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Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

8-16-1984

August 16, 1984

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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August 16, 1984

Arkansas Baptist

NEWSMAGAZINE

Single adults:
part of the family
page 5



On the cover



BSSB photo / David Hayward

Conferences at Ridgecrest and Glorieta Conference Centers provide single adults like Sherry Upshaw an opportunity to share with others how they are involved in their churches. Upshaw is a member of First Church of Shreveport, La. Churches are encouraged to highlight single adults as part of the church family on Single Adult Day, Sept. 9.

In this issue

7 ACTS picks Magnolia

Central Church at Magnolia is the third Southern Baptist church to have services broadcast over the American Christian Television network as part of the "Great Churches of America" series.

10 Christ and country

Many Baptists in the Soviet Union open their lives to public scrutiny by living out their faith while working within the system they must live under, reports a writer who visited the country's registered congregations.

God's call 'merits finest preparation'

Moore calls LR seminary program 'vital'

Having a seminary program close to home can be important to many Arkansas ministers, according to state executive secretary Don Moore.

"Information from the Uniform Church Letter in Arkansas indicates that 57 percent of our pastors have not studied at a seminary," Moore said. "While seminary seems to be more necessary for some than for others, surely everyone could benefit from the experience."

"That is why the Seminary Studies program in Little Rock is so vital," Moore continued. "It puts seminary training within reach of scores of people who could never move their families or leave their ministries to move to a campus."

Moore's remarks came in a prepared statement in anticipation of the beginning of the program's fall term Sept. 17.

The Little Rock Seminary Studies Program began in the spring of 1982 under the leadership of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. In 1983 it came under the joint sponsorship of all six Southern Baptist seminaries, administered through their Seminary Studies Department in Nashville, Tenn.

"Baptists believe in an educated ministry," Moore feels. "While education does not take the place of natural abilities, spiritual gifts, and personal dedication, man's highest calling would seem to merit the finest preparation possible, both spiritually and intellectually."

Courses offered this term are Old Testament Studies (spotlighted in the ABN issue of Aug. 2), English and American Baptist Church History, and Church Staff Development. Classes meet on Mondays for 12 weeks.

The history course will be taught by Leon McBeth, professor of church history at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Missionaries' son undergoes heart surgery at LR

The 20-month old son of Southern Baptist missionaries to Brazil is doing very well following heart surgery in Little Rock, according to his father. Shawn Townsend, who will be two in November, had procedures to repair an opening between the chambers of his heart and to correct a narrowing of a blood vessel from the heart to the lungs.

The surgery was performed at Children's Hospital where he and his mother came for a heart catheterization diagnostic procedure in November. His mother, the former Sharon Kluck, grew up in Arkadelphia where her father is pastor of Second Church.

John Townsend said Shawn's problem surfaced at two-weeks of age when they took him to a pediatrician in Sao Paulo. The doc-

tor heard a heart murmur then, and tests eight months later confirmed the problem, known as Fallot's Tetralogy.

The Townsends returned to the United States at the end of July, stopping first in Arkadelphia. While Shawn is hospitalized, they are staying in a missionary residence provided by Immanuel Church, Little Rock. They will go to Fayetteville to complete furlough after Shawn is released, about Sept. 1, and live in a house provided by University Church.

Townsend, a professor of religious education at Baptist Seminary in Sao Paulo, said Shawn's surgery had been the object of prayers from everywhere, "literally around the world."



McBeth



Sheffield

Sheffield, a master of religious education graduate of Southwestern, has served as minister to youth and as minister of education and music in churches in Texas and Louisiana before coming to Park Hill. He is author of articles and books on church administration.

Lehman Webb serves as local coordinator for the Little Rock program. He can be contacted through the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203, or by calling (501) 376-4791.

Money: curse or blessing?

The editor's page

J. Everett Sneed



The use of money provides direct insight into one's character. Prosperity has been variously regarded, in the Old Testament, as the blessing of God and, in the New Testament, as the very adversary of righteousness. Depending upon the purpose to which personal wealth is employed, either may be true. Money possesses no inherent quality of goodness or badness but represents, merely, a medium of exchange which may be used to effect great good or serious harm. To the Christian, all that one holds belongs to God, to be used for his purpose and glory.

We are living in what has been called "the affluent society." This is not to deny that, in the midst of our wealth, dire poverty still exists. Yet, to Christians, the challenge of prosperity is directly proportional to one's own commitment to God.

Most of us would not consider ourselves wealthy. Yet, compared to most of the world today, Americans are extremely fortunate. Even by our own standards of 50 years ago, we live in absolute luxury. Fine homes, air conditioning and automobiles are just a few of the advantages that place us among the affluent. Yet, in the hands of the uncommitted and the uncaring, affluence is the curse of an ungodly society.

There is no doubt that affluence has made our lives much easier. The list of conveniences found in most homes today didn't even exist 50 years ago. There are limitless opportunities for achievement, increased productivity, higher wages and leisure time.

Society is flourishing. Yet, on every hand, we see this very prosperity producing drug addiction, juvenile delinquency, venereal disease and crime.

We have been led to believe that there is a sense of security in wealth. Yet, Solomon said wisely, "The rich man's wealth is his strong city, and a high wall in his own conceit" (Prov. 18:11). He deceives himself who builds up his own wealth, as a fortress around him, rather than reaching out to his fellowman in service and love. Solomon concludes, "Treasures of wickedness profit nothing; but righteousness delivereth from death" (Prov. 10:2).

The emphasis of the Scripture is upon earning and using one's substance wisely. Again Solomon declares, "He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand; but the hand of the diligent maketh rich," and "He that gathereth in the summer is a wise son: but he that sleeth in the harvest is a son that causeth shame" (Prov. 10:4-5).

In the New Testament, the principle is evident that the able Christian is to work and satisfy his obligations in life. It is assumed that he will be working at the vocation to which he is called, earn-

ing his salary, paying his debts and supporting his dependents.

This was Jesus' own way of life during the 30 years in which he was living at home in Nazareth. Even after he began his earthly ministry, he paid taxes to both the Roman government and the Jewish Temple. To Judas' safekeeping the purse was entrusted which represented the collective savings of Jesus and the apostles. The scripture clearly indicates that Jesus and the 12 were accustomed to assuming their own financial responsibilities.

The second principle which is evident in the Scripture is that, besides meeting their own obligations, Christians are to uplift those who are less fortunate than themselves. The New Testament never condemns a person for possessing great wealth. However, the Scripture does condemn many persons for greed and neglect of the needs of others.

One of the clear lessons to be observed in the story of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-30) is the irresponsible lack of concern and awareness of the needs of others. There is no indication that the rich man was cruel to Lazarus, only that he was so unconcerned that he failed to even notice him. Christians have an obligation to help those who are in need of the substance of life.

The third principle is that Christians are stewards of the possessions that God has entrusted into their care. The psalmist said, "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Ps. 24:1).

The word "steward" as used in the New Testament, portrays the concept of God's total ownership of all that we have. In the New Testament era, a steward was the servant or a free man who had full charge of his master's affairs and could use his master's money for his own personal advantage, if he so chose. Yet, he was completely accountable to his master, rendering a full account of his transactions, when requested to do so. As Christians, we are accountable to God for the way we use our own material possessions.

There are questions which each person should ask himself in determining the quality of his own stewardship. These are: (1) How did I get my money? (2) How do I regard money? (3) Is money my master or my servant? (4) How do I use my money? (5) Is money more important than people? (6) Have I, without reservation, given myself and all I have to God?

One who is serving God will not be possessed by money. When a person is totally committed to God, material possessions will have their proper place. We are to use our possessions so that God will be glorified and our concern for our fellowman will be demonstrated.

Arkansas Baptist

NEWSMAGAZINE

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

VOLUME 83

NUMBER 31

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Photos submitted for publication will be returned only when accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Only black and white photos can be used.

Copies by mail 50 cents each.

Deaths of members of Arkansas churches will be reported in brief form when information is received not later than 14 days after the date of death.

Advertising rates on request.

Opinions expressed in signed articles are those of the writer.

Member of the Southern Baptist Press Association.

The Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine (USPS 031-280) is published weekly, except the third week in April, at July 4 and Dec. 25, by the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine, Inc., Little Rock, AR. Subscription rates are \$6.36 per year (individual), \$5.40 per year (Every Resident Family Plan), \$6.00 per year (Group Plan) and \$18.00 per year (to foreign address). Second class postage paid at Little Rock, AR. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine, P. O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203.



Woman's viewpoint

Janet Williams

Express your gratitude

I'm really not sure when we reach an age capable of becoming grateful for memories. Probably the biggest step is when we leave our childhood homes and families for the first job or college experience. At that time we gain a new perspective, an awareness of some of the efforts that have gone into the making of our lives.

Our maturity grows as the depth of our gratitude increases. However, we tend to think that there will always be time for expressing gratitude at a future time. We take for granted persons in our past and present experiences, as we plan to someday say "thank you." The appreciation for the positive influence of a patient teacher or for the encouragement given by a certain friend remains in our thoughts rather than being

communicated.

A special privilege I shall always treasure was the opportunity to say a final "thank you" to my dad during the last hours of his life. Although there had been other times of saying "thank you," those were the words we both chose for those last few moments. In the midst of the contrasting pain and comfort, I realized a need which I believe all of us share. We need to openly express our gratitude, to communicate our feeling of "thank you," and to acknowledge a response.

Although words are not always necessary, they are symbols of the feelings and attitudes we experience. God blesses us with relationships and enriches our memories with opportunities to say "thank you."

But, even greater than our deeply felt gratitude to the persons in our lives can be our gratitude for the memories of the miracle of Christ in our lives. As Jesus sought to glorify God in the raising of Lazarus, he said, "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me..." (John 11:41, KJV). Likewise, let us never fail to find opportunities to acknowledge our gratitude to God for memories already made and for those memories yet to be made.

Janet Hamm Williams, a native of Batesville, is a graduate of Baylor University and has graduate hours from Southwestern Seminary. A mother of three, she is director of childhood education at Calvary Church, Little Rock.



One layman's opinion

Daniel R. Grant

Legalizing gambling is promoting cancer

What a ridiculous argument was used by those paid solicitors of signatures on the petition to vote on the issue of casino gambling in November! In working for the 25 cent-per-signature, many of these solicitors asked almost self-righteously, "Don't you believe in giving the people of Arkansas the chance to vote on this issue? When one considers how cancerous the growth and impact of casino gambling is, it seems obvious there is no moral right or mandate for placing such an issue on the ballot.

Nevertheless, enough people were swayed by the logic of the paid solicitors, that this controversial question will be up for public decision at the November election. This being the case, I think Christian people should take advantage of the bad situation and mount a massive educational campaign to

reveal the cancerous nature of open, legalized, institutionalized gambling.

All the talk about increased tax revenue for whatever good cause, and about improved business in Hot Springs from a year-round influx of gambling tourists, is irrelevant eyewash because casino gambling itself is thoroughly wrong economically, socially, and morally. It is especially wrong because it preys on the poor and the downtrodden—those least able to afford the high-risk rip-off. As for "keeping it clean" and excluding the crime syndicates, study after study of cities already allowing casino gambling reveal that this is worse than the impossible dream. Crime and the rackets thrive in and around casino gambling.

Ultimately, the strongest argument against legalizing casino gambling is that it amounts

to society's placing its stamp of approval on a cancerous growth within our nation and within our communities. If gambling could be limited to the individual choice of individual citizens, without the complicating factor of influence on others, it might be a different story. But with the element of public approval and the strong profit incentive to involve more and still more people as victims, it has all the characteristics of the most deadly kind of spreading cancer.

If Christian people will dedicate themselves to a strong and intelligent fight against this special form of cancer, Nov. 6 can become the "teachable moment" for casino gambling advocates in Arkansas.

Daniel R. Grant is president of Ouachita Baptist University.

SBC churches to get world hunger resource

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—An up-to-date report on how Southern Baptists are responding to the world hunger crisis is being sent to pastors, ministers of education and associational directors of missions throughout the Southern Baptist Convention.

The report is contained in a 16-page, "awareness/action guide" produced by the Christian Life Commission with support from the Home Mission Board and Baptist Sunday School Board.

The guide gives practical suggestions for promoting hunger awareness and action in local churches, associations and state Baptist conventions. On Oct. 14 Southern Baptists will observe their seventh annual World Hunger Day.

Additional copies of the guide may be ordered at cost from the Christian Life Commission. "Hunger Alert," a new guidebook for youth and youth leaders, also is available from the CLC.

OBU registration

Registration for the 1984 fall semester at Ouachita Baptist University will be held Wednesday, Aug. 29, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. in Evans Student Center and Lile Hall, according to Mike Kolb, OBU registrar.

The first day of classes is Thursday, Aug. 30, with the last day to register or add a course Sept. 12. The final day to drop a course is Oct. 18.

Don Moore

You'll be glad to know...

...Churches work together! We have been doing this to various degrees for years. I've just been particularly blessed to see renewed efforts jointly addressed. A good example was the joint effort of several churches in starting Otter Creek Church.



Moore

At the present, a number of churches in Concord Association are giving one half of one percent of their undesignated receipts toward a building fund that will make possible a building for a new church in Fianna Hills in Fort Smith. While sponsored by East Side Church, the association and state Missions Department have shared in funding the purchase of the property for their church.

Several areas of our state have seen churches come together in evangelistic crusades with tremendous results. This is very encouraging! When we address a need without concern for who gets the credit or benefits, something good is going to happen. This selflessness opens the door for God to do great things and receive the credit.

... The Casino Gambling Amendment will necessitate our churches working together. Casino gambling is tied so closely to organized crime and the underworld, that it would be amazing if they felt any constraint to be honest or fair in their campaign. Unprincipled people will stop at nothing, if it means more dollars in their pockets. We should expect a very deceptive campaign waged with out of state money which will be designed to mislead Arkansans about the revenue casino gambling will bring into the state. It has been reported that they are prepared to spend \$1 million to get casinos in Arkansas. We had half that much to tell the truth in advertising and promotion, we would be pleased. Our churches must work together to defeat this dread scourge that threatens our state and nation.

Here is what you can do:

- (1) Work in the local and county organization.
 - (2) Contribute to the campaign.
 - (3) Register to vote and encourage others.
 - (4) Vote and help others get to the polls.
- Those attending the annual convention will have to vote earlier as an absentee because the convention begins on election day.

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

The church's mission: last in a series of three The four functions of a New Testament church

by R. Wilbur Herring



Herring

Back in the 1950's, the Education Division of our Sunday School Board appointed 12 persons to devote nine months to the task of "defining the functions of a New Testament church." After visiting 21 selected churches and checking their findings with many outstanding leaders in our convention, the task force published their conclusion. The functions of a New Testament church are: evangelization, education, ministration and worship.

A successful New Testament church

should be a very elementary thing to set down the functions of a New Testament church in light of the Great Commission. Some elementary truths are many times the most difficult to convey or to establish.

should strive to excel in all four functions. The leaders should adopt these four functions as the church program. The non-essentials in church activities should be cut out. Unless a project or program can comfortably fit into one of these four categories, it should be eliminated or discouraged.

A church cannot major in one function, for it is evidence per se that it minors in the other three. For example, if a pastor or church should say that they "major in evangelism;" then they are admitting that they are neglecting a well-balanced program.

The church budget should be drafted to fully undergird these four functions of the church. Then the pastor and the other leaders need to organize to accomplish these objectives. If a church is not organized, it is disorganized; and this is described as chaos and confusion.

R. Wilbur Herring is pastor emeritus of Central Church in Jonesboro and interim pastor at Conway First Church.

Volunteer helps singles find healing, strength

by Mark Kelly

LAS VEGAS, Nev.(BP)—Las Vegas could use more people like Pat Brister.

Pat, 42, ministers to singles in the most single of all cities—Las Vegas. More than 60 percent of the population is unmarried, mostly from divorce.

Broken lives abound here. Many people, their marriages on the rocks are drawn by a minimal six-week residency requirement for divorce proceedings. Still others' lives are dashed on the felt-covered gaming tables of the world-renowned "Strip."

It's a cold city," said Pat, who directs singles ministries for 26 churches and missions in the Southern Baptist Nevada Baptist Association. "This place magnifies people's needs and hurts."

Drawn by those needs, Pat sold her Fort Worth, Texas, home and moved to Las Vegas. Supported by her insurance career, she volunteers during her off-hours through the Home Mission Board's Mission Service Corps program.

"I spend a lot of time listening," noted Brister, a Mississippi native. "I hear a lot of loneliness, bitterness, and rejection. I hear searching questions, too. God can heal these traumas, though," she added. "I know because it happened to me."

She meets weekly with a group of singles from various parts of the city. Sharing their struggles and praying together, they find healing in mutual support and Bible study.

"Most singles here have failed in a rela-

tionship and need to rebuild their sense of self-worth," she explained. "My own divorce 10 years ago totally devastated me.

"Finding God could still use me as a major step in my healing. God rebuilt my life; now it's better than ever."

Brister is opening the eyes of Las Vegas churches to the need and potential for ministry to singles. Ralph Hall, pastor of Paradise Valley Church, explained.

"More than one-third of our church's 43 families include singles," said Hall. "We found singles were carrying a lot of the work load, but our couple-oriented program wasn't meeting their needs."

Two other singles groups, one of them meeting at The Church on the Strip, have grown directly from Brister's first group. With other churches eyeing similar ministries, Brister dreams of singles groups meeting in every quadrant of the city.

The next step, said Brister, is to sensitize singles to mission needs beyond Las Vegas. After surveying missions around Nevada, the Las Vegas singles plan to compile a list of needs and enlist support from other singles groups around the country.

As it is, Brister finds her ministry fulfilling.

"You can't buy blessings like these," she concluded. "They come from giving."

Mark Kelly, now an ABN staff writer, wrote the above article while serving as a Mission Service Corps volunteer.

Magnolia Central Church selected for ACTS 'Great Churches'

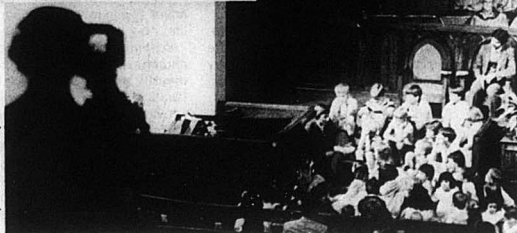
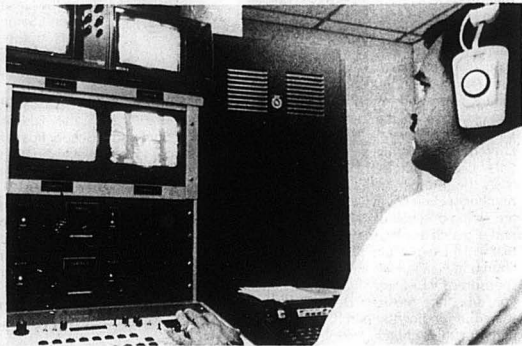
Worship services of Central Church, Magnolia, are being broadcast in August on the American Christian Television System (ACTS) as part of the "Great Churches of America" series.

Two other congregations—First Church, Dallas, and North Phoenix Church—led the

series in June and July.

Each Sunday, two worship services and a pastor's Sunday school class are broadcast through the local cable company. Seventy homebound persons are tied to that class by the broadcast, according to Central pastor John Stubblefield.

Magnolia Central, which began its cable video broadcasts in 1980, was one of two churches involved with the "Invitation to Life" series, broadcast in 1981 by the Radio and Television Commission. Broadcasts of John Bisagno-led revival services resulted in 1,563 recorded decisions for Christ.



ABN photos / Mark Kelly

(Above left) John Stubblefield, pastor of Central Church, Magnolia, closes a morning worship service, which was broadcast to area residents through the local cable company and was taped for later broadcast in ACTS "Great Churches of America" series. ACTS is a project of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission. (Above) Ken Sibley works a switcher in the control room, directing the work of two cameramen in the sanctuary. Sibley is one of 13 volunteers working in two teams for Central's radio and television committee. They are all trained by the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission, which also installed the control room. (Below) A balcony camera pulls in the children's sermon, led by associate pastor Billy Hines Jr.

Magnolia church launches SBC peace observance

Central Church, Magnolia, is one of 29 Southern Baptist churches which has helped inaugurate a denomination-wide observance of the Day of Prayer for World Peace.

The inaugural churches, each in a different state convention, focused on peace with justice in an Aug. 5 worship service.

"I'm glad to see the Day of Prayer for World Peace," said John Stubblefield, pastor of the congregation. "Every Christian, every Southern Baptist must be concerned about peace in the world. Our Lord, after all, is the 'prince of peace.'"

"We must be concerned that every person find peace in his heart in a right relationship with God," he continued. "This

becomes the key to world peace, as we share the prince of peace."

Although many groups exist to promote peace, many carry strong political overtones, said Stubblefield, president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. A specifically Southern Baptist emphasis provides pastors "legitimate ways to express their concern for peace—world peace and peace in the hearts of men—without making it political," he noted.

The evening observance featured peace-related hymns and scriptures and a sermon entitled "Are you a peace-maker." Three church members offered prayers for world peace, a role their pastor called "primary."

First Baptist Church, Strong

David L. Wilson, Pastor
announces

"Celebration of Joy"

Building dedication
August 26, 2:30 p.m.

We invite you to be a part of our Special Day as we dedicate our new facilities and celebrate the 81st anniversary of First Baptist. Morning Worship Service begins at 10:50, followed by fellowship meal. Dedication Service will be at 2:30 p.m.

by Millie Gill / ABN staff writer

people

Thomas W. Wideman will join the staff of Little Rock Second Church Aug. 19 as minister of music and youth. He comes from Fort Worth, Texas, where he has been serving as minister of music at the Riverside Church. He is a graduate of both William Jewell College in Liberty, Mo., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Wideman has served Missouri churches in Manchester, North Kansas City and Kansas City. He is married to the former Sally Ann Burridge, a graduate of William Jewell College. They have a daughter, Jolee Ann.

H. D. McCarty has been promoted to full colonel in the Arkansas Air National Guard and has been assigned to Air National Guard state headquarters as the first state chaplain in the history of the Arkansas Air Guard. He is pastor of the University Church in Fayetteville and since 1968 has served as chaplain to the Arkansas Razorback football team.

Ron Hall has resigned as minister of music and youth at Malvern Third Church to enter Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Max Garrison is serving as pastor of the Owensville Church at Lonsdale. He was a member of the Salem Church at Benton.

Bruce Stone, who has been serving as interim pastor of the Shannon Church in Pocahontas, is now serving as full-time pastor.

Steve Harelson was ordained to the ministry July 29 at the North Point Church in Little Rock where he serves as pastor. Glenn E. Hickey, director of missions for Pulaski County Association, preached the ordination sermon.

Elbert Warren will begin serving Aug. 19 as pastor of the Pleasant Grove Church in Pulaski County Association.

William Gullick has resigned as pastor of the Clear Lake Church to move to Memphis.

Ron Rogers has resigned as pastor of the Yarbrough Church to become pastor of the Poplar Corner Church in Jackson, Tenn.

John Henson has resigned as pastor of the Joiner Bethel Church to pursue his education.

Steve Butler has resigned as pastor of the Emmanuel Church at Hot Springs.



Wideman



McCarty

Carl Hogue has resigned as pastor of the Pines Church to move to Watertown, S.D., where he and Mrs. Hogue have been appointed to serve by the Home Mission Board.

Jess Lunsford is serving as interim pastor of the West Side Church in Heber Springs.

Chip Broadbent has resigned from the staff of Lakeshore Drive Church in Little Rock to accept the position of choral director at Norview Junior High School in Norfolk, Va.

Burnett Whitaker is serving as pastor of the Vandervoort Church in Ouachita Association. He retired to Arkansas in October from the First Church in West Point, Calif. He also has served churches in Oklahoma.

Rev. and Mrs. Cecil Guthrie of Newport celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary July 15 with a reception hosted by their children, Mr. and Mrs. Gene Dolby of Grand Blanc, Mich., Mr. and Mrs. Gary Guthrie of Headland, Ala., Mr. and Mrs. Sam Vogel Jr. and Dr. Ann Guthrie of Little Rock. Guthrie served for 27 years as director of missions for Black River Association prior to his retirement. Mrs. Guthrie is a retired public school teacher.

Leslie Dennie was in Washington, D. C. July 2-7 to attend the first national Christian youth leadership conference. The purpose of the conference was to help develop greater leadership ability and to equip young people to be more effective in their local ministries. Dennie, age 17, is the son of James and Virginia Dennie of Little Rock. He is a member of Geyer Springs First Church.

Floyd Tidsworth Jr. of Little Rock was in Chicago recently to attend a "How to Plant a Church" seminar. He is church extension director for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

briefs

Calvary Church at Lepanto is training 14 tutors this month to assist with a literacy ministry expected to be in operation in September as the school year begins.

Ward First Church celebrated its 59th anniversary July 29 with activities that included a worship hour, potluck dinner, special music and a testimony by Sally Jayroe, who has been a member since 1927 and has served as church clerk since 1944. Speakers were Harold Sadler, a former pastor, and W. T. Byrum, director of missions for Caroline Association.

Bald Knob Central Church licensed Eddie Meharg to the ministry July 29.

Woodlawn Church in Little Rock observed homecoming Aug. 5 when George Domerese, a former pastor and director of missions for Clear Creek Association, was speaker.

Strong First Church had a mission team in Mulberry, Kans., July 9-13 to assist with a vacation Bible school and revival at the Southern Baptist mission. David Wilson, pastor of the Strong church, and Mike Seabaugh, youth director, led a revival that resulted in six professions of faith and one other addition.

Remount Church in North Little Rock ordained Al Peel as a deacon July 15. The ordaining council consisted of Tim McMinn, Bratton Rhoades, Richard Spinks and Clyde Valentine.

Lakeshore Drive Church in Little Rock honored pastor Jerry Wilcox Aug. 12 in recognition of his 13th anniversary as pastor. He was presented with a gift at the close of the evening service.

Fordyce First Church held a deacon ordination service Aug. 5 for John Summers and Grady Colvin.

Judsonia First Church will hold a service Aug. 19 to ordain Mark Rutherford, a student at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, to the ministry.

youth

Ward First Church youth and adult sponsors were in Boyne City, Mich., July 15-23 to assist the Boyne City Chapel with backyard Bible clubs and a revival. Gary Nelke, a lay minister and chairman of deacons at the Ward church, preached the revival. Pastor Bill Hilburn directed music.

Tanner says politicization of SBC will hurt missions

by Jim Newton

ATLANTA (BP)—Lamenting a trend toward "politicization of the Southern Baptist Convention," SBC Home Mission Board President William G. Tanner called for unity within diversity in Baptists' efforts to reach the nation and world with the gospel.

In an address to the agency's board of directors, Tanner said he is deeply concerned about politicization of the denomination would "render our efforts in missions and evangelism ineffective," and insisted, "We must maintain our missions priorities as an agency and not become trapped in politicization."

"We must stop assaulting each other with counterfeit labels and start assaulting the gates of hell," Tanner declared. "We must maintain an attitude of genuine Christian caring for each other. No issue should overshadow the fact that there are infinitely more things and deeper things that unite us than divide us."

He challenged directors of the board "to join me in seeing that this organization (the Home Mission Board) does not become so entangled in controversy or paralyzed by polarization that we default on this trust of sharing our Saviour with this nation."

"If we become so galvanized as a denomination that we will not tolerate differences of opinion regarding Baptist tradition, different approaches and models for ministry, different interpretations to theological truth based on revelation from the Holy Spirit, then this inflexibility will eventually nullify our ability to speak to the diversity of spiritual needs in America and the world," he said.

In his first address to the directors since the Southern Baptist Convention met in Kansas City, Mo., last June, Tanner offered seven "benchmarks" which he said were "extremely important considerations" in the agency's efforts to reach America for Christ.

"These are not profound statements, rather they are simple, honest observations that I hope will evaluate where we are as an agency and what we must do to fulfill our role. . . ."

His seven benchmarks, briefly, included: (1) commitment to the SBC Cooperative Program, (2) emphasis on the denomination's Bold Mission Thrust, (3) the need for Christian fellowship, (4) emphasis on Christians caring for each other, (5) maintaining mission priorities instead of politics, (6) remaining close to Baptist history and heritage, and

(7) working for unity.

Tanner stressed in his opening statements his personal commitment to "a Bible-centered, conservative theology," and to the principle of "unity within diversity."

"Southern Baptists have always subscribed to a Bible-centered, conservative theology and we have also maintained a unity within our diversity," he said. "But I have never believed that being conservative has supplied me with either the credentials or the mandate to disenfranchise everyone else

every person to be utilized in helping build churches, witness to our land, and evangelize the world."

Commenting on a resolution on ordination of women adopted by the SBC in Kansas City, Tanner stated: "It is my hope that ordination will not become a criteria or a test of Baptist faithfulness, fellowship or service."

Pointing out many sincere, Bible-believing Christians differ on what the Bible says about ordination, Tanner stressed the Home Mission Board holds ordination is a local church

Tanner's seven home missions 'benchmarks':

(1) commitment to the SBC Cooperative Program, (2) emphasis on the denomination's Bold Mission Thrust, (3) the need for Christian fellowship, (4) emphasis on Christians caring for each other, (5) maintaining mission priorities instead of politics, (6) remaining close to Baptist history and heritage, and (7) working for unity.

who did not agree with me."

Throughout its history, the Southern Baptist Convention has consistently maintained unity in diversity, operating for its first 80 years without any statement or confession of faith, Tanner observed. The first statement of faith, adopted in 1925 by the SBC in Memphis, Tenn., followed the famous Scopes trial (on evolution) in Tennessee amid a "modernist-fundamentalist" controversy. But that statement, and another adopted in 1963, avoided "exclusivist terminology" and allowed for "latitude of interpretation," Tanner said.

"Historically, Southern Baptists have discovered they can find unity around a broad doctrinal statement and a specific missionary and evangelistic purpose," he said.

The Home Mission Board has had a reputation for "our willingness to not only tolerate, but to welcome diversity within the framework of our programs," Tanner said.

"Our unity at the Home Mission Board is not defined as all of us being 'look-alikes,' 'sound-alikes,' 'act-alikes,' or 'believe-alikes,'" Tanner said. "Our unity comes from having a right relationship with the Holy Spirit and with each other."

Calling for unity based on Christian fellowship, Tanner observed Southern Baptists always have had their differences, but "despite our diversity there has been a welded unity based in part on Christian fellowship as we have allowed the gifts and talents of

matter. The agency, which appoints 3,700 missionaries in all 50 states, does not require ordination of either men or women to serve as missionaries. For more than 130 years, ordination has not been a determining factor in appointment of missionaries, he said.

He observed, however, many women view the resolution adopted by the convention "as a rejection of them for any Southern Baptist ministry and are questioning whether there is a place for them in Southern Baptist work. "It would be unfortunate," he said, "if in the ongoing discussion of ordination we alienate women from their support of and participation in home missions. . . . We could neither finance nor carry out home missions as we know it without the leadership and participation of women."

Tanner said he came away from the Southern Baptist Convention in Kansas City feeling that both the Home and Foreign Mission Boards' reports to the convention were given "polite but inconsequential hearings." He added: "I did not feel the response to either (mission) report by our convention indicated a great sense of burden, urgency or expectancy that has been characteristic of our people in days gone by."

Emphasizing the need for commitment to the denomination's Bold Mission Thrust plan to preach the gospel to every person in the world by the year 2000, Tanner said Bold Mission Thrust is too important to be subordinated to a power struggle.

missionary notes

Mr. and Mrs. Darrel E. Garner, missionaries to Malawi, have completed furlough and returned to the field (address: P. O. Box 224, Balaka, Malawi). He was born in Oklahoma and lived for a time in Huntsville. The former Judy Brown, she was born in Independence County and lived in Walnut Ridge and Fayetteville while growing up. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1969.

Mr. and Mrs. D. Edwin Pinkston, missionaries to the Ivory Coast, have completed furlough and returned to the field (address: BP 1424, Daloa, Ivory Coast). They are natives of Arkansas. He was born in Camden and grew up in Crossett. The former Greta McFerrin, she was born in Hill Top, and lived there and in Harrison while growing up. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1966.

Mr. and Mrs. Max N. Alexander, missionaries to Thailand, have completed furlough and returned to the field (address: P.O. Box 832, Bangkok, Thailand). They are natives of Arkansas. He was born in Lake City and grew up in Jonesboro. The former Betty Nickell, she was born in Hazel Valley and also lived in Fayetteville. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1961.

Two methods for obtaining messenger housing in Dallas, 1985

"It appears to me that it (Bold Mission Thrust) not only has been hustled off center stage in our emphasis, but it is being pushed by other agendas outside the theater altogether.

"It would be a sad commentary," he continued, "if someday we looked back at the decade of the 80's and realized we forfeited and lost the spiritual battle for our age because we refused to work together as Southern Baptists to maintain Bold Mission Thrust as our major approach for winning our nation and world to Christ."

Tanner also challenged elected leaders of the convention, including trustees and directors of the agencies, to strongly support and actively promote the Cooperative Program, the denomination's unified budget financing missions and evangelism. "I want to challenge those who have been elected to demonstrate their leadership and confidence in the cooperative effort of Southern Baptists to reach this world by giving priority to their churches to the Cooperative Program channel for supporting world missions," he said.

In recent years, he observed, Baptists have misinterpreted the Cooperative Program, talking of giving "to" rather than "through" it. "The Cooperative Program is a channel; a means to an end and not an end in itself," he added. "I honestly believe it is the most effective stewardship means ever conceived by a religious body to impact a lost world."

Finally, Tanner challenged the directors to "work for unity so that we do not become divided and pass the point of no return and as a consequence discover our leadership role in God's redemptive plan for this land and the world has been taken from us."

He cautioned if Baptists do not continue their main focus on missions and evangelism for any reason, or for lack of reason, God will "move on to others who will honor him. God doesn't have to have Southern Baptists" to accomplish his purposes in the world.

The board of directors responded with a standing ovation following Tanner's presentation, which he described not as an address or sermon, but as a "position statement" on where he feels the agency is and should be headed in the future.

Jim Newton is chief of the Atlanta bureau of Baptist Press.

Mr. and Mrs. Donald L. Orr, missionaries to Colombia, have arrived in the States for furlough (address: 647 Fifth St., Hot Springs, AR 71901). He is a native of Hot Springs. The former Violet Rogers, she is an Oklahoma native. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1951.

Convention policies provide two methods for individuals and groups to secure hotel rooms for the 1985 Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Dallas, Texas, June 11-14.

1. At least 4,000 rooms—3,000 of which must be located within two miles of the Convention Center—are to be held for individuals making written reservation requests through the host city's official housing bureau.

2. All other rooms in the city not being held by the city's housing bureau are to be left for individuals and groups to make direct reservations with the hotels.

Sixteen hotels have committed just under 5,000 rooms to be used by the Dallas Convention and Visitors Housing Bureau for the annual meeting. Special room reservation request forms are currently being prepared, and during the month of September they will be available in all state Baptist Convention offices and printed in the *Baptist Program*. These forms may be mailed to the Housing Bureau beginning Oct. 1, 1984. Only requests made on these special forms will be accepted by the Housing Bureau. Forms will be processed on an individual family basis.

The 16 hotels committing rooms to the Housing Bureau are the Adolphus Hotel, Dallas Hilton, Dupont Plaza, Executive Inn,

Greenelefe Hotel, Holiday Inn Downtown, Hyatt Regency, La Quinta Regal Row, Wyndham North Park Inn, Plaza Hotel, Quality Inn Market Center, Regent Hotel, Sheraton Mockingbird, Twin Sixties, and Viscount Hotel.

The city of Dallas has approximately 26,000 hotel/motel rooms, and with the exception of the rooms in the 16 hotels being held by the city's Housing Bureau, rooms may be secured at this by individuals or groups by directly contacting the hotels.

The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention provides a housing information office to assist individuals and groups with special needs. The information office does not make reservations but can often assist messengers who encounter problems with the hotels or the Housing Bureau. Information and help may be secured by writing Housing Information, 460 James Robertson Parkway, Nashville, TN 37219, or by calling 615/244-2355

The Dallas Hilton will serve as the convention hotel, and the Adolphus Hotel as the Woman's Missionary Union headquarters. The Convention sessions, WMU general sessions, and the Pastors' Conference will be held in the Dallas Convention Center located at 650 South Griffin. Excellent parking is also available at the Convention Center.

Family ministry must include single parents

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)—The traditional family is a myth that we need to discount when we talk about strengthening the family, Drew Gunnels told participants in the third Sunday School Leadership Conference.

Gunnels, pastor of the Spring Hill Church, Mobile, Ala., said, "The picture of the traditional family has the mother and father with two children—always a baby—gathered around the hearth at home in the evening."

But there is no real model of the family today, he said. Today's families are ever-changing and frequently have only one parent.

"Single-parent families are a fact that churches must deal with. We can minister to the family even though we don't condone divorce," he said. "We ought to minister to the real needs of a real world rather than trying to deal with something that doesn't exist."

Gunnels listed four points for helping to develop stronger families.

Christians should accept the value of per-

sonhood. "A wife isn't to be used and children aren't to be manipulated," he said.

Second, we should have a belief in a complete commitment to marriage and not bail out at the first sign of trouble.

Also, discipline must be considered anew, he said. "Too much discipline deals with punishment and correction. Discipline is not what you do to a child, but what you do for a child."

Fathers especially need to learn how to demonstrate their love, said Gunnels, admitting his own difficulties with showing love to his young adult children. "The greatest thing you could do for your family is to demonstrate your love to them," he said.

The time to deal with the family is now, Gunnels said. "Hurry. Before it is too late, hurry. You can't put your children in the freezer and take them out when you have time to deal with them. You must deal with them now," he concluded.

Soviet Baptists seek to live for both Christ and country

by Martha Skelton

U.S.S.R. (BP)—Tension between a felt need to work within the system and yet maintain their Christian principles has shaped the development of the Soviet Union's registered evangelical churches.

Baptists, part of the evangelical group, constantly try to balance their lives between doing what they believe pleases God and also fulfilling their roles as Soviet citizens.

"From early in my life, I realized only Christians can solve the problems of mankind," said Jacob Dukhonchenko, 53, pastor of Central Church in Kiev and superintendent of the union of 1,500 Baptist churches in the Ukraine region. "I dreamed to be a slave of the Lord Jesus Christ."

Thirty-three years ago he and his fiancée, Luibov ("Love"), had a serious talk. "I told her my dream was to be a servant of God, and I was not sure whether I could create for her a better life," he said. They considered the matter before marrying.

Leaders like Dukhonchenko know many

of their countrymen's needs are in a realm beyond sociology and economic structure. But, at the same time, they feel a strong sense of civic responsibility to stay within the laws of the land where atheism is the official "religion."

In major cities, Soviet officials have set up museums visibly packaging Christianity in displays linking it to ancient superstition and high-church corruption. The people have been freed from this past, citizens are told. A newer eternal value is proclaimed, another central figure glorified: "The name and acts of Lenin will live forever! Communism will win!" proclaim banners strung across intersections and buildings.

Lenin's tomb is a shrine. His image is painted onto buildings, chiseled into statues and woven into cloth.

Some evangelicals in the Soviet Union believe the doctrine of atheism stands immovably between the government and Christians. In 1960 the All-Union Council of

Evangelical Christians-Baptists split over this question. The 5,030 churches remaining in the council follow government requirements for church registration.

Those refusing to cooperate formed a second group, the Council of Churches of Evangelical Christians-Baptists. There are several sub-groups in that movement. Some churches have registered with the government but remain unaffiliated with the All-Union Council.

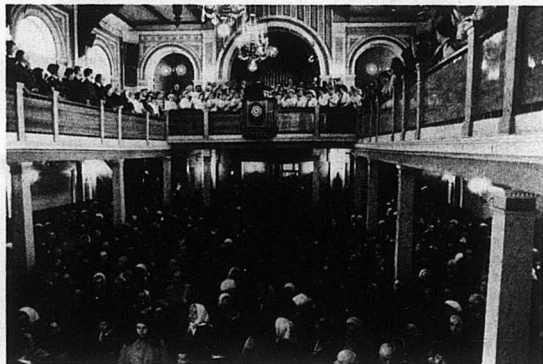
Churches which do register send the state's religious affairs office their membership lists and reports on numbers of baptisms, weddings, funerals and the like. Financial statements and church property inventories must also be made available.

Registered churches are required to center activities in church houses. No public rallies or meetings are allowed. Most churches hold multiple meetings each week. Membership in All-Union Council churches officially is reported as 545,000, the largest Baptist Union in Europe.

These churches focus evangelism efforts on family members, friends and co-workers. The Soviet government forbids social ministries, since that is the state's domain. "All our members live to have contacts with nonbelievers," says one pastor, Peter Konovalchik of Leningrad. "We cannot be quiet. We understand that not every member can explain everything about Christ, but at least he can invite someone to come (to church)."

"Our testimony is not in vain," he adds. "We invite people to 'come and see.' Now is just the preparation for awakening."

Alexei Bichkov, general secretary for the All-Union Council, believes cooperation with the government is biblical. The council takes the position that working within the laws accomplishes more for the kingdom of God than living in confrontation. "It is important good leaders find out what it means



BP photos / Don Runledge

Tight quarters—(Above) Sitting, standing,

leaning, craning, people fill the seats, aisles, stairwells, halls and adjoining rooms of the church in Moscow. In some Soviet churches, people must worship outside because there is simply no room to come inside. Churches hold multiple services to accommodate their membership.

'Gospodie! Gospodie!'—(Right) Beginning

with quiet whispers, Soviet Baptists' individual prayers to the Lord ("Gospodie") rise with an intensity and feeling that breaks like a wave over the congregation. This is Darnitsa Church near Kiev.



to render to Caesar and God," says Bichkov. "Jesus Christ didn't regulate what and how. He invited people to find the way."

Convictions make Christians honest and industrious workers. Their abstinence from alcohol sharply contrasts a society struggling with a major drinking problem. They teach and exercise high standards of personal morality. Such productivity and moral awareness parallel government standards.

People outside believing families make decisions for the gospel and are baptized each year. More young people are attending, asking questions and aligning themselves with the church. Several observers point to essentially the same reason—something within the young people themselves.

Youth is a time for searching, explains Nikita Jerome of Alexander Nevsky Lavra, an Orthodox monastery-seminary in Leningrad. "I don't think the increased number of young people belongs to the church," he

says. "It belongs to the young people, who come to the church in spiritual need."

Every Sunday and many week nights, young people are part of the thousands of Soviet citizens gather for worship. Bearded old men and babushkas (grandmothers) in kerchiefs are seated alongside teenagers, new parents struggling with squirming little ones, and middle-aged men and women. Their services are long and punctuated with fervent prayer time.

Preaching ability is an important factor in pastoral selection, but Soviet Baptists place a high priority on spiritual living. "When we consider a candidate, we search his life," Dukhonchenko explains. Living the gospel is imperative.

Pastors are selected by the local churches with consultation from local superintendents. Leaders in the church arise through a system of deacons, lay preachers and pastors found in evangelical churches

throughout the country. A church usually will have several pastors, a number of lay preachers and deacons. As vacancies occur, the congregation selects a new leader based on its choice from among those who have risen through the network of practical experience and informal training.

Pastoral candidates are questioned thoroughly and their theology is studied. A year of interim work culminates in the new pastor's ordination, if the congregation chooses.

Dukhonchenko knows living the Christian life is not the easiest road he could have picked, but he has no regrets. "I have never felt miserable, pitiful that I decided to be a servant of God," he says. "The highest name for all servants, whatever their place, is 'slave of the Lord.'"

Martha Skelton, associate editor of The Commission, spent a month visiting Soviet Baptist work.

Soviet Christian families under constant scrutiny

LENINGRAD, U.S.S.R. (BP)—To Soviet believers, being the light of the world is more than a metaphor.

Families are under constant scrutiny from those around them. "Our lives are visible for everybody," says Peter Konovalchik, pastor of the Baptist church in Leningrad. "They look at us attentively. Everybody is watching. They know who we are, where we are going, and our relationships with our wives and children."

Great friendships develop among church families, who serve as support groups for each other. Children in the churches are best friends and spend much of their free time together.

Soviet Christian families live their witness. Church is almost an extension of home for the Konovalchiks. They spend hours each week worshipping and enjoying fellowship with their extended family. The three teenage girls sing in the choir. The mother, Antoninya, is available to help those who need her.

Konovalchik, the product of a Baptist family who became a Christian at age 14, felt the desire to preach before he went into the army. He was invited to work with young people and organized Bible studies outside Leningrad. He began to preach during the fellowships, and was elected as pastor of his church in 1979.

He devotes some entire church meetings to discussing family life with married young people, dealing with husband-wife and parent-child relationships. He teaches about living in holiness. "You never separate your testimony from your Christian life," he says. "You should live according to Christ."

Time spent together is a must for Soviet Christian families. "We don't have a Sunday school. It is the responsibility of the family to have church at home—prayer, reading the Bible, explaining things. (Families) should be spiritual developers," Konovalchik explains.

Konovalchik's church is located in an area called Poklonnaya Gora. The name means a mountain bowing down, describing how conquered people would bow down to their conquerors. Says one church member: "Now we do it to God; he conquered us."



BP photo / Don Rutledge

Delight is in the air as a daughter of Vladimir Kunets, pastor in Kiev, and her two children sit down for some fun at the piano. The Kunets household includes this daughter, her husband and children, another married child with spouse and child, 10 unmarried children and Kunets and his wife.

WMU stresses Cooperative Program key to ministry

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)—More than 80 missionaries and conference leaders stressed the necessity of ministering to needs in the community and marketplace as they interpreted the WMU week theme, "By Love Compelled", at Glorieta Baptist Conference Center.

Compelled by God's love, Woman's Missionary Union members and leaders are seeking a way to express missions concern and missions love in this day, Carolyn Weatherford, executive director of WMU, told the crowd of almost 1,200. "We are 20th century women who are anxious to find the key to Bold Mission Thrust in our churches and through organizations," she said.

Weatherford noted the emphasis on compelling love translates into two objectives for WMU: to seek to involve every church member in a lifestyle of personal ministry and witness and to seek to minister to urban areas. "Each church member—man, woman, boy and girl—should be encouraged to become a marketplace missionary committed to sharing his faith in lifestyle ministry and evangelism," she said.

The importance of increased giving to the

Cooperative Program was an additional emphasis of the week. The missions-minded audience answered the pleas for Cooperative Program awareness with an offering of more than \$2,490. Conference center records show the offering as the largest collected to date this summer.

The week's Bible study leader, Beverly Hammack, assistant director of the Home Mission Board Christian social ministries department, related the ministry of Jesus to present ministry opportunities. She noted the way Jesus affirmed persons, accepted persons and listened are requirements of ministry today.

During morning and evening convocations missionaries issued challenges to pray and confront personal ministry opportunities.

"I would rather have five minutes a day of your prayer time for me and my work than \$10 or \$15 or \$20 or \$50 a day of your money," said Zan Gladen, foreign missionary to Mexico. "I can't always wisely spend the money you send but I can't miss when you pray," he added.

Ministering to the hungry, to resort areas, through student work and by lifestyle witnessing were among the challenges presented by the week's speakers.

Judi Folds, missionary to Japan, questioned the women about their use of their time and facilities in taking advantage of week-day ministry opportunities. She urged them to develop friendships in order to present the

love of Christ. "Are you so busy in your WMU activities that you do not have time for missions in your own community and neighborhood," she asked.

Addressing current issues, Nathan Porter, Home Mission Board national consultant for disaster relief and domestic hunger, also questioned participants on their knowledge of hunger in the U.S. He noted women and children are the people suffering most in the United States because of poverty and hunger.

He drew spontaneous applause with his remarks on the inconsistency in male/female pay scales even within the church. "How can we as women or men who believe in Christ call for and expect social justice in the world when we do not call for it in our own churches," he asked.

Another highlight of the week came when Harlan Spurgeon, Foreign Mission Board vice-president for human resources, spoke of his recent trip to China. He quoted Chinese Christians who refer to the policy change allowing Christians openness to worship without persecution as the "daybreak after a long, dark period."

First home missionary

SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic—Dominican Republic Baptists have named Berta Aquino as their first home missionary. She will work in the city of San Francisco de Macoris.

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GOOD NEWS AMERICA



March 16 -
April 6, 1986

GOD LOVES YOU

Your state convention at work

Missions

Large vs. small churches

Constant discussion continues about the merits of large churches and vice versa. Some say the large church has so much more complete program to offer members. But others counter that the fellowship is so much closer in a small church. The large church can afford to have staff to lead more ministries. The small church is able to provide a more personal ministry.



Tidsworth

And on goes the list.

Large churches are usually regional churches. They draw members from many communities. People come because they like the nature and program of the church. They may drive a long distance to attend the regional church.

The small church is usually a neighborhood church. It is tied to and serves a given community. It takes on the social and economic character of the community. The church can also have a profound impact on its setting. — **Floyd Tidsworth Jr.**, church extension director

Evangelism

LES spiritual objectives

The spiritual objectives for each individual are: (1) To daily experience the full and meaningful life and grow toward maturity in Christ; (2) To make witnessing a part of his/her daily lifestyle in Christ. Jesus spoke of this lifestyle when he said, "I am come that ye might have life in all its fullness." A Christian can consistently witness out of the overflow of a full and meaningful relationship with Christ.

The more that a Christian gives away of Jesus, the more that Christ lives within and matures the individual. In contrast to this, the more that a Christian tries to keep Jesus only for himself, the less he will know of the Lord Jesus. I challenge you to give away Jesus every day.

Recently, I received a letter from Jack Barnes, pastor of Highfill Church. He related to me a story of a young Christian boy who went about the community giving away Jesus. He did this by inviting his friends to come to Bible School. Thirteen came and 12 were saved. This is very

refreshing to see the Lord use one of his followers in such a delightful way. — **Clarence Shell**, director

Christian Life Council

From statistics to people

Using an innovative idea which came while studying world hunger needs, Dick Collidge, a northern California Southern Baptist pastor, turned "statistics into people." Unsliced loaves of bread were hollowed out and used as coin banks by families in his church to help alleviate world hunger.

Other areas of the church's ministry have been positively affected by enthusiasm generated over this project. After the first three months, pastor Collidge reported the largest budget offering in the history of the church, that he had baptized more people than in any other previous three-month period and that they'd had the largest Sunday School attendance Sunday after Sunday ever.

Mozambique and Ethiopia illustrate the frightening dimensions of the present world hunger crisis. Recent reports indicate at least 300,000 people in just those two nations are in imminent danger of starvation. Some are foraging for leaves, grass, bugs and small animals.

When statistics are turned into people who are prayerfully and physically assisted by those more fortunate, God causes things to happen. Giving to world hunger needs may not affect your church in the same way as the California church but when suffering people everywhere are sincerely helped, God more likely considers where we stand as praying ground. — **Bob Parker**, director

Stewardship/Annuity

Churches need budgets

When total receipts of Arkansas Baptist churches are divided by the total number of churches, the average is \$79,187.02 per church. The fact is, however, three-fourths of the churches in Arkansas received less than the average in 1983.

Three hundred and sixty of our churches had gifts of less than \$15,000 last year. Three hundred and two churches received between \$15,000 and \$30,000.

Cecil Ray, Director of Planned Growth in Giving, said the average Baptist church member gave two percent of his income 30 years ago. The dollars have increased but Baptist giving still hovers around the two percent level.

Baptists need a challenge to give. Churches need budget programs that challenge their members.

The Basic Budget Program is designed for churches with limited or no experience in budget preparation.

Why should churches use budget pro-

grams? The Basic Budget Program gives a church a workable plan. Few materials are needed. The program isn't time consuming.

What happens when churches use good budgeting methods? The budget is an excellent definition of the church's ministries. Church members are challenged to increase their giving. The church sets priorities for its ministries. A budget gives direction and saves time. Good budgets make churches better stewards of their total opportunities.

Basic Budget Program packets are free from the Stewardship/Annuity Department. — **James A. Walker**, director

Sunday School

Think enrollment!

How? By enrolling those who come to our Sunday School, attend our worship services, join our church, attend our V.B.S.

(last year in the SBC we had over 250,000 children in V.B.S. who were not enrolled in a Sunday School). And I know you can think of other ways. Think enrollment!

Why? Someone has said, "Enrollment is the most important figure in your church"

and when you stop to think how just about everything we do is related to the enrollment, we may agree—it is important! On an average one out of two lost persons enrolled in Sunday School will be saved within 12 months. (The best place in the world for a lost person to be is in Sunday School where people are taught God's word in a loving, caring, prayerful atmosphere. Amen? Amen!) When you enroll a person in your Sunday School you begin a personal relationship with that person. Your attendance will grow. And, when you have an enrollment goal, you give your church a direction in which to go. Think enrollment! — **Ed Hinkson**, assistant director



Hinkson



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International

Measured by the Word

by Carl M. Overton, DOM, Central Assn.

Basic passage: 2 Kings 21:1-23:30

Focal passages: 2 Kings 21:1a, 10-13, 15-16; 23:2-3

Central truth: Serious consideration of God's Word may point out the need for a person to change his way of life.

Josiah's reign began when he was eight years old. It is probable that during the early years of his rule the priests served as regents in the affairs of government.

However, in Josiah's eighth year as king (when he was 16) he began to seek after the God of David. At 20, he began to purge the country of its high places and pagan images.

Part of this reform was a physical cleansing and renovation of the Temple in Jerusalem. It was during this program that a scroll was found which has been identified as a part (or all) of the book of Deuteronomy. This book contains the blessings and curses for those who follow or do not practice the injunctions of the laws given by Moses.

When Shaphan, the scribe, read the book, he realized its significance and brought it and read it before the king. Upon learning of its authenticity from Huldah, the prophetess, the king came to the Temple to make a formal covenant with God and before the people to "walk after the Lord, and . . . to perform the words that were written in this book."

Men are often looking for a dependable standard by which to measure the uprightness of their lives. All sorts of proposals are put forth. The problem with most is they change so readily with the changing scenes of man's existence.

The only enduring standard is God's Word. Its basic message is founded on principles which will stand the test of the changes of man's experience. They are true in whatever time man finds himself.

The only lasting standard is God's Word, and by it all are to judge their way of life.

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Life and Work

The warfare of Christians

by Jimmie Garner, Trinity Assn., Trumann

Basic passage: Ephesians 6:10-20

Focal passage: Ephesians 6:11-20

Central truth: Christians are to be bold in warfare for Christ.

Paul told the Ephesian Christians that there were some things in their lives that should be left out. In our lesson this week, he tells the Christians at Ephesus, as well as those of us today in modern America, what we need to put on. The Scriptures tell us that we are in a warfare. In this warfare there are some preparations to be made.

This warfare is against wicked spiritual forces. Man cannot stand against these forces in his own power. Just as a soldier prepares for battle, so must the Christian prepare for the spiritual battle that he will face.

In the army of Uncle Sam, a young raw recruit is put through a rigorous program of physical training. So, too, is the Christian to be prepared. According to Paul, God has already furnished the equipment. All the Christian has to do is to put it on.

A soldier would not think of going into battle half-dressed. If he did, he would not last long. The half-dressed Christian is soon defeated in his battle with Satan. God furnishes the equipment and the leadership for the benefit of the Christian, if the Christian will only put it on.

The question is, how does the Christian put on this equipment? Through prayer and obedience to God's will, the Christian can meet the Devil and defeat him on his own grounds. The burning arrows shot by the evil one will not defeat the Christian.

When the battle is over and everything around the Christian is destroyed, he will still be standing strong and able to advance forward. As a strong child of God covered with God's armor, the Christian will be able to help those around him. There are many wounded people, broken and defeated by the Devil. The Christian can help them overcome the evil one through prayer. Paul asked to be remembered in prayer by the Ephesian Christians. He needed and asked for their prayers.

Please remember, you may be strong today and are able to help your brother. Tomorrow your brother in Christ may be needing to help you. Remember to pray for one another.

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Bible Book

Living while waiting

by Doug Dickens, First Church, Hot Springs

Basic passage: 2 Peter 3:1-18

Central truth: In a world of unbelievers God expects Christians to live holy lives as we await Christ's return.

The headline read, "Girl Obeys Dad, Waits 18 Hours in Snowbound Car." Nine-year-old Kelly Beam believed her father and obeyed him when their car was stranded in a snowdrift on Christmas Day outside Colorado Springs. Her obedience saved her life as her dad walked for help. "She stayed in the car just like I told her," Dennis Beam said. "She kept the windows up like she was supposed to do. She got scared when the windows got covered up with snow, but she controlled herself and stayed put." Waiting for a long time is difficult.

How shall you and I live as we await Christ's return, "when the trumpet of the Lord shall sound and time shall be no more?" This chapter may be divided into three sections.

The promises of God are clear (vv. 9-10). Each Christian must understand that God is still in control of the world. History is "his story." God has not forgotten his commitments, but he is giving us time to repent.

The problems concerning the Second Coming appear awesome. There are today false teachers who twist truths and even mock his appearing. They fail to understand time from God's perspective, thus scoff and deny (vv. 3-8, 16-17).

The larger issue of this chapter, and the best focus for the lesson, deals with the pattern of the waiting Christian. Unfortunately, we will have difficulty dealing with the temptation to tell more than we really know. Huber Drumwright used to tell preachers in his classes concerning the Second Coming, "God put the church on the Preparation Committee, not the Planning Committee."

What "manner of person" ought we to be as we wait? Seven clues are found in the text: (1) Be forewarned (vv. 8-9, 17); (2) Keep clear in your minds the message of salvation (vv. 1-2); (3) Mark your entire life by godly living (v. 11); (4) Live at peace with others (v. 14); (5) Don't give folks room to find fault with you (v. 14); (6) Keep faith the foundation of your life (v. 17); and (7) Keep growing in grace and Christian understanding (v. 18).

It is not for the modern Christian to be concerned with details of time known only to God. It is our business to focus on the details of a Christ-like life until the trumpet sounds.

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ACTS awarded fifth low-power TV station

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—The American Christian Television System (ACTS) has been awarded a fifth construction permit for a low-power television station—this one in Champaign, Ill.—through the Federal Communications Commission's random selection procedure, or lottery.

To date ACTS has been granted all but three of its applications. The network still has 147 applications awaiting FCC action, 91 of

which will be assigned to lotteries between now and the end of the year.

ACTS also is carried on 84 cable TV systems reaching more than a million homes.

ACTS is an 18-hour-per-day network of family and Christian entertainment programs sent by satellite to cable TV systems and television stations nationwide. It is operated by the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission.

August 'Life' features Beirut missionaries

RICHMOND Va. (BP)—Three Southern Baptist missionaries and a missionary "kid" are among Americans in Beirut featured in a seven-page spread in the August 1984 issue of *Life* magazine.

The article, "Hanging On in Beirut: The Last Americans," focuses on missionaries Nancie Wingo, a teacher at Beirut Baptist School in west Beirut; David and Maxine King, who live on the east side; and the Kings' 18-year-old daughter, Jeanne. King teaches at Arab Baptist Theological Seminary

and his wife is a church and home worker.

The magazine photographs show Wingo on her apartment balcony, which still shows damage from a direct artillery shell hit last September, and talking with an Arab neighbor on the street.

The Kings are shown giving thanks around their table. Maxine King is pictured checking provisions in the family's bomb shelter. Jeanne King was photographed crossing Beirut's Green Line after school and later riding her Arabian stallion into the Lebanese hills.

Australian nominated as BWA president

BERLIN, West Germany (BP)—G. Noel Vose of Australia has been nominated as president of the Baptist World Alliance for 1985-1990, subject to election by the general assembly at the 15th Baptist World Congress in Los Angeles, July 2-7, 1985.

Vose was nominated by the BWA General Council during its meeting July 27-29. He is a native of Perth, Western Australia, and principal of Baptist Theological College, Western Australia. He will succeed Duke K. McCall, chancellor of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., who has been BWA president since 1980.

Christine Gregory, of Danville, Va., a Southern Baptist leader, was nominated first vice-president.

The meetings in Berlin, attended by more

than 450 delegates and visitors, marked a record attendance for the BWA General Conference.

The Council passed resolutions on human rights, calling for action against torture, on the first use of nuclear weapons and an immediate verifiable freeze, urging Baptist churches all over the world to "seek peace and pursue it."

Another resolution acknowledged the "strong cultural and theological differences of women in the church" and affirmed the firm biblical teaching "that in Christ male and female are equal."

The Baptist World Alliance is a voluntary fellowship of more than 34 million members of 131 Baptist unions/conventions with headquarters in 90 countries.

Spanish pastor honored by HMB

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)—A Spanish pastor who receives no pay from his church was named the "Messenger of the Word" for 1984 by the language missions division of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

Efraim R. Diaz, pastor of Theo Avenue Church in San Antonio, Texas, was recognized for his leadership of the Hispanic congregation during an annual conference sponsored by the HMB at Glorieta Baptist Conference Center.

Diaz was lauded for taking a declining Anglo congregation of a dozen members and building a Hispanic congregation of more than 900 members in seven years—all as an unpaid staff member of the church.

Diaz, a government worker in San Antonio, joined the Theo Avenue church seven years ago and began a Bible study for

Hispanics, which grew to 50 people within three months. Theo Avenue members ordained Diaz and turned over their facilities to the budding Hispanic group, which named Diaz pastor, and the congregation flourished in the predominantly Hispanic community.

Romo noted the congregation averaged 60 professions of faith per week. Romo added the Theo Avenue church has been among the top three churches in its association with 686 baptisms during the past five years.

Diaz organized church members into witnessing teams which blitzed 29 communities outside of San Antonio and recorded 6,500 professions of faith during 1983 alone, Romo said. The church recently built debt-free a \$250,000 building in addition to the existing Theo Avenue facilities.

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