of enjoying what we have gained over thousands of years.

Yes, people who believe in God have done some awful things. We are not perfect.

But look at the record: we have built hospitals, schools, nations, great music, great art, great buildings. We care for our neighbor and people of other nations. We spend billions of dollars to fight hunger,

pain, disease, and ignorance.

Look at the atheist record: The only song they have written is "We shall overcome". In the nations they control, there is a shortage of staple items for life and no luxuries except for "party members". Slavery is the normal life. They destroy, kill, maim and separate families. People risk and give their lives to escape from their power. They have no problem of too many people wanting in.

"When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; but when the wicked bear reign, the people mourn" (Prov. 14:34).—Russ Curry, Bentonville

'SBC Forum' to offer messengers pre-convention option

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)—The "SBC Forum," a meeting aimed at pastors and other ministers, is being planned to offer "another pre-convention option" for messengers to the 1984 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The Forum, being organized by a loosely-knit group of pastors, will be in the 2,000-seat Music Hall of the Roe Bartle Convention Center in Kansas City, 1:30-5 p.m., Monday, June 11.

"The forum is not an attempt to preempt any other pre-convention meeting," said Bill Bruster, pastor of Central-Bearden Church in Knoxville, Tenn., and publicity chairman for the event. "The Forum is an attempt to provide a meeting for those messengers not attending any other pre-convention gathering."

Bruster said the Forum is not a second Pastors' Conference, the traditional pre-convention meeting which draws upwards of 10,000 participants. This year's Pastors' conference, presided over by Charles F. Stanley, pastor of First Church of Atlanta, will meet in the Convention Center Sunday afternoon and Monday, June 10 and 11.

Other sessions preceding the annual meeting June 12-14 include the Woman's Missionary Union-SBC, and specialized gatherings for religious educators, music ministers, directors of missions, student workers and women in ministry.

"It is believed a significant segment is not being represented or attending any of the pre-convention meetings," Bruster said. "The SBC Forum is Southern Baptists speaking to Southern Baptists. It is not a split off anything."

Gene Garrison, pastor of First Church of Oklahoma City, and immediate past second vice president of the SBC, will preside at the SBC Forum.

"I was asked to preside and I agreed to do so simply because I personally would like to see a positive approach to providing help and encouragement for pastors," Garrison said.

"I remember the day when I looked forward to the annual Pastors' Conference as a place for inspiration and affirmation. Recent years, I believe, have seen the conference become merely a revivalistic religious-political platform.

"Our program will be entirely non-political and completely positive. It will provide a clear alternative for those who come to Kansas City seeking this kind of fellowship

and proclamation," Garrison said. He added the SBC Forum will not be "a lot of pulpit pounding harangue, but of substantive preaching."

Henry Crouch, pastor of Providence Church in Charlotte, N.C., who has been working to plan the Forum, said the program "has not yet been completely put together," but said four persons have agreed to speak.

Major messages will be delivered by Kenneth L. Chafin, pastor of South Main Church of Houston; David L. Matthews, pastor of First Church of Greenville, S.C.; Duke K. McCall, president of the Baptist World Alliance and chancellor of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., and Kirby Godsey, president of Mercer University in Macon, Ga.

Godsey replaces the previously announced J. Gordon Kingsley, president of William Jewell College in Liberty, Mo., who withdrew from the program.

Another feature will be a "pro and con discussion" on ordination of women. Although several prominent SBC leaders have been approached to take part in the program, presenters of the opposing views have not been named, Crouch said. "This will not be a debate, but just a presentation of points of view," he explained.

Chafin told Baptist Press he agreed to participate in the program only if the "program addressed itself to the ordinary needs of the pastor and his staff, if there is nothing political—said or unsaid—about the program, and if it would be very supportive of the agencies and institutions of the denomination.

"I did not have any part in the planning of the meeting," Chafin said. "But I think it is pretty obvious for a number of years that the Pastors' Conference has been used as a platform for political operation."

He added he believes the Pastors' Conference in the past several years "has had a very limited perspective and a very narrow modeling of the pastorate."

Bruster echoed Chafin's remarks, noting he believes the Pastors' Conference "has been far too politicized... far too much a preaching marathon. I am not interested in going and hearing the same people say virtually the same thing year after year.

"I haven't really found anything that has been helpful to my ministry or to help me to be a better pastor. Not everybody can grow a humongous church and when I was

a pastor in a town of 5,000, I would leave the Pastors' Conference feeling like a failure because I wasn't running 2,000 in Sunday school. I think we need another kind of affirmative model."

John Hewitt, pastor of Kirkwood Church in Kirkwood, Mo., who is local arrangements chairman, added he believes there are "many issues crucial to the ministry that are not being addressed by the Pastors' Conference.

"It seems we have had a succession of preachers preaching on evangelism. We feel there is more to pastoral ministry than evangelism, although that is very important," he said.

Hewitt said the organizers of the SBC Forum "are not staging a rump session. We are not seeking to take anyone away from the Pastors' Conference. But there are a lot of people who do not attend the Pastors' Conference because it does not meet their needs.

"We are not organizing a separate convention. I personally probably will go to the Pastors' Conference Sunday evening and Monday morning and probably Monday evening. But on Monday afternoon, I will go to the Forum and experience something a little different from what we have been getting in the past several years," he said.

Hewitt added, "There is no place for people who want to discuss things like worship, pastoral care or administration. The Pastors' Conference has become a preaching conference. That's important, but not the only thing which should ever be done."

He added when the Forum concludes "we will go to the convention and participate as loyal messengers from loyal churches."

Bruster used a "local church analogy" to describe the Forum: "The SBC annual meeting is like the church and the pre-convention meetings are like Sunday school classes. Many church members (messengers) are not coming to Sunday school (the pre-convention meetings). The Forum is simply starting another Sunday school class for those who are not attending," he added.

Bruster added the Forum "will not be political, and underline the 'not.' It is not designed to get anyone elected to anything. Not one of the speakers is running for SBC office. It is simply designed to help contemporary Christians deal with the issues of the day."

Home mission force at record level, sees 18 percent increase

ATLANTA (BP)—The Southern Baptist Home Mission Board recorded an 18 percent increase in missions personnel last year, boosting the total home missions force to a record 3,792 persons, reported Irvin Dawson, director of the HMB's missionary

personnel department.

The board approved or appointed 630 new missions workers during 1983, the second largest number of appointees during a single year, he said. In 1982, 693 new workers were assigned.

"Southern Baptists have proven again they take Bold Mission Thrust seriously and are willing to answer God's call to witness and minister, as well as provide the resources to expand our home missions force," said William G. Tanner, HMB president.

Student directors pledge to fight hunger at home

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (BP)—Members of the State Baptist Student Directors Association have voted unanimously to lead in promotion of domestic hunger projects among their campuses.

Nathan Porter, national consultant for domestic hunger for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, introduced 83 "Jerusalem Projects" (domestic hunger relief ministries in 18 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico) during the group's 25th annual meeting in Little Rock. Porter proposed Baptist Student Union groups underwrite a portion of or the total expense for specific domestic hunger relief projects.

Projects range in cost from \$150 for a New York mission congregation to provide food for low-income families to \$24,000 to help the Baptist Center in Miami, provide food assistance to some 1,000 Haitian refugees who pass through the center daily. A request of \$8,000 for Washington would provide food for diplomats living in the D.C. community who, because of a coup or other change in government in their home country, become economically stranded. A group could underwrite the total expense of the project, or a portion of it; \$100 would feed one diplomatic family for about one week.

Jerusalem Projects offer an opportunity for local and state BSU groups as well as churches to become involved in domestic hunger relief, Porter explained. The projects,

he added, "will raise the awareness of the need as well as the extent and gravity of the problem of hunger in the United States."

Porter assured student directors monies given will be used "100 percent" for food relief or buying seed or other food-related items. No funds will be used in development programs, said Porter, because they are already part of Christian social ministries missionaries' regular programs supported by Cooperative Program and Annie Armstrong Easter offering funds.

"What Jerusalem Projects have done is increase our capabilities for emergency food relief," said Porter. "And it's just in the nick of time because the need is so desperate, so urgent, just for survival."

"The impact of Jerusalem Projects is not fundraising at all," insisted Porter, "but the education of those who sponsor such projects and the overall concern it will generate for prayer support, local ministry involvement and advocacy on behalf of the poor."

Groups which support one of the Jerusalem Projects will work directly with HMB Christian social ministries missionaries. Working with home missionaries will increase students' awareness of mission needs in general and will increase personal support for home missions, added Porter.

Jim Greene, director of the division of campus ministry for North Carolina Baptists and president of the State Student Directors Association, said, "The Jerusalem Projects

allow our students to know about, pray for and give to meet the needs of some of God's children. We acknowledge ourselves as rich persons to whom the gospel speaks with powerful clarity. This will prod and help us act responsibly."

Porter called on Baptist campuses to conduct hunger surveys to assess local needs. He noted the Pan American University (Edinburg, Texas) BSU recently conducted a hunger survey and discovered "an alarming poverty level in that county of 60 to 70 percent, with 40 percent unemployment." Nearly 50 percent of the 240,000 residents received food stamps, but only 60 percent of those who qualified for the program took advantage of the benefits, he said.

The students also found a critical need for volunteers to staff existing programs as well as help establish new feeding programs in the area.

Porter said attitudes toward poor people claiming they cheat, take advantage of food stamp programs, and are con artists who don't want to work and don't deserve help only hinders ministry to the poor. Student participation in Jerusalem Projects will provide an experiential education that will reshape Baptists' thinking about the poor, he added.

"One of the best ways to overcome these prejudices and myths about the poor is through personal involvement in ministries to and with poor people."

New hunger committee established by House

WASHINGTON (BP)—A Select Committee on Hunger designed to coordinate congressional actions on hunger issues has been established by the U.S. House of Representatives.

By a 309-78 vote, the House authorized establishment of the committee which will have no legislative jurisdiction but will be empowered to conduct a comprehensive study of domestic and international hunger problems as well as review executive branch

recommendations on hunger. The panel would be composed of 17 members appointed by Speaker of the House Thomas P. O'Neill Jr., D-Mass.

A separate funding resolution for the committee will be considered at a later date.

"Once funded, the new committee would be required to report to the House "as soon as practical during the present session of Congress, the results of its investigation and study." Recommendations by the hunger

panel would then be referred to existing House committees with jurisdiction over hunger related issues.

Rep. Tony P. Hall, D-Ohio, floor manager of the hunger panel resolution, said "Hunger is a plague on this Earth—but is one that can be cured."

Hall said the new committee would "provide the necessary mechanism to coordinate existing congressional action on domestic and international hunger."

Draper, Executive Committee oppose ambassador to Vatican

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—At the urging of Southern Baptist Convention President James T. Draper Jr., members of the SBC Executive Committee unanimously adopted a resolution opposing establishment of diplomatic relations with the Vatican.

The resolution, drafted Feb. 20, on the eve of the resumption of hearings on the confirmation of presidential envoy William Wilson as ambassador to the Holy See, was transmitted to key members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee by telegram.

Draper, pastor of First Church of Euless, Texas, told members of the Executive Committee: "I have spoken very plainly against establishment of diplomatic relations with the Vatican. I feel it is one of the most im-

portant issues we are facing.

"Many groups do not see the importance, particularly independent groups... but they have no sense of history. Baptists, and particularly Southern Baptists, have always been at the forefront in this issue of separation of church and state."

Draper commented he is "not against the Pope. I like Pope John Paul II. I am not against Catholics. But the truth is that an ambassador to the Vatican is an ambassador to the Roman Catholic Church."

He commented that in times past there has been a political entity, but added "that was 100 years ago when the papal state was 17,000 square miles and had three million inhabitants. There is no state today." He

added: "When Mr. Wilson referred to the Pope as the Holy Father, that didn't seem like a political relationship to me."

Draper testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Feb. 2, and he told the Executive Committee that staffers of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs in Washington, "had prepared my testimony. I deviated from that somewhat, but not much. They did a wonderful job and helped me verbalize some things."

The resolution, as adopted by the committee, notes Baptists have historically been for the separation of church and state, and says the action "establishes a dangerous precedent of entanglement of church and state."

Prayer launches Arkansas partnership with Brazil

by J. Everett Sneed

"The needs and opportunities in the Amazon region are exciting and yet challenging beyond our ability to respond," said Executive Secretary Don Moore in evaluating the recent trip that he and other Arkansans made to set up a partnership with two state conventions in Brazil. The partnership, which will officially begin in March of next year and conclude with the end of 1987, will utilize Arkansas people to help Brazilian Baptists in reaching the lost and strengthening churches.

The Amazon River basin, in which Arkansas will be working, has two major cities and a large rural population accessible primarily by boat. Manaus has a population of approximately 925,000, while Belem has a population of 450,000. The two state conventions cover the four areas of Amazonas, Roraima, Para and Amapa.

Brazil itself has a larger land area than the United States, excluding Alaska, and a population of more than 127.7 million people. There are a number of ethnic groups within the country including Brazilians, Indians, Portuguese, Negroes and immigrants from Europe and the Orient. Since the spoken language is Portuguese, it will be necessary for an interpreter to work with each group.

While most of the people claim to be Roman Catholic, only a small percentage attend church with any regularity. Many of the people are open to the claims of the gospel, but the main problem for Brazilian Baptists is to provide resources and manpower to share the gospel with the people.

The partnership was born in the hearts of Glendon Grober, who has served as a missionary to Brazil for 30 years, and Executive Secretary Don Moore. Grober,

who will be the Arkansas director of the program, has accepted a position as an associate in the Arkansas Evangelism Department beginning the latter part of this month. It is estimated that a minimum of 300 Arkansas volunteers will be required to make the partnership a success.

The vastness of the endeavor which Arkansas has accepted is illustrated by the fact that Para alone has a land area of approximately 474,000 square miles. This one state is one-third larger than Arkansas and Texas combined. The Para State Convention has 94 churches, 18 missions and 200 preaching points, with a total Baptist membership of 7,500.

The climate is hot and humid. The rainfall averages about 600 inches a year, with dry and wet seasons, depending on which section of the Amazon region one is in. The temperature averages about 78 degrees, with little variance during the year. But the daytime temperature can go much higher, and the humidity usually is about 80 percent.

The Amazon River is spectacular. It is a little shorter than the Nile but has the largest volume of water of any river on earth. An estimated 170 billion gallons of water per hour is discharged into the Atlantic Ocean. The Amazon system drains across 2.7 million square miles and touches parts of six countries.

Life in all forms, from man to insects, is rife along the river. Thousands of specimens of fish and insects and hundreds of types of birds and mammals make their homes in the water and forest of the Amazon region.

Indigenous tribes live along the banks of the river and have for centuries. Many Indians still make their homes and living in the Amazon area, pro-

vided, to a large extent, from outside influences.

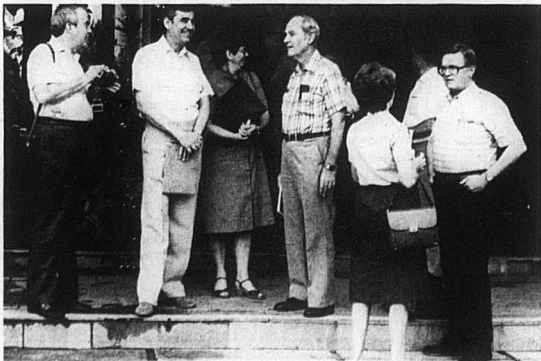
Area dwellers live by the rise and fall of the river with their homes being either houseboats or houses built on stilts. Canoes are still the basic transportation for many. Small passenger crafts carry people long distances into the river towns.

Arkansas Baptists working with the Brazilian Baptists and the Foreign Mission Board will be working to meet the needs of the people living in the cities and isolated areas of the Amazon Valley region. Julia Ketner, executive director of the Arkansas Baptist WMU, said, "We can only begin to meet the needs of this area as God guides us and grants us wisdom. The first and most important aspect of this partnership must be prayer. Unless God gives us guidance, we will surely fail. With his help we will succeed."

Prayer for the partnership for the Amazon Valley region of Brazil will be kicked off at the WMU annual meeting on March 21-22, at First Church, Benton.

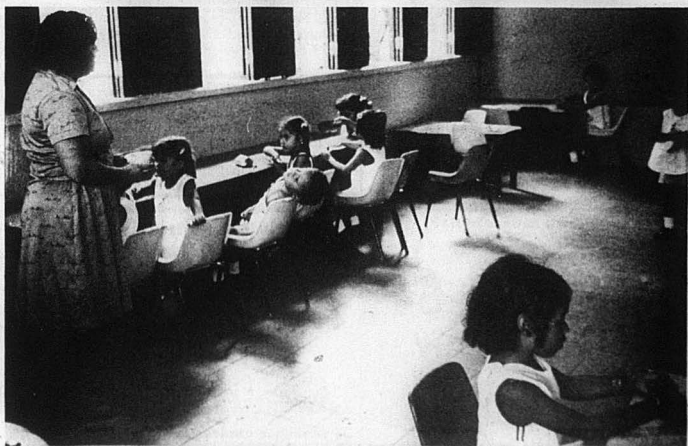
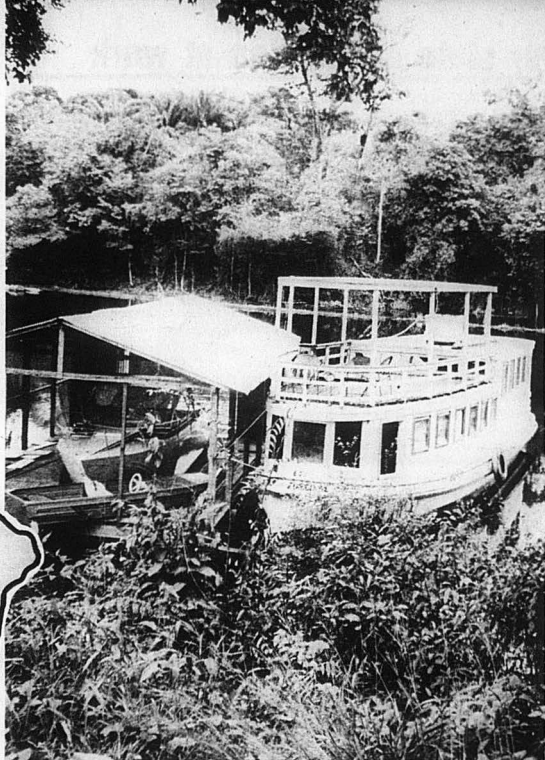
J. Everett Sneed is editor of the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine.

Departing from the hotel in Manaus are (left to right) Neal Guthrie, Arkansas Brotherhood director; Jim Adams, pastor of Beech Street Church in Texarkana; Julia Ketner, Arkansas' WMU executive director; J. Daniel Luper, professor at Equatorial Baptist Theological Seminary in Belem; Marjorie Grober, missionary to Brazil; Russell Miller, layman from Mountain Home (background); and Arkansas executive director Don Moore



ABN photos by J. Everett Sneed

Amazonas Executive Secretary
Thome Tavares (left) makes plans for
the partnership with Glendon Grober.



TOP RIGHT: The boat used to travel to the interior is named after Eric Nelson, first Baptist missionary to the Amazon who arrived in 1882.
RIGHT: These kindergarten students at the Eric Nelson Baptist School in Manaus are among 3500 who attend through grade 12. Junior college classes meet here at night.

Your state convention at work

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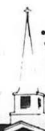
Shell

He also was the greatest first century evangelist. Augustine was a great theologian. He formulated the theology which Luther and his contemporaries so effectively used many centuries later in the Reformation. Jonathan Edwards was a great Christian scholar in America that God used to initiate the Great Awakening. Many would be surprised to know that Charles Finney was a systematic theology professor. He also was the most effective evangelist of his generation.

Evangelism depends upon theology. The purpose of theology is to define and explain our evangel. The evangelist confronts the lost world with the evangelical truth and urges it upon those who hear. Evangelism is the living expression of doctrinal theology. Our evangelism must draw upon the very truth by which the church lives and moves and has its being. — Clarence Shell, director

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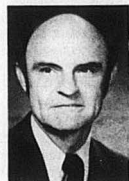
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Baptist Student Union

Good news at Hot Springs

Three college students, heavily involved in our BSU program at Garland County Community College, were baptized last



Logue

week in Baptist churches in Hot Springs.

Community colleges are difficult places to carry on BSU work. There are no dormitories and usually no Baptist Student Centers. Most of the students work and are on the campus only for classes. There is little community, little *koinonia*.

Al Morris is our director at Garland County, and the first thing he did was to set up a table in the college's Student Union Building and put a sign on it 'Baptist Student Union.' Several times he has borrowed a friend's doughnut machine and made doughnuts for the students.

Soon he enlisted a core group of students. Today there are BSU Council meetings, devotional services, Bible studies, and various types of outreach. The students plan to enter both the girls' and boys' team in the state BSU basketball tournament. They have decided to give the money they won in a local talent contest to world hunger.

Congratulations to Al Morris and the Baptist Student Union at Garland County Community College. — Tom J. Logue, director

Church Training

State Youth Convention



Pollard



Tanner

What has at least 9,000 legs, travels on a church bus, eats hamburgers and smiles a lot? No, it's not some galactic monster about to invade the earth — just 4500 plus youth who will be traveling to Little Rock on Friday, April 20, for the 1984 State Youth Convention. This year's Youth Convention will meet at the Statehouse Convention Center with sessions beginning at 10 a.m., 2 p.m. and 6 p.m.

The program will feature Frank Pollard, president of Golden Gate Baptist Seminary, Mill Valley, Calif., and Christian musician Dave Tanner from Dallas, Texas. In addition, the state Youth Bible Drill and Youth Speakers' Tournament will be conducted and music will be provided by choirs from Ouachita Baptist University and Southern Baptist College.

The afternoon session will feature a "talk show" hosted by local television personality Beth Ward. Beth and Dr. Pollard will be sharing how youth can make choices based on Biblical principles. Each session will focus on helping youth live their discipleship on a daily basis.

For further information about the State Youth Convention contact the Church Training Department, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203, 376-4791. — Bill Falkner, associate

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MSC support enhances involvement, survey says

ATLANTA (BP)—A survey of Southern Baptist Convention churches and individuals which sponsor Mission Service Corps volunteers found a large majority do so in addition to regular contributions to the Cooperative Program and special SBC missions offerings.

The study, conducted by the Home Mission Board's research division, polled 80 churches and 171 individual sponsors about their involvement as direct supporters of home missions volunteers.

Ninety-four percent of individual sponsors and 81 percent of church sponsors provide MSC funds over and above their regular giving through traditional SBC channels, according to the survey. In addition, 43 percent of individuals said their contributions would most likely have gone to other benevolent causes, Baptist or otherwise, if not to support MSC volunteers.

Thirty-two percent of the churches reported their MSC gifts would probably not have been given at all if not to MSC volunteers. Less than one-fourth of the churches indicated the funds would have gone

instead to their church budget; one-third said they would have opted to send the money through other mission channels such as the Cooperative Program (five percent), SBC mission offerings (10 percent), or other benevolences (18 percent).

Three-fourths of the individual respondents said their church contributions had not been affected by their support of an MSC volunteer, and 12 percent said their church giving had increased. Three percent noted their church giving had decreased.

Almost 60 percent of both churches and individuals gave to MSC because they personally knew the volunteer they supported. MSC sponsorship resulted in increased awareness of and commitment to missions, a feeling of direct involvement in missions, and increased giving, the survey found.

More than 1,000 home missions volunteers have served through Mission Service Corps since it was created by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1977. The HMB estimates the cost of appointing missionaries to do the same work would have totaled \$10 million.

Hastings to retire as Illinois editor

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. (BP)—Robert J. Hastings will retire as editor of the *Illinois Baptist* in September, shortly after his 60th birthday.

Hastings, who has been editor of the 34,000 circulation weekly newspaper of the Illinois Baptist State Association 17 years, said the early retirement will enable him to do more teaching and creative writing.

"This is not an impulsive decision, but one I've anticipated for three or four years," he said, noting he first discussed the action with IBSA Executive Director Ernest E. Mosely 13 months ago.

This fall, Hastings will be visiting professor at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif.

David Bunch, the HMB's Mission Service Corps director, said the survey showed "rank and file Southern Baptists are very loyal to traditional avenues of giving tithes and offerings, but are also willing to go the second mile in responding to Bold Mission Thrust needs."

Bunch noted "instead of siphoning off funds from the Cooperative Program, Mission Service Corps seems to be ventilating available mission funds." The by-product of increased missions awareness pays dividends at home as MSC supporters "become more sensitive and responsive to local mission needs," he added.

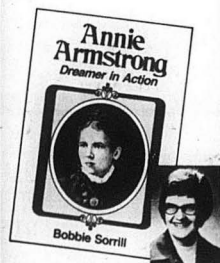
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Survey shows Baptists gain in reaching U.S. counties

ATLANTA (BP)—Southern Baptists made slow but steady progress last year in their attempt to place a Southern Baptist church or mission in every county in the United States, a Southern Baptist Home Mission Board researcher says.

A 1983 survey of state directors of missions indicated 504 counties in the United States lacked a Southern Baptist church or mission, said Clay Price, HMB missions researcher.

The figure represents a net drop of eight from the 512 counties reported as unentered in 1981, the last available Price said.

"Since 1973, SBC churches have been organized in 168 counties which previously had no Southern Baptist churches," he noted.

An unentered county is defined as one

without an SBC church or mission, said Price. The survey showed 65 counties have been entered since 1981; 57 previously-entered counties were reclassified as unentered, he explained, adding that if an existing church or mission disbands or relocates to another county it is possible for a previously-entered county to revert to unentered status.

About half of the 57 counties added to the unentered list were in Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota and Wisconsin, Price noted, while 31 of the 65 counties dropped from the unentered list were in Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York and Pennsylvania.

Price said 28 states listed at least one unentered county; 55 percent of the

unentered counties are located in five of the 28 states. Nebraska ranked the highest with 66 unentered counties, followed by Minnesota (62), Iowa (58), Wisconsin (49) and South Dakota (40).

Eight states had less than five unentered counties, including two states—California and Rhode Island—which reported only one unentered county each.

According to the 1980 census, the unentered counties had a combined population of 8.2 million people, said Price. Of the 504 unentered counties, state missions directors listed only 147 of them as high priority areas for church extension, he added. The remaining counties were ranked as medium or low priority. Wisconsin had the largest number of high priority counties with 21.

Bill establishing national drinking age supported

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Proposed legislation to set a national legal drinking age at 21 could provide a welcomed toe-hold in the uphill struggle against teenage alcohol abuse and its consequences.

But Ronald D. Sisk of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission believes the Reagan administration may have to make an exception to its back-to-the-states policy if the bill is to become law.

The proposed legislation (H.R. 3870) already has been approved by the House Energy and Commerce Committee and sent to the Rules Committee. The bill would prohibit shipment of alcohol to states

which do not have a minimum legal drinking age of 21.

A companion bill (S1948) has been introduced in the Senate.

In November a Presidential Commission on Drunk Driving recommended federal legislation requiring states to set 21 as the minimum legal age for purchase of alcohol. Although the administration endorsed the commission's general report, it objected to this particular provision, claiming such regulations should remain under state control.

Sisk and other supporters of H.R. 3870, however, insist the issue must be address-

ed at the national level.

"Unfortunately, state regulation leads to the phenomenon of young people crossing state lines to drink legally, then driving home thoroughly drunk," Sisk explained. "The only way to stop that practice is to establish a uniform national drinking age. To insist the question be dealt with on a state-to-state basis serves only to perpetuate this problem."

Sisk, who directs the Southern Baptist agency's work related to abuse of alcohol and other drugs, claimed raising the legal minimum drinking age to 21 will save the lives of many young people, as well as other victims of teenage drunk driving. "Some estimates indicate as many as 1,250 lives a year can be saved this way," he explained.

"These are crucial, potentially life-saving bills which ought to be considered before Congress recesses for this session," Sisk added. He urged Southern Baptists to respond quickly by expressing their opinions to their respective legislators.

Missionary to Japan named Witness editor

PORTLAND, Ore. (BP)—James L. Watters, 52, a Southern Baptist missionary to Japan for 20 years, has been elected editor of the *Northwest Baptist Witness*, newsjournal of the Northwest Baptist Convention.

Watters succeeds Herbert V. Hollinger, who resigned in August, 1983, to assume the

editorship of the *California Southern Baptist*.

Watters currently is chaplain of the Kobe Friendship House in Kobe, Japan, and is director of the Literature Evangelism Project of the Japan Baptist Mission. He is a native of Ada, Okla., and a graduate of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary.

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Draper seeks 'common ground' for Southern Baptists

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Southern Baptist Convention President James T. Draper Jr., continued to seek "common ground" for the denomination, pointing to efforts for missions and evangelism and against hunger, pornography and abortion as areas of agreement.

Draper, pastor of First Church of Eules, Texas, continued to emphasize the theme of common ground as he addressed the February session of the SBC Executive Committee. It is a theme he has frequently repeated in the past year.

"There are many things we can join hands on as we work together. We are going to have to turn from magnifying those things that we differ on and turn to those things we can join our hands and hearts on," he said.

First mentioning evangelism and missions as unifying factors, Draper turned his attention to "the very creative things that are being done to reach the world for Jesus Christ." He mentioned efforts to work and minister in the United Nations, where there are "35,000 diplomats from 160 nations."

Currently the Home Mission Board and the Baptist Convention of New York sponsor a mission to the United Nations, and the Christian Life Commission addresses issues

of concern in the international body.

Draper admitted some Southern Baptists are not big supporters of the UN, and said "I'm not very excited about it myself most of the time, but they are there."

He urged his co-religionists to "pray for peace. We can debate nuclear arms or the freeze, but we all ought to be praying for peace."

The second term president of the nation's largest non-Catholic denomination also urged the denomination to be "concerned about hunger," and said: "I believe we need to speak out positively about the evils and tragedy of abortion. We have let the independent groups take the flag from us on this."

Using abortion as an illustration of magnifying the differences, Draper noted the denomination "has tended to emphasize the exceptions—rape, incest, deformity. But less than five percent of the abortions are for these causes. Ninety-five percent of the abortions are for convenience or birth control. I think Southern Baptists ought to say that is wrong."

He urged continuing efforts against pornography and gambling, issues on which he said Baptists can agree.

Draper said he is continuing to "try to find something of a common ground that we have. If we don't have that common ground, then we will disintegrate. There are some things that we can agree on."

He added, however, there is a "real division theologically in our convention, but we can deal with it. We have the machinery to

deal with it. I have never called for anybody to be dismissed or to be fired. I don't think that is the way to do it. But if we pretend we have no differences, we stick our heads in the sand."

He noted he has heard from a "leader of the opposition" who said he felt disenfranchised in denominational affairs. "Many of us feel disenfranchised. It is a dangerous situation when people on both ends of the spectrum feel disenfranchised."

"We must face the issues that are before us, but there are more things that keep us together than separate us," he added.

Draper also noted Southern Baptists "must not continue to deal with the integrity and motives of those with whom we differ. There is an historic Baptist principle—which we seem to have forgotten—that says we can respect honest differences."

He told members of the Executive Committee he believes "in the basic integrity of every man and woman who leads the institutions and agencies of this convention. Some I disagree with, but that does not mean that I question their integrity or commitment to Christ."

He encouraged an honest dealing with unifying factors and areas of disagreement, noting there is "much misunderstanding and suspicion," in the denomination.

However, he emphasized, there are points of common ground, which can help Southern Baptists make the final 15 years of the 20th century the "greatest years in the history of the Christian movement. We have the resources and the training to do the job."

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International

Jesus encounters hostility

by Dennis M. Dodson, pastor, First Church, Monticello

Basic passage: Mark 2:1-3:6

Focal passage: Mark 2:15-17, 23 to 3:6

Central truth: Jesus encourages and enables us in encounters with the enemy wherein we experience their enmity.

Mark compiles some conflict cases which indicate the developing enmity of the religious legalists toward Jesus. These involve attitudes toward individuals and institutions that merit our attention.

The conflict that occurred in the home of Levi was caused by Jesus' association with persons whom the Pharisees regarded as sinners, with whom contact should be avoided in order to prevent ceremonial contamination. Their spiritual arrogance, however, was not only prohibiting their association with people, it was also preventing their acceptance by God (Mt. 5:3; Luke 18:9-14). In these associations Jesus was on a mission, which he would specify later in a similar situation (Luke 19:10).

The other two conflicts concerned the institution of the Sabbath. Jesus' response to the critics and reference to David re-emphasized the established principle that the provision of human need must take precedence over the practice of ritual requirements. The validity and value of institutions and instructions should meet the test, "Does it serve people?"

Religion is not to be rules and regulations but relationships and responsibilities (Mt. 12:28-31). Being sovereign of the Sabbath, as its owner Jesus could operate it as he chose. The practices and pressures of the Pharisees would change neither his conduct nor course which he knew were right.

Jesus' critics kept watching and waiting for an opportunity to accuse him of violating the religious law. Healing the crippled hand of a man in the synagogue on the Sabbath provided the opportunity.

Jesus was angered by their hardness of heart which opposed this humanitarian service. His anger was an indignation brought about with his love having to contend with attitudes and actions putting law above life and love.

From this we should learn to refrain from making the Lord's Day a time to emphasize regulation and prohibition. It should be a day to be positive in worship, witness, and work to the glory of God and the good of man.

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Life and Work

Establishing priorities

by Gene Crawley, First Church, Newport

Basic passage: Mark 12:13-44

Focal passage: Mark 12:28-31, 38-44

Central truth: Right relationships establish proper priorities.

An examination of Christ's life would reveal that he kept his priorities right. He prayed, if prayer was needed; he healed, if healing was needed; he preached, if preaching was needed. He went where he said he must and did what was expedient. Why can't we? We seem to let too many things get in the way of what is best. Our intentions are good, but our follow-through is poor. In the passage before us, Jesus gives us a formula for priorities.

The first step to proper priorities is placing God first in one's life. This may seem easy enough, but it is precisely here that most fail. We love God all right, but not with all our being. We love God too often for what he can do for us, and not what we can do for him. He is deserving of all our love, loyalty, and service.

The second step is in understanding and loving oneself. It seems that too often we either love ourselves too much or we don't love ourselves enough. If there is no love for self, we will be unable to love others, and we are told to "love thy neighbor as thyself."

Loving one's neighbor then becomes the third step. Beneficence is the characteristic of the life which loves others as oneself. Correct priorities were the reason of the widow in our text was esteemed by Jesus.

The widow (vv. 41-44) is a perfect illustration of the beneficent life. Having practically nothing, yet thinking of the needs of others and her responsibility toward God, she gave all that she had. Selfishness at best would say to give only from the overflow. This lady had no overflow, but she had proper priorities. Therefore, Jesus praised her.

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Mission tour scheduled

New Creations, the 75-voice college choir of University Church, Fayetteville, has scheduled an 11-day mission tour of Germany, Switzerland and Belgium March 16-26.

Under the direction of F. Tanner Riley, pastor of music and media ministries, the choir has prepared a repertory of songs in English and German. The trip will be the 16th annual missions excursion for the group and their second trip overseas.

Bible Book

Manasseh's evil reign

by Glenn E. Hickey, director of missions, Pulaski County Association

Basic passage: II Kings 21:1-26

Central truth: The greatness of a father's career is tarnished by the evil deeds of his son.

It is often true that the greatness of a prominent leader is eclipsed by the abysmal failure of his offspring. Such seems to be the case in the life of Judah's most illustrious ruler.

Hezekiah grew up as the godly son of an idolatrous father. His own son Manasseh experienced the opposite. He seems deliberately to have set his course to become the exact opposite of his godly father. He put an end to all his father's reforms. He practiced every conceivable kind of idolatry. He is pictured as a violent overlord whose long reign was characterized by treachery and bloodshed.

What lessons can be learned from Manasseh's 55-year reign of terror and unbridled wickedness? The best source for lesson applications for life today seems to be in the area of father-son relationships.

These truths are suggested by the lesson text:

1. Motivation for a life in such total contradiction of one's family traditions must have had deep roots in early father-son relationships. Manasseh was evidently born during the period of Hezekiah's spiritual pride and the ego trip reflected in 20:12-15. Did the young child see hypocrisy and arrogance in a father's religious life? Did he fail to receive the human warmth of a father's love? These are questions worth pondering.

2. No career is truly great, no professional achievements truly commendable, if they are achieved at the expense of one's own family. When one looks at the greatness of Hezekiah the father and the repudiation of it all in Manasseh the son, one is reminded of the lament in the Song of Solomon: "They have made me a keeper of the vineyards; mine own vineyard I have not kept" (1:6).

Dr. B. H. Carroll, founder of Southwestern Seminary, is Southern Baptist's only theologian to produce a complete commentary on the whole Bible. It is truly a monumental work. Carroll also produced a wayward son, and he often lamented his failure in the words of the lament quoted above.

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Bylaw revisions, site rotation system okayed

ASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Proposed revisions in three bylaws to the Southern Baptist Convention Constitution were approved and guidelines for selecting meeting sites for the annual meeting were reviewed during the February meeting of the SBC Executive Committee.

The committee heard a report from its bylaws workgroup on an ongoing study of Article VI of the Constitution, primarily dealing with the number of trustees of each of the 20 organizations supported by the national Cooperative Program.

The action asks "each agency of the convention to study the possible need to increase or decrease the number of persons serving as trustees, since each agency has unique needs, and to report to the Executive Committee by Feb. 1, 1985."

In the bylaws revisions, the committee adopted recommendations proposed by the 1983 annual meetings on the committee on boards, committee on committees and resolutions committee.

During the 1983 annual meeting messengers approved recommendations for residency requirements of persons serving on the committee on committees and committee on boards. Further revisions were approved in the February Executive Committee meeting and will be submitted to the 1984 annual meeting.

In the revision adopted in 1983, persons serving on the two committees were "required to have resided within the state from which they are elected at least one year prior to election."

Frank Ingraham, a Nashville attorney and chairman of the bylaws workgroup, said the wording eliminated some persons because it emphasized the "habitat" of the person.

Alvin O. West, a committee member from the District of Columbia, said the original wording would exclude him from service on the Executive Committee.

"I have been a member of First Church of the District of Columbia since 1941, and have served as president of the District of Columbia Convention. I live just across the Potomac River in Arlington, Va. I don't want to be excluded from the Executive Committee for what is left of my term of service because of the wording of the bylaw," he said.

In both of the bylaws, the committee members approved wording which says those serving either on the committee on boards or committee on committees "shall have been resident members for at least one year of a Southern Baptist church either geographically within the state or affiliated with the convention of the state from which they are elected."

The committee on committees bylaw (21) also includes the provision that the names of those appointed by the convention president "shall be released. . . to Baptist Press

no later than 45 days prior to the annual meeting of the convention."

The wording brings into accord with the reporting provisions for the committee on boards report, adopted at the 1983 convention.

The revisions on the resolutions committee bylaw (22) follow recommendations made by James T. Draper Jr., convention president, and used during the 1983 meeting.

Ingraham said the revisions "incorporate many of the things Jimmy Draper" suggested. Revisions of the bylaws concerning the resolutions process were suggested during the 1982 annual meeting, and also were considered, Ingraham added.

The revision also includes a provision that the names of those selected to serve be released through Baptist Press no later than 45 days prior to the convention.

The recommended bylaw sets out a process for introducing resolutions almost identical to that followed in Pittsburgh. "Proposed resolutions, including those previously sent to the committee, shall be submitted to the convention by a registered messenger not later than the beginning of the evening session of the first day of the convention.

"Titles of proposed resolutions and the names of the makers shall be read into the convention record by an officer of the convention and referred to the committee. . . ." it reads.

The bylaws work group reported it carefully studied two resolutions presented at the New Orleans convention, and declined to include them. One would have given resolutions the same weight as a motion, and the other requiring a three-fourths majority vote for adoption.

The committee heard a report from the convention arrangements workgroup which suggests a rotation of annual meeting sites between Texas (San Antonio, Dallas and Houston), Georgia (Atlanta) and Louisiana (New Orleans) "on a four to seven year rotation basis."

After adopting the suggestion of a rotation system, the committee voted to recommend Atlanta as the convention site in both 1991 and 1995, Indianapolis in 1992 and New Orleans in 1996.

John McCall, who voted against the proposals, said in the "next 11 years we are locked into only a few cities. That imposes a character on our convention that is not reflective of its nature. Someday I hope we will open up the guidelines and go to other cities."

Under guidelines adopted in 1983, the convention city must provide 6,500 hotel and motel rooms, 3,000 of which must be within two miles of the convention center, a hall capable of seating 16,000 persons and 50,000 square feet of exhibit space.