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Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

8-30-1984

August 30, 1984

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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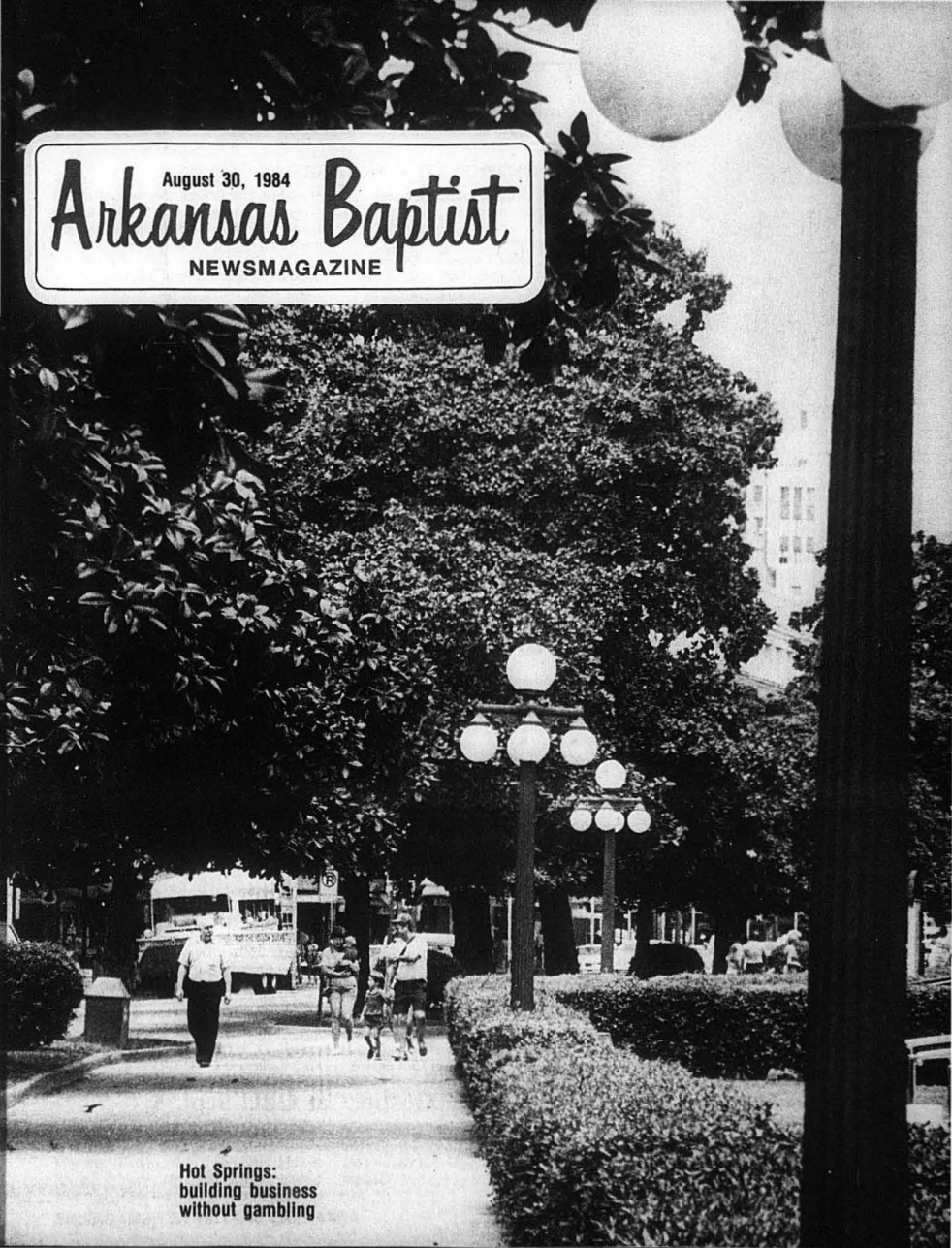


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August 30, 1984

Arkansas Baptist

NEWSMAGAZINE



**Hot Springs:
building business
without gambling**



ABN photo / Betty J. Kennedy

Tree-lined walks in Hot Springs' downtown attract both retirees and families. The city has built an economy based on clean recreation and a safe place to enjoy it in since illegal gambling was shut down 20 years ago. An article on pages 8 and 9 details the view of a city official who wants to keep it.

JUNE							JULY							AUGUST							SEPTEMBER							OCTOBER							NOVEMBER							DECEMBER													
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Next month in Arkansas

Sept. 3-8, Brotherhood Leadership Week. Time for the local church to recognize Brotherhood's place in the church's program.

Sept. 6-8, Fall Campers on Mission Rally, Petit Jean State Park. Business and fellowship for the state group of campers who share worship and Bible study with others when they camp.

Sept. 6, State Church-wide WMU Training Day, Immanuel Church, Little Rock. In-depth training for leaders of age-level organizations and church WMU officers.

Sept. 8, Baptist Youth Day, Magic Springs at Hot Springs. Regular attractions of the theme park, plus music and magic entertainment. An afternoon rally will be held in the park's new amphitheater.

Sept. 9, Single Adult Day. Suggested day for local churches to highlight singles as part of the church family.

Sept. 9, Baptist Foundation Sunday. Time to recognize the ministry of the Arkansas Baptist Foundation in managing and holding in trust monies to benefit state and Southern Baptist causes.

Sept. 10, WMU Area Conference, West Helena Church. Morning and evening sessions of training for organization leaders and adult officers.

Sept. 10, Brotherhood Area Conference, West Helena Church. Evening sessions of Training for Brotherhood leaders and officers.

Sept. 10, Area Stewardship Conference, Magnolia, Central. Helps for pastors, staff, and laypersons involved in budgeting by churches. Emphasis on salaries and insurance/retirement for church staff as part of the budget.

Sept. 10, Area Evangelism Conference, Central Church, Magnolia. Emphasis on helps for bivocational pastors and lay persons. Conferences include revival preparation and evangelistic music.

Sept. 11-12, Area WMU Conference, Warren, First Church. Evening and next morning. (See Sept. 10 entry.)

Sept. 11, Area Brotherhood Conference, Warren, First Church. (See Sept. 10 entry.)

Sept. 11, Area Stewardship Conference, McGehee, First Church. (See Sept. 10)

Sept. 11, Area Evangelism Conference,

McGehee, First Church. (See Sept. 10 entry.)

Sept. 11, Associational Sunday School Leadership Night. Suggested time for leadership training in district associations.

Sept. 12, Founders Day at Southern Baptist College. A time of reflection on the school's past, centering in a chapel program.

Sept. 13, Area WMU Conference, Nashville, First Church. (See Sept. 10.)

Sept. 13, Area Brotherhood Conference, Nashville, First. (See Sept. 10.)

Sept. 13, Area Stewardship Conference, First Church, Batesville. (See Sept. 10.)

Sept. 13, Area Evangelism Conference, First Church, Batesville. (See Sept. 10.)

Sept. 16-23, Season of Prayer for State Missions and Dixie Jackson Offering. Time for emphasis on missions in Arkansas. Local churches are provided study materials examining the variety of ministries accomplished by Arkansas Baptists together, with oversight by the State Missions Department. The offering benefits missions in the state.

Sept. 17-18, Sunday School State Convention, Fayetteville, First Church. First of two in the state to provide training for Sunday School teachers and officers. Regional format is new this year.

Sept. 20, Planning Youth-led Revivals Seminar, Baptist Building, Little Rock. Help for youth directors to lead young people and prepare church for revival. Emphasis on Good News America revivals in 1985-86.

Sept. 20-21, Sunday School State Convention, Pine Bluff. Second of two meetings. (See Sept. 17-18.)

Sept. 24, Area WMU Conference, First Church, Walnut Ridge. (See Sept. 10.)

Sept. 24, Area Brotherhood Conference, First, Walnut Ridge. (See Sept. 10.)

Sept. 25, Band-Orchestra Instrumental Workshop, Geyer Springs First Church, Little Rock. Help for churches using band-orchestra instruments in worship. Teaching will include arranging, rehearsal techniques and materials sources.

Sept. 25-26, Area WMU Conference, Wynne Church. (See Sept. 10.)

Sept. 25, Area Brotherhood Conference, Wynne Church. (See Sept. 10.)

Sept. 27, WMU Area Conference, Russellville First Church. (See Sept. 10.)

Sept. 27, Area Brotherhood Conference, Russellville First Church. (See Sept. 10.)

In this issue

10 a 'typical' church

Is your church large or small compared to others? How about your baptisms last year? New statistics defining the "typical" Southern Baptist church may surprise you.

11 saving lives

The arrival of a grain shipment from Southern Baptists may help a half-million people in Mali, where famine will claim the lives of 100,000 children this year, say Southern Baptist missionaries Beverly and Norman Coad.

Correction

In a Baptist Press story, "Braidfoot says odds tell true story about lottery," published on page 13 of the August 23 Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine, please substitute the following paragraph for the third from last paragraph: "The New York lottery generated a \$22.1 million jackpot (44 percent) on about \$50 million wagered. The state got about \$20.5 million (41 percent) of the total wagered, with about \$7.8 million (15 percent) going toward overhead."

"Cotton Patch Gospel" at OBU Sept. 5

The "Cotton Patch Gospel", a professional touring production of a musical by the late Harry Chapin, will be presented Wednesday, Sept. 5 at 8 p.m. on the campus of Ouachita Baptist University.

Reserve seat tickets are \$6 for members of church groups and \$7 for the general public. Requests should be directed to the Student Activities Office, Box 3793, Arkadelphia, AR 71923 or by calling (501) 246-4531, ext. 539.

Victory in adversity

The editor's page

J. Everett Sneed



It is often implied that a truly committed and consecrated Christian will have no personal problems but will prosper in all he does. Yet, the Bible never promises God will protect his children from all difficulties. The faithful may even mature spiritually while confronting the problems of life.

A kindergarten teacher shared a child's probing questions concerning gratitude in the face of adversity. As the children were being taught to pray, the teacher was emphasizing the importance of giving thanks to God for the blessings we receive. The class was led to name a host of personal possessions for which thanksgiving should be expressed. The list included good food, a nice house, cars, toys, family, friends, good health and all that we usually associate with the good life.

Later, a five-year-old child caught her teacher by the hand and, pointing to a poster in the hallway asked, "But what can he be thankful for?" It was a poster encouraging support of the world hunger offering. It showed a starving child. His thin face, etched with pain and fear, reflected total despair. What did he have for which to be thankful? The teacher said there was an awkward silence as she groped for an answer.

Even yet, some preachers are proclaiming instant rewards and punishment. Some use the testimonies of outstanding athletes, who declare that being Christian has made them winners. Others seek the most successful businessmen to give tithing testimonies. The false concept this presents is that one who is truly committed to God and in the center of his will shall never encounter anything unpleasant.

One radio evangelist has gone so far as to tell his listening audience the more they give him, the more God will reward each of his contributors. He reads such alleged testimonies as, "I sent you my last \$100, and the same day I received \$500 unexpectedly.

The truth is that the Bible does not guarantee immediate prosperity or protection to those who are serving God. It does promise a sufficient supply of his love and grace. Showers of blessings may continue to fall on the least deserving, and misfortune and injustice upon committed Christians. Yet, all who have had an experience with Christ are in his care. This is the ultimate assurance, regardless of temporal circumstances.

As related in the Old Testament, the story of Job shows how God permitted calamity and disaster to befall one who was serving him. The opening verses of the book describes Job as a man

of great wealth, unblemished character and total commitment to God.

The scene moves swiftly to heaven, where Satan appears before God. When the name of Job is mentioned, God challenges Satan to show any flaw in Job's character. Unable to do so, Satan attributes Job's piety to self-interest. To prove Job's faithful, flawless life, God then permits Satan to bring calamity and disaster upon him.

The book probes both the dark and the bright sides of suffering. It shows the agonizing struggle of Job and the inspiring triumph of trust and hope. The most evident teaching of the book is that the righteous do suffer. A consistent, godly life is not a guarantee against all difficulties.

Jesus stated emphatically that suffering is not necessarily the direct result of sin, nor does a consistent Christian life build a wall of protection around us. Christ encountered individuals who experienced suffering that was not a result of personal sin.

On one particularly memorable occasion, the disciples asked Jesus, "Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents; but that the works of God should be made manifest in him" (John 9:2-3).

There are several ways the works of Jesus can be revealed in suffering. In this instance, opportunity was made for Jesus to demonstrate his power and glory. The miracles of Jesus were signs or proofs that he was the Messiah.

Today we manifest the works of God in at least two ways. First, suffering enables God to demonstrate his power and grace in us. Second, it prepares Christians to demonstrate the compassionate nature of Christ toward others.

Christians are not always winners in the contest of this world, nor does God protect them from all difficulties. When Paul wrote II Timothy, he was awaiting death at the hand of Nero, because of his committed Christian life. The victory, crown and reward is assured for all Christians, however, when they are present with the Lord. Paul wrote, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (II Tim. 4:7-8).

Arkansas Baptist

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

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Letters to the editor expressing opinions are invited. Letters should be typed double-space and must be signed. Editors must not contain more than 350 words and must not defame the character of persons. They must be marked "for publication."

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.

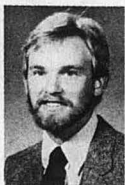
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1984 Student-to-Student workers named for six campuses



Eden



Sasser



Wright



Church



Edmondson



Walker

The Student Department of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention has announced its Student-to-Student Workers for 1984-85.

Donna Eden, a recent graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, will serve at Arkansas Tech in Russellville. Scott Sasser, also a student at Southwestern Seminary, will serve at Westark Community College in Fort Smith. Donna Wright, a graduate of Oklahoma's East Central State University, will serve at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville. Greg Church, a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University, will serve at his alma mater. Peggy Edmondson,

also a graduate of Ouachita, will serve at the University of Central Arkansas in Conway. Ken Walker, a graduate of Southern Arkansas University, will serve at Southern Arkansas University, Technical Branch in Camden.

Student-to-Student Workers are funded by the BSU Third Century Campaign. Workers spend nine months leading dormitory visitation, Bible studies, and evangelistic outreach.

The Third Century Campaign also makes possible the employment of three contract workers: Patti Adams, who serves as associate BSU director at Henderson State University in Arkadelphia; Peggy Burnett,

who serves at Baptist Medical Systems and Arkansas State University, Beebe Branch; Mike Weaver, who serves as associate at the University of Arkansas in Little Rock.

Directors at community colleges, also paid by the Third Century fund, are D.C. McAtee at Eastern Arkansas Community College in Forrest City; Mike Fowler at Phillips County Community College in Helena; Al Morris, at Garland County Community College in Hot Springs; Rosie Simpkins, at Westark Community College in Fort Smith; and Cathy Whitaker at North Arkansas Community College in Harrison.

Letters to the editor

Let's turn our energy

The devotional in *Open Windows* July 25 tells of the boy who got rid of the wasps on the outside of his home by putting gasoline on the nest and setting it afire. The wasps were gone—with \$15,000 damage to the house.

When I read this, I said, "I am afraid that is what Southern Baptists are doing." For some time I have been concerned about the bickering and picking at some of the brethren about differences of opinions or of interpretation of some scripture. Some pretty hard things have been said. None of these differences were essential to salvation. When Christ gave us his last instructions, he said, "Go and make disciples" not "understand all of the scriptures alike."

This controversy about ordaining women to the ministry—if a woman feels called of God to minister in America and answers that call, how different is that from the woman who feels God's call to go to Africa or South America and preach forgiveness of sins? The directive for women to keep silent in church was given in an age when women were held back, not educated, not versed in public affairs or church affairs and had no opinion to voice. God gave his Son to a woman to raise and instruct. What better recommendation could he give?

The commission to go and make disciples of all nations is still our commission. If we differ in some details on how to do this, is it to be wondered at? We are human. But when we let those differences sidetrack us from our main purpose and spend our time

getting rid of them, we are falling into Satan's trap. We get rid of some of them, but at what cost!

I feel that this has already shown up in less mission giving and in fewer baptisms. This pleases Satan so much. If he can keep us so occupied, he will defeat our God-given mission. Let's turn our energy and strength to winning souls instead of hair splitting—Mrs. M.O. Havey, Bella Vista

Strong, clear witness

I was a member of Congress for 16 years and led the fight in 1972, with the help of the Baptists, to defeat a so-called prayer amendment. Such an amendment would have put the First Amendment in jeopardy. My background has included membership in German, Southern and Northern Baptist churches and I am now a member of the Calvary Church in Washington, D.C., affiliated with both American Baptists and the Southern Baptist Convention. I now write you a special note on recent developments.

All Americans owe a debt of gratitude to the staff of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs for their leadership in passing equal access legislation.

For the first time in 20 years, Congress has passed legislation concerning the proper role of religion in the public schools. It represents a remarkable accomplishment to see such major legislation move from initial introduction to enactment in less than 3 years.

Baptists have an exceptionally effective voice in Washington. The staff members are

spiritually sound, politically astute and intellectually able. As a former Congressman, I know this Baptist office to be one of the most valuable resources of its kind available to Congress.

As an active Baptist layman, I rejoice in the Baptist Joint Committee's strong, clear witness to our historic Baptist faith—Fred Schwengel, Washington, D.C.

Letters to the editor expressing opinions are invited. Letters should be typed double space and must be signed by one person, though the name may be withheld on request. Mailing address and phone number of the writer should be included. Letters must not contain more than 350 words and must not defame the character of persons. Letters must be marked "for publication." Only original letters will be considered.

New lesson writer begins

Don Hook, interim pastor of Indianhead Lake Church in Sherwood, begins this week writing the International series Sunday school lessons in "Lessons for living."

Hook, who retired six years ago after 47 years in the pastorate and three years in missions and evangelism, served for two years as president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. He currently directs the Crisis Closet ministry of the Pulaski County Association.



Hook

Don Moore

You'll be glad to know...

...A good example! A sizeable church, knowing how difficult it will be for some pastors and their wives to get to the convention in November, has voted to provide \$100 to help a pastor and his wife from their association to go. This is great! When we are sensitive to the Spirit and aware of others, these spontaneous things just naturally happen. How good it is for the Concord Association leadership to offer to find 100 homes for people who may need bed and breakfast. President of our convention, Jon Stubblefield, has secured Baker James Cauthen and Joel Gregory as outside speakers. It seems God is moving to make this one of our truly outstanding conventions. "Thanks for the good examples!"

...Another one! A pastor of a relatively small church that has had many struggles recently learned of the pressing need for funds to secure TV time to oppose casino gambling. That evening, he led his church to commit \$1,000 to the cause. Hundreds of others will need to follow their example. The Christian Civic Foundation is our channel for supporting Citizens United Against Gambling.

...Yet another example! John Moldovan, a student at our seminary in Fort Worth, recently gave his testimony at Foreign Missions week at Gloria. He has been recently exiled from communist Romania for refusing to compromise his belief in Jesus and his continued ministry as a Baptist evangelist. For nearly one month, he was tortured with beatings and brainwashing efforts while in prison. He said, "At one point a part of me cried to compromise," but he refused to yield to fear. "I was able to pray shortly before I collapsed, 'God have mercy!'" and received strength and peace from God then and looked at my tormentors through new eyes with compassion and pity, he said. "I'm not sure if you can understand, but when Christ takes the place of the flesh, the flesh is out and Christ is in. You don't worry about anything. It is his faithfulness which counts. He was there!"

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

First in a series of three The imperative of new work

by Andrew M. Hall



Hall

"happen." The system of spiritual arithmetic worked then as it does now—people willingly left the mother church to help start a new church and God kept "filling the barrel" at the home base. God promises "never to leave us nor forsake us."

Through the years, it has been my privilege to help start a number of new churches; the most recent one is in a burgeoning area of Florida. We first made a commitment to start a new work. Business meeting commitment was imperative. Any Southern Baptist church can so commit itself. God will dictate the timing, but the decision is history.

Faith worked in the actions of First Church of Delray Beach, Fla. An acreage was located and purchased with the help of a grant from the state missions offering (\$25,000) and additional assistance from the associational new work fund. The property is now worth

A new church is no more an accident than is a new Hilton or a new federal building. Some mind must conceive the idea.

When the late C.C. Warren came to Immanuel, Little Rock, he soon led that church to discover un-churched areas, and new works began to

five times the original purchase price.

Next step: find a qualified pastor. He was located. Next step: figure the cost of a first unit structure. The timing seemed right.

Next step: "Who will go for us?" Who will leave his or her class and become a part of new church planting? It was suggested that at least 15 families should form the nucleus of the new church. Almost to the number, they responded. Some said, "How will the home church survive the loss of so many good teachers?" Yet, the budget held firm. Faith worked.

Any Baptist can fill in the rest of the story—the construction of the building, the fund-raising to furnish it, the joyous day of dedication. The secret? Very simple. We committed ourselves, and there was no "taking the plow and then looking back."

Just for the record, "super" churches do not often build other super-churches. How can they? Schools, book stores, gymnasiums, senior citizen's homes, bus purchases, etc.—all cost money. The way our Convention will grow is for the average, hard working, middle-sized churches to make a commitment to give birth to a new work and then do it—in God's timing.

Andrew M. Hall, a former pastor of First Church, Fayetteville, recently returned to Arkansas after retiring from First Church, Delray Beach, Fla.

Ouachita graduates three with honors

Fifty-nine students received degrees during summer commencement exercises at Ouachita Baptist University on Aug. 10 in Mitchell Hall Auditorium.

Twenty-six students were awarded bachelor's degrees, while 33 took master's degrees from President Daniel R. Grant.

Jon M. Stubblefield, pastor of the Central Church of Magnolia and president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, was the commencement speaker.

Three students were graduated with special academic honors during the commencement activities. Magna cum laude honors for maintaining at least a 3.75 grade point average, out of a possible 4.00 (straight A) system during her college career, went to Mary Ann Wasson of Arkadelphia. John Lee Littleford of Bonham, Texas, and Paul K.W. Au of Honolulu, Hawaii, received cum laude recognition for graduating with at least a 3.50 grade point average.

Bible conference features Rogers, Smith

Former Southern Baptist Convention presidents Adrian Rogers and Bailey Smith will lead the program for the annual Paul Jackson Bible Conference Sept. 6-8, at First Church, Little Rock.

Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Church, Memphis, Tenn., and Smith, pastor of First Southern Church, Del City, Okla., will be joined by Sam Cathey, Joyce Rogers, Bill Stafford, Jack Price, Jim Whitmire and Michael Haynes on the conference program.

Conference sessions will be held at Little Rock, First, except for two scheduled at the Excelsior Hotel Friday morning and noon. Both Excelsior sessions require reservations.

Jackson, 29, has held revivals in more than 400 local churches nation-wide in his 12 years of ministry. He has recorded more than

100,000 public commitments to Christ in crusade and revival services.

In May, a Paul Jackson crusade in north Georgia recorded nearly 1,800 commitments, 570 of them professions of faith. A March 1983 revival at Central Church, Jonesboro, recorded more than 2,000 decisions, including 512 professions, the largest number of any revival in the Southern Baptist Convention that year.

Jackson has been in evangelism since age 17. His high school dreams of football stardom were shattered by knee surgery in his senior year. He entered evangelism while a student at Ouachita Baptist University.

Conference information may be obtained from the Paul Jackson Evangelistic Association, P.O. Box 5791, Little Rock, AR 72215.

Arkansas all over

by Millie Gill / ABN staff writer

people

John McAlexander is serving as pastor of the Shiloh Church at Texarkana.

Robert Wayland Ingle is serving as pastor of the Friendship Church at Marianna. A native of Haleyville, Ala., he is a graduate of Hannibal-LaGrange College and is currently working toward a master of theology degree at Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Dianna, have three children, Robert Jr., David and Kathy.

Al Maines is serving as pastor of the Open Door Church at Rogers.

Debbie Smith has resigned as minister of youth at Highland Heights Church in Benton to move to Fort Worth, Texas, where she and her husband, Charles, will enroll in Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Claude Lester Young died Aug. 12 in Harrison at age 71. Funeral services were conducted Aug. 15 by Jack Ramsey. Young had been the pastor of the Cassville Church. Survivors include three sons, James L. Young of Bellvue, Wash.; Ford L. Young of Thousand Oaks, Calif.; Billie J. Young of Pueblo, Colo.; 10 grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

Willie F. Sawyers died Aug. 1 at the age of 80 while sharing his personal testimony at a quarterly meeting of Mount Zion Association senior adults. He was a member of the Brookland First Church. Survivors are his wife, Mrs. Myrl Goodwin Sawyers; two daughters, Mrs. Willene Austin of Imboden and Mrs. Vera Breeding of Lake City; a son, Conway H. Sawyers of Little Rock, director of missions for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention; seven grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

Terry Henderson was licensed to the ministry Aug. 5 at Newport First Church. A senior at Newport High School, he serves as president of the Black River Association youth group.

David W. Willard resigned Aug. 12 as youth and church activities director at Newport First Church following seven years of service. He and his wife, Jane, and their daughter, Annabeth, will reside in Cabot where he will be associated with the Cabot Public Schools.

briefly

Booneville First Church recently had a mission team in Michigan to assist with surveys at Houghton Lake and Prudenville and to present the musical "On the Rock" at these two locations as well as at Roscommon and Grayling. The Booneville church has linked itself to the new chapel at Houghton Lake for a three-year period to assist in the growth and development of the chapel.

Lake City mission team, composed of members from First, Bowman, and Bathabra churches, has returned from Lake City, Mich., where they assisted in the organization of a new chapel by assisting with a tent revival, backyard Bible clubs and surveys. W. O. Qualls coordinated the Lake City team.

Highland Hills Church at Texarkana recently held services to ordain Charles Wise as a deacon.

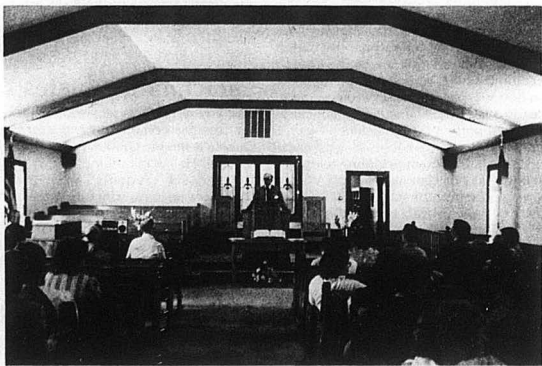
Otter Creek Church in Little Rock ordained Charles Cockman as a deacon Aug. 19. Pastor Max Deaton preached the ordination message. Questioning was by O. L. Bayless of Hot Springs and Clarence Shell, director of evangelism for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

Immanuel Church at Viny Ridge observed homecoming Aug. 26 with regular morning services, a potluck luncheon and an afternoon music program, featuring the "Sounds of Glory" group.

Eagle Heights Church in Harrison celebrated its 35th anniversary Aug. 26 with "Roundup Sunday."

Geyer Springs First Church in Little Rock dedicated its 26-rank Wicks pipe organ with an organ recital Aug. 19. Donald Paul Hustad, professor of organ at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, was guest artist.

buildings



ABN photo / J. Everett Sneed

Pilgrim's Rest Church, near Batesville, dedicated the remodeling of their sanctuary on Aug. 19. The remodeling included the installation of stained glass windows, carpeting, a sound system, pew cushions, flooring in the foyer and exterior doors. The church, also, placed vinyl on the exterior of the building. A number of the improvements were given as memorials in memory of loved ones. The project was completed at a cost of \$14,000 to the church. Since the coming of pastor Lonnie Busby in September 1980, the church has added an educational wing, developed a fellowship hall in the basement which included new carpeting and new lights, and dedicated a 1,500-volume library as a memorial to Wesley Michael Gordon. Former pastor Hal Gallop was present for the afternoon service as well as Manuel Macks, Billy Duncan, Kenneth Hull, and I. R. Hull, all of whom were ordained by the church.

update *Sing 'Hosanna...!'*

Oak Grove Church at Ashdown was in a recent revival that resulted in three professions of faith and one addition by letter. J. D. Webb was evangelist and Jay Gore was music director.

Cabin Creek Church at Lamar, a one-year-old church, held its first services in a new building June 24 with pastor Jerry Holcomb preaching. The building houses a sanctuary, 14 classrooms and a fellowship hall. There were 257 in attendance for this service, exceeding an attendance goal of 250. Since June 24, average Sunday school attendance has increased from 125 to 200. The congregation held a revival that resulted in 22 professions of faith. Don Babin of Houston, Texas, and Ken Freeman of Pasadena, Texas, were leaders.

Immanuel Church in Little Rock honored E. Amon Baker and his wife, Joy, Aug. 19 in recognition of their 20 years of service in the church's music ministry. Baker is minister of music and Mrs. Baker assists with the graded choir program.

Little Rock Second Church hosted a reception Aug. 19 to honor Tom Wideman, minister of music and youth. Also honored were Carolyn Staley, who has been serving as interim minister of music, and Mike Hart, who has been serving as interim minister of youth.

Grace Memorial Church in North Little Rock will celebrate its 50th anniversary Sept. 9. Activities will include a potluck meal, an afternoon program and recognition of former members and friends.

Osceola First Church conducted 16 backyard Bible clubs in the Osceola area Aug. 20-23. John Dresbach, minister of music/youth, was coordinator.

Staff golf tourney results announced

Alan Moore, minister of music and youth at Calvary Church, Hope, won the championship flight of the annual state golf tournament for church staff held in Little Rock Aug. 13.

Doug Turner, music minister at First Church, Forrest City, was the championship flight runner-up. First flight co-winners were Paul Williams, minister of music, Calvary Church, Little Rock, and Larry Bradley, music minister, First Church, Hot Springs.

A fall tournament has been scheduled for Monday, Oct. 29, in Benton.

More than 400 Arkansans gathered at First Church, Benton, Monday evening, Aug. 20, for the Convocation on Congregational Singing sponsored by the Music Department of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. Don Hustad, professor of organ at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, led the program, which featured an afternoon session on worship for pastors and ministers of music and an evening worship experience, "Hosanna... An Evening of Singing and Praise," based on the worship experience of Isaiah the prophet. The program was in preparation for the 1984-85 church music emphasis, "Reaching People Through Congregational Singing."

ABN photos / Glen Ennes



ABN photo / Glen Ennes

Always ready—Children's choir leaders from across the state met at Little Rock's Immanuel Church Aug. 10-11 for the biennial Children's Choir Leader Readiness Clinic sponsored by the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Music Department. The workshop featured out-of-state leadership such as Charlotte McElroy of Tupelo, Miss. (above), who assisted 267 Arkansans with graded choir techniques.

Hot Springs' family-oriented recreation image built healthy

Hot Springs mayor Jim Randall has only to point out the window of his office to support his optimism about how business—without gambling—is going in the Spa City.

Across Convention Boulevard and to the west of the city's convention center, in the same block, is the Trailways bus station. Now that the city has a commitment from developers who will build a Hilton Inn on the site, Randall points to the development as a sign of economic health.

The hotel is one of several things in the works which the Mayor says will create an environment favorable to revitalizing business downtown. He expects the formal announcement on the Hilton within the next month, when permanent financing is secured.

But the hotel is not the only yardstick Randall has applied to the city's economy. From his checking he concludes that business is doing just fine without the legalized casino gambling that will be before the voters statewide in November.

"I have asked some supporters of casinos how their business is doing," Randall relates. "When they say it's doing great, I ask them why we need casino gambling."

Some empty storefronts in downtown have been a rallying point for the proponents of legalizing casinos, Randall admits. "But it is that way all around the country," he counters. The Mayor explains that, like in other towns, the merchants move out to where the amenities include a variety of stores and lots of free parking.

He says he would like to see the downtown merchants focus on sophisticated specialty shops, since the trade downtown is largely from tourists.

Despite some struggles downtown, Randall says the state of Hot Springs' economy is good, and he offers statistics to support his optimism:

§ In 1983 gross retail sales were \$342 million, compared to \$65.5 million in 1963;

§ There was more than \$500 million in deposits and assets with two local commercial banks in 1983, compared to \$68.5 million in 1963 (and this does not count savings and loan associations and a new commercial bank);

§ In 1983 Hot Springs had \$35 million in growth in new construction, within the city limits. This was up from \$17 million the year before.

The 20-year comparison is on purpose. In 1963 illegal gambling flourished in the county, the Mayor notes. "We have built up family-oriented recreation business in the

past 20 years, and I don't want to see all that destroyed at the flip of a pen."

Randall feels the building of this image of family-oriented, safe recreation has been possible largely because the people worked hard at promoting and building on the area's natural resources, the lakes, the forests, mineral water and unexcelled vistas.

The county's family attractions include Magic Springs theme park, which Randall says is the state's second largest drawing attraction. Another is the Hot Springs Tower, which has counted more than 256,000 visitors in the first year of operation.

The Mayor includes the MidAmerica Museum, the Arkansas Alligator Farm, Josephine Tussaud's Wax Museum and the new cruise boat, Belle of Hot Springs, as family-oriented businesses which would probably fold quickly if casinos changed the type of visitors the city attracts.

"Our image would change overnight," he concludes.

The Mayor says another economic issue must be considered. "The family-oriented businesses employ numerous local people,"

RIGHT: Hot Springs Mayor Jim Randall takes the proposed Hilton Inn (to be built on the site behind him and to his left) as a sign of good health for the family-oriented economy the city has built

BELOW: Families flock to the area's lakes to cool off during summer. OPPOSITE: A shady stroll down Bath House Row attracts a family and a senior adult.

he notes, "what would happen to their jobs?" He says he does not foresee them being trained for jobs with the casinos.

Mayor Randall notes that a survey done for the pro-casino group showed 61 percent of 405 residents said they thought casino gambling would help the economy.

Randall is interested in the state of the economy, too. He says he can't understand the need to exchange a proven economic base for another, vastly different one.



Betty J. Kennedy, ABN managing editor, was born and raised in Hot Springs and visits family there from time to time.

economy, Mayor concludes



HMB report offers new view of 'typical' SBC church

by Michael Tutterow

ATLANTA (BP)—The typical 1983 Southern Baptist church had 237 total members, an enrollment of 116 people in Sunday school (average weekly attendance of 65), and six baptisms, according to a recently published report by researchers at the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

Phillip B. Jones, director of the HMB's planning and services research department, and Julie McKelvie, research assistant/program manager, analyzed, painted the picture of the typical SBC church from statistics from the denomination's Uniform Church Letter.

Jones used median—or midpoint—statistics instead of averages in computing the typical SBC church and said using a median statistic is more representative than using an average.

"The 'average' size church has a total of 388 members," explained Jones. "The problem with using the average or mean as a descriptive statistic is a few extremely large churches can force the average to be abnormally high and not really representative of the majority of Southern Baptist churches.

"The median represents the middle point of a group of numbers," he added. "For example, when considering church size, the median is the mid-point where half the churches have a larger membership and half have a smaller membership."

The median size SBC church has 237 total

members, which means "half of the churches have a membership larger than 237 and half a smaller membership," he said. He added his research revealed 70 percent of SBC churches fall below the average total of 388 members, further emphasizing average statistics can be misleading.

Based on data from 35,422 SBC churches reporting on the 1983 Uniform Church Letter, Jones noted the following characteristics of the "typical" SBC church:

(1) Total members, 237; (2) Resident members, 171; (3) Baptisms, 6; (4) Age of church, 62 years; (5) Sunday School enrollment, 116; (6) Average weekly Sunday school attendance, 65; (7) Church Training enrollment, 31.

(8) WMU enrollment, 19; (9) Brotherhood enrollment, 4; (10) Total receipts, \$39,515; (11) Tithes and offerings, \$39,445; (12) Undesignated gifts, \$33,005; (13) Designated gifts, \$3,864; (14) Total local expenditures, \$31,395; (15) Total mission expenditures, \$5,000.

(16) Cooperative Program, \$2,198; (17) Percent of undesignated gifts to the Cooperative Program, 7.5 percent; (18) Associational missions gifts, \$720; (19) Percent of undesignated gifts to the association, 2.1 percent, and (20) Annie Armstrong Easter Offering, \$213.

The typical SBC church had 2.9 baptisms

per 100 resident members; pastoral tenure runs between two and three years.

Jones added that 9,246 churches did not contribute to the Annie Armstrong offering for home missions support and 5,318 churches reported no baptisms during 1983.

"We're holding up super-churches as models for our convention. However, they are not representative of the typical Southern Baptist church," said Jones, who noted 90 percent of Southern Baptist churches have less than 620 resident members.

"When we program for churches with a staff of six persons and a \$1 million budget, we're not being realistic of what a true SBC church is like," said Jones. "We need to take into consideration the typical church may be limited in its resources, both in terms of people and finances. The typical church may not be capable of implementing all the programs available to Southern Baptist churches.

"Furthermore," he added, "when denominational personnel design programs, they should keep in mind the true picture of a Southern Baptist church. They have to be realistic in their expectations as to what programs can be implemented and what issues can be addressed."

Michael Tutterow is assistant news editor for the Baptist Home Mission Board.

Elder says great dreams for student work insure SBC future

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)—"For student work to be great, there must be great dreams," Lloyd Elder, president of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, told student leaders attending the Ridgecrest Student Leadership Conference.

"Leaders must paint great dreams for local church and campus involvement in student work," and campus ministers should involve local churches because "We will be at our best in student work when we focus on the local church," he said.

Working together, the local church, the Baptist Student Union, campus ministers and the Sunday School Board have the tools to equip each other in team leadership to reach

students for Christ, Elder said.

Campus work is a crucial area because what is done there to change lives on campus will change the world in future generations, he pointed out.

"Student work is more than an assignment at the Sunday School Board. There is a deep sense of commitment to student work and to the people of student work," he said. "We have a decision to make about the commit-

ment of our convention to missions. We must decide whether we will help to raise up Christian young people with a commitment to missions."

"When we have a denomination committed to missions to the whole world, the denomination has power," Elder said.

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Maliens thankful for grain; 5,000-ton shipment arrives

by Mary Jane Welch

BAMAKO, Mali (BP)—One man wept as he received a 100-lb. bag of grain from a Baptist mission team at Kolokani, Mali.

For two years, rains had not come and he had been unable to provide his family that much grain, he said. "This year the Baptist mission came in the place of the long-awaited rain clouds, and they have brought us a harvest of grain," he said.

This man is one of several in the West African nation of Mali who've expressed appreciation for 400 tons of sorghum Southern Baptists distributed during July, said missionary Beverly Coad. The grain was secured by the U.S. ambassador to Mali as a stopgap measure until 5,000 tons of U.S. government grain arrived from the United States.

The first load of U.S. corn secured by a group of interested Baptists in Washington arrived Aug. 7 in Bamako, the capital. Baptist missionaries will be responsible for distributing it to hardest-hit areas of Mali.

The United Nations Children's Fund estimates 100,000 children in Mali will starve to death this year because of drought and food shortages. The crisis promises to stretch into another year. The rainy season should be well underway, said Coad, but so far no rains have fallen.

The Southern Baptist-sponsored distribution team in Mali has trucks lined up to move the grain into needy areas as fast as it arrives in Bamako from the Ivory Coast port of Abidjan, said Coad.

By giving a 100-lb. sack of grain to each family of five with a government registration card, Baptists can expect to reach about 500,000 people with grain, she said. Under normal conditions, a family of five would use such a sack in a month, she said, but many families in Mali have been eating only once every four days to stretch their food. Some also will use some of the grain as seed.

After Baptists experienced problems with transportation from Abidjan to Mali, Mali's minister of interior and minister of transportation sent a telegram to the government coordinator in the port asking that the grain for Southern Baptists be given top priority for shipping among the hundreds of thousands of tons of grain waiting in the port. "Thank you's" have come to the distribu-

tion teams as they've worked in areas as far north as Nara, an isolated village which is a six-and-a-half-hour drive north of Bamako. There, authorities went on national radio to express their appreciation for 100 tons of grain distributed in their area.

Still, the situation in Nara deteriorated seriously in just the week between her husband's visits there, Coad said. "What we're doing here is like irrigating the Sahara Desert with a five-gallon bucket. It's just a drop in the bucket as far as really meeting needs."

At one distribution point, villagers brought small plastic containers of milk to the Baptist mission team as a gift. When team members tried to refuse it, not wanting to deprive the people of their only meager source of nourishment, the villagers replied, "This is the only way we can thank you. If we had something better, we would gladly give it."

Another village brought two goats for the team to take back to the people of America to show their appreciation.

Although Southern Baptists are financing the grain distribution, it is a cooperative effort between almost all evangelical groups in Mali, Coad said. She and her husband,

Norman, started Southern Baptist mission work in Mali last fall and are still the only Southern Baptist missionaries in the country.

A team of Maliens composed of two Moslems, two men related to the Christian and Missionary Alliance and two related to the Gospel Missionary Union actually distribute the grain, while Norman Coad coordinates the program.

"The main thing this is doing is showing that we're a caring people and that we're doing our very best to try to meet needs," she said. Because grain has been available to everyone who comes as long as it lasts, people have said, "The Protestants have done what they said they would do," she added.

The grain distribution has broken down barriers which normally exist between evangelical Christians and the Moslems who dominate the country, she said. The Gospel Missionary Union church in Kolokani, one of the first distribution points, is running over with people, and four people accepted Christ as savior on a recent Sunday.

Mary Jane Welch is a staff writer for the Foreign Mission Board.

(BP) photo / Norman Coad



Southern Baptist missionaries Norman and Beverly Coad are distributing 5,000 tons of grain sent by Washington, D.C. area Baptists to the drought-stricken country of Mali.



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For more information write:

Bellcaro Ministries, Ray and Carol Bellgrau, 228 Saunders Ferry Rd. #112, Hendersonville, TN 37075 or call (615) 822-6528

Your state convention at work

Evangelism

LES preparation

Preparation for the Lay Evangelism School is very critical to the success of it. A church manual has been prepared for each church to use as they plan their school. This manual can be purchased from the Home Mission Board or the State Evangelism Department.



Shell

The church leadership, both staff and laity, must be involved and lead in the preparatory stages. At least one person, or possibly a committee, needs to be assigned to lead the church in each area of preparation.

The promotion and registration committee has the responsibility to promote, inform and pre-register participants. The promotion must be so thorough that everyone in the church understands what is involved, especially the requirements for attendance.

The spiritual preparation committee has the responsibility to lead the church body in special studies. The Church Training hour or Wednesday evening Bible study is the ideal time to prepare spiritually. The pastor adds to the emphasis by preaching a series of messages preceding the school.

The prospect survey committee has a very critical responsibility. To get proper results, this committee must produce prospects.

Other important assignments are discussed in the church manual. — **Clarence Shell, director**

Student Ministries

Baptist Student Union

Recently our Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine received a letter from Phil Leslie of Booneville, a senior at Arkansas State, and shared that letter with me. I'd like to share some of it now with you.

"In 1980, when I traveled to Jonesboro to visit the university I was to be attending, the first step I took on the ground in that city was on the front lawn of the Baptist Student Union. Then, as a freshman, I remember my director, Arliss Dickerson, saying to me to make sure I didn't burn myself out in BSU. Now, as I'm looking at my senior year ahead, I can safely say that I have not burned myself out.

Through the ministry of the BSU and my campus church, the Lord has taken this lump of clay and molded it far beyond what I could ever imagine. I thank the Lord that he has led me to serve on the BSU Freshman Council, as well as three years on Executive Council. He also led me to serve as a dorm Bible study leader as well.

And thank you, ABN, for the fitting tribute to BSU you printed in the article by Chester E. Swor. God alone knows the new vitality this servant has brought to thousands of students everywhere, myself included.

I give a challenge to the churches of Arkansas: give your support to the BSU in your area, and dare to see how you can be a lasting part in a student's life, career, and ministry. Never give up on the ones who seem set in their ways. Those could be the ones that surprise you most.

So, the next time you see some long-haired college kid stroll into your church sanctuary, seat him next to a student of the Baptist Student Union... and watch him grow!" — **Tom J. Logue, director**

Christian Life Council

The power of music

Paul Harvey tells of the interesting way Croton, an ancient Greek city-state defeated Sybaris, another city-state, though outnumbered three to one. The date was 510 B.C.



Parker

Knowing the war horses of Sybaris had been trained to perform upon hearing a certain tune, as the opposing armies drew within arrow and hearing distance, the Croton musicians began to play the melody. The horses completely ignored the command of their riders and began to dance, prance and side-step instead of joining the battle.

As susceptible as some are to fall for the expensive, attractive propaganda of greedy entrepreneurs, it is hoped that when the melodic wooing of casino gambling promoters is heard, the people of Arkansas will not "prance, dance and side-step" to the polls on Nov. 6 to defeat!

We must be disciplined to ignore the world's sweet music and do everything possible to overwhelmingly defeat another problem-causing issue. We don't have to dance when the Devil fiddles. Abstain from every appearance (and sound) of evil. — **Bob Parker, director**

Family and Child Care

A place of safety

Breaking ground for a new structure that will house a ministry to abused and neglected children and battered wives is a visible expression of compassion. Calvary Association, Searcy, made this expression on Sunday, Aug. 12, as approximately 500 people gathered on the site of the proposed emergency receiving home to break ground for new ministry.

The home will be a joint ministry between the association and the Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services. Primarily, it will serve children and families from the counties of White, Jackson, Cleburne and Woodruff.

Several years ago, the association contacted our agency about the need for such a ministry in their area. Our agency conducted a needs assessment in the four counties to determine the unmet needs of children and families and to identify the present resources. The survey revealed a primary need for an emergency receiving home for youth ages 13-17 and a resource for battered women and their children. The association appointed a committee to develop the plans, and the groundbreaking ceremony was the culmination of their many hours of praying, planning and working. Some churches in the surrounding area also made financial contributions to the project.

The emergency receiving home, expected to be completed by Jan. 1, will provide a place of safety for six youth and will have one unit for a woman and her children who need emergency protection and care. — **Johnny G. Biggs, executive director**

Missions

Why start new churches?

It is scriptural. Jesus said to make disciples and teach them to observe all he commanded (Matt. 28:20). In Acts 1:8, he said to witness to everybody in the world. The church is God's plan for carrying out these commands.



Tidsworth

The Bible gives us an example to follow. Individual Christians witnessed (Acts 8:35). Revivals sprang up (Acts 8:6). Missionaries and laypeople traveled to distant places and shared the gospel (Acts 8:4). But after the revival was over and the missionary was gone, the church continued witnessing, worshiping, serving and growing.

Multitudes of people are unchurched (1,001,413 in Arkansas). Southern Baptists have reached people by starting churches, averaging one per day for several years. The best and quickest way to reach the unchurched is to start new churches. The state convention baptismal ratios in West Virginia was 1:22. In mission congregations, it was 1:6.

More churches give more people a choice of going to church. Some people have a barrier in their minds toward the present churches in the community. A new church opens a new door for them. — **Floyd Tidsworth Jr., church extension director**

Stewardship/Annuity Area conferences

Three area conferences are set by the Stewardship/Annuity and Evangelism Departments for Sept. 10, 11 and 13.



Walker

Central Church, Magnolia; First Church, McGehee; and First Church, Batesville, will host the conferences.

The Stewardship-Annuity conferences begin at 4:30 and the Evangelism conferences begin at 7:30.

Who should attend the Stewardship conference? Pastors, staff members, personnel committee chairmen, church treasurers, and those who are responsible for budget planning are invited.

Conference participants will receive a packet of budget planning materials. Pastor/church staff salaries and benefits will be discussed. Don Burton, from the Annuity Board, will lead a session on insurance and retirement programs offered by the Annuity Board.

Those who participate in the Stewardship conference are invited to a meal served at the host church. The meal is provided by the Stewardship/Annuity Department. Contact the Department office, 376-4791, for reservations.

After the 6 p.m. meal, individual conferences may be scheduled with Burton and Walker. — **James A. Walker, director**

Showing His love...

Like the family proudly showing the photo album, Arkansas Baptists can set before the world illustrations of ministries that picture their showing God's love in our state.

It's coming in next week's issue: *Showing His Love through state missions*



Dr. Ed Young

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Atlanta religious groups rally for political season

by Michael Tutterow

ATLANTA (BP)—Conservative Christians in the Atlanta area rallied at First Church to show their support for political candidates who espouse a return to traditional morality.

About 150 people gathered in the sanctuary Aug. 16 for the rally, sponsored by FaithAmerica, a non-denominational organization based in Phoenix, Ariz., which claims it is dedicated to preserving constitutional liberties, educating Americans about their Christian heritage and current issues and training Christians how to be effective in protecting and advancing those liberties.

Charles Stanley, president of the 14.1-million member Southern Baptist Convention, is pastor of the host church. He was scheduled to be present but was unable to because of a last-minute schedule conflict. Rally organizers said Stanley "is supportive" of FaithAmerica and "agrees in our wanting to get more Christians registered to vote."

The rally, prefaced by the playing of patriotic songs and hymns, was set as a preliminary to a Sept. 15 national Constitutional Liberties Rally in Washington. The September program will be beamed live, via satellite, to more than 700 sites throughout the nation, including the Atlanta Civic Center.

A similar rally was held in Atlanta this past spring prior to many of the state Democratic presidential primaries and was hosted by Zig Ziglar, a Dallas businessman and first vice-president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

During the rally, participants viewed about 45 minutes of video tape from the two-hour Spring rally. Footage included a speech by former Arizona congressman and FaithAmerica national president John Conlan claiming lax morality is one form of Communist aggression toward the United States designed to make the nation crumble from within.

Also shown was a clip from an address by President Reagan to a group of religious broadcasters. When Reagan was introduced on tape, the audience broke into applause.

Jim Zauderer, founder and chairman of FaithAmerica Foundation's Georgia chapter and a member of Atlanta's First Church, said the organization has grown since its Georgia beginning last January. A February rally at First Baptist Church drew 1,000 people; in April, the Constitutional Liberties Rally attracted more than 3,000 participants.

Other activities have included voter registration Sundays, corresponding with thousands of drives by churches nationwide. Zauderer said the drives represented "the first major push the Christian community has had in this area and the results have really been fantastic."

Another First Church member, Greg Brezina, a former pro-football player, said registering Christians to vote had helped to "get rid of one" unidentified Fayette Coun-

ty (metro Atlanta) politician. Though the office "was a small one," he contended the process will work at all levels. "If I can be salt in this sin-sick society by getting rid of corrupt politicians, stopping homosexual sex, standing against abortionists, then I'll do it," he said.

Zauderer said an estimated 10-15 million Christians are not registered to vote. Nancy Shaefer, chairperson for the Atlanta chapter of FaithAmerica Foundation, said complacency "moves across this country just like fog" among many Christians who "don't want to know what's happening and willfully choose not to hear it."

She questioned why Christians don't get angry "when greed and evil and perversion and lies and murder and pornography" are allowed to go unchecked. "When God is removed from our schools, leaving them with confusion, with no discipline, with teachers who are teaching humanism, with no restraints, no boundaries, why don't we get angry?" she asked.

She advocated changing laws which allow homosexuals to have unlimited freedom and urged the election of Christians to public office "to get them to positions where policies and decisions can be altered." She added

he had been involved in efforts to organize Christians to vote and make an impact on the political and social scene, especially in the areas of prayer in public schools, tuition tax credits for those who send their children to private and parochial schools and anti-abortion legislation.

Although he called for support of the two Atlanta candidates, Zauderer maintained FaithAmerica endorsed no candidate, though "I may have indicated that this group should support candidates like (the two introduced at the rally)." Zauderer said he personally supports the two Georgia congressional candidates.

Zauderer encouraged participants to place information about the September rally in churches throughout the city. The leaflets advertise that both President Reagan and Democratic presidential candidate Walter Mondale will be present at the rally.

He said many people have asked why Mondale would appear on the program. His statement—"the positions of both men would be presented 'side by side' so 'every Christian can see the difference between President Reagan and Walter Mondale'—drew laughter from attendees.

He also indicated the Republican and

"Complacency 'moves across this country just like a fog' among many Christians who 'don't want to know what's happening and willfully choose not to hear it.'"

Christians should fight to get textbooks "back into the classroom that once again introduce the minds of our boys and girls to love of country, love of God, love of their Christian heritage and of their families."

Zauderer introduced Pat Swindall and Bill Bronson, who are running for congressional seats in the metropolitan Atlanta area. Both Republican candidates received strong applause. Swindall, who took 90 percent of the vote in the Republican primary, is vying for Georgia's fourth district congressional seat; Bronson is seeking Georgia's seventh district seat.

"Both of these men are committed Christians, who are politically conservative," said Zauderer. "They're both committed to a strong Judeo-Christian heritage; both these men have been endorsed by the national Right-To-Life and the Georgia Right-To-Life; both of these men deserve and should have our support."

He urged churches to get involved in voter registration and individuals to choose "one or two key Christian races" and work for candidates. "If we can send one new conservative Christian congressman to Congress from each state, we can turn this nation around," he added.

Zauderer was Reagan's state treasurer and state co-chairman from 1977 through 1980. He said in an interview following the rally

Democratic platforms will be compared in a similar fashion, yet maintained "we're not trying to promote one party over the other." That statement also elicited laughter from rally participants.

Zauderer defended FaithAmerica's effort to sign up voters, noting voter registration is something blacks have been doing in churches for the last 20 years. "It's funny to me that when white churches begin to be involved in the same practice they're criticized," he said.

"The paradox is when Jerry Falwell spoke up on political issues in 1976 through 1980, he was chastised for doing such by the press," said Zauderer. "Yet Jesse Jackson, who is a minister, can run for president and nobody brings up separation of church and state. On the other hand you have a minister who's speaking out about how he feels about the country and the whole news media comes down on top of him like he's some wild-eyed radical. This seems hypocritical," he said.

FaithAmerica is working in conjunction with the American Coalition for Traditional Values (ACTV), a group organized by author Tim LaHay, and with the 700 Club, a Christian broadcasting group based in New Jersey.

Michael Tutterow is assistant news editor for the Baptist Home Mission Board.

International

Paul's conversion

by Don Hook, interim pastor,
Indianhead Lake, Sherwood

Basic passage: Acts 7:54 to 8:3; 9:1-19;
Galatians 1

Focal passage: Acts 7:59 to 8:1; 9:3-8;
Galatians 1:11-17

Central truth: Salvation changes one's heart, life, and life's direction.

Historically, the bitterest and cruelest persecutions Jesus and his true disciples have ever known have been, and are, from organized religion. In his time, Saul of Tarsus gave his best effort to this sort of persecution (Acts 8:1). One day Saul saw one of these persecuted ones die (Acts 7:54-60). From that moment, Saul of Tarsus was "pricked" in his heart. His first reaction to this conviction was violent. He intensified his persecutions (Acts 9:1-5).

When Saul was confronted personally by the Crucified One, his persecutions were brought to a screeching halt. The probing, searing brilliance of the Light of the World struck him down. The pointed questions, "Why do you resist the convicting power of God?" and "Why do you persecute me?", were driven by the Savior's own voice into Saul's deepest consciousness. Saul's question, "Who is speaking?", reflects a sincere intention to accept the answer as authentic and worthy of a sincere response (Acts 9:3-5).

Saul's repentance, faith, and submission to Jesus is reflected in his question, "Lord, what do you want me to do?" (Acts 9:6). His mind was changed, his heart was changed, the entire direction of his life was changed.

In confirming the reality of his experience, he did not confer with flesh and blood but went to Arabia (Sinai) where God assured him of his salvation, calling and commission (Gal. 1:11-17).

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GOOD NEWS AMERICA



March 16 -
April 6, 1986

GOD LOVES YOU

Life and Work

Serving is our task

by Bert Thomas, Toltec Church, Scott

Basic passage: Matthew 21:33-46

Focal passage: Matthew 21:33-43

Central truth: Each Christian is to submit to the lordship of Christ and serve him.

The scene was not a very pleasant one. Two people had been seriously injured in an automobile accident. Within minutes, a crowd had gathered near the wreckage. A policeman arrived and began directing traffic. Paramedics handled the injured very carefully and transported them quickly to a local hospital. There a team of medical experts worked to determine the extent of the injuries. All of these individuals knew their task and did their best.

Jesus told a parable about special people God had called to reconcile a world injured by sin back to him. Instead of answering his call for service, they rejected it (Matt. 21:33-44). This parable, known as the Parable of the Wicked Tenants is built on the song of the vineyard in Isaiah 5:1-7. It clearly illustrates God's ownership, protection, and care of the nation of Israel, their continual rejection of his attempts to correct them, and their final rejection of God when they crucified his Son, Jesus. After years of rebellion and rejection of God's task for them to reconcile a sinful world, God took the kingdom from them and gave it to a nation bearing the fruits of it (Matt. 21:43).

Peter describes that new nation. "But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, his own special people" (1 Pe. 2:9). Christians from all races make up that new nation. This new nation will do the work of God's kingdom. What is that work? Peter has the answer for us; "that you may proclaim the praises of him who has called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Pe. 2:9). We proclaim his praises when we think about who we once were and who we are now. This should inspire us to serve God wherever he places us.

As Southern Baptists, we must get on with the task of serving our Lord. We can become so preoccupied with who we are that we may forget what we have been called to do. We must not allow the fierce winds of controversy to blow across our denomination just as we are about to launch into the deep and catch many souls for our Lord. The greatness of any individual, church or denomination is determined by how effectively they serve the Master.

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Bible Book

Followers and opponents

by Doug Dickens, First Church, Hot Springs

Background passage: 1 John 2:18 to 4:6

Central truth: The disciple's life is secure in a relationship and lifestyle which clearly distinguishes him from Christ's enemies.

Many Christians, when we think of "anti-christs," let our minds leap to John's book of Revelation. Immediately, we sink in a slew of confusing symbols: Does he have seven heads and ten horns? Is he a person or a great red dragon? Before long, we lose sight of the basic fact: any person, group or thing which opposes or is substituted for Christ is an anti-christ. The New Testament symbols suggest there are many who are anti-christs.

In John's second letter, the followers of Christ are warned that opponents or substitutes often have certain distinguishing characteristics. They appear religious, sometimes even identified with the church, or having broken away from it (2:19). We must be careful to discern or prove genuine faith (4:1).

A second mark of an opponent of God is his denial of Christ's humanity or divinity (2:22-23). Either of these errors is a tragic heresy. Some folks who appear religious may say, "We don't believe what you Christians believe about Jesus being the Christ, but we all believe in God, we're all brothers, we're all going to the same place." Sounds good, it's just not so. This assumption is why so many church members often join sub-Christian cults and sects.

A true Christian has (1) an intimate personal relationship with Jesus which keeps him from deception (2:26-29). He has (2) a great hope as God's child, rooted in obedience and resulting in inner confidence (3:1-3, 19-24). His life is (3) distinctively different in that it is marked by righteousness, not sin, as a lifestyle (3:4-10). (Note in this passage what sin is and does, why it exists and how it is conquered.) The real Christian has (4) a self-giving love for others which doesn't stop with words (3:11-18). The true disciple, out of his relationship with Christ, (5) discerns between religious phrases and religious truths (4:1-6).

When Gen. Sherman's Yankee troops marched through Georgia to the sea, they burned houses and lands. One little old lady refused to leave her farm home and stood defiantly in the road, as if she could stop the marching soldiers. A captain shouted, "Old lady, do you expect to win the war with a broom?" "No," came the quick reply, "but at least I'll show the world which side I'm on!" Will we?

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Government, religion entwined, Cothen says

by Norman Jameson

SHAWNEE, Okla. (BP)—"Religion and government are so entwined, "We don't talk about right and wrong, we talk about right and left," said retired Baptist Sunday School Board President Grady C. Cothen.

Cothen, who long has fought government intrusion into religion affairs, especially IRS attempts to define church "integrated auxiliaries," lectured on Baptist heritage during a meeting of in-service guidance directors at Oklahoma Baptist University.

He said the success of pressure politics in the civil rights movement demonstrated a way to accomplish things in democratic society, and religious leaders embraced the tactic. "The result is an increasing confusion over the function of religion in reinforcing social values and the role of government in reinforcing religious values," he said.

Cothen maintained there are some "overriding concerns of society in general" which require government action on behalf of the people. Among them are abortion, justice, crime, drugs, civil rights, hunger and nuclear weapons.

Issues he considered beyond government purview include prayer, support of any religious activities with tax funds and any religious observances.

Convictions cannot be legislated because "religious convictions subject to what the

majority wants are not religious convictions at all," Cothen said.

Cothen said the church should be the conscience of the nation, but should have no legal control. "The church's weapon is not power, but truth," he said. "Its only power is the power of moral persuasion. When the end of that power comes, we need to back off, pray, and do nothing."

Though Baptists have always been dissenters, in some places where they are the establishment "they want to use (political) power to force others to do their will," Cothen said. "The church must never use power or force to achieve its ends.

"Christians need to be involved in a plethora of human problems, not as a Christian coercing others, but as a witness to the nature of the love of God—in the spirit of Christ, not in the spirit of a ruling monarch."

Cothen said he cannot submit to the "coercive power" of the Moral Majority, though he "agrees with many of the ideals."

Regarding the special tax preference given religion by government, Cothen said, "In all honesty, I don't see any reason at all why I should have a tax-free housing allowance because I'm a Baptist preacher."

Norman Jameson is associate editor of the Oklahoma Baptist Messenger.

Volunteers win one-fourth of student body

SAMOA (BP)—Ten of the 40 students enrolled at the Samoa Baptist Academy made professions of faith during the past school year. All four teachers at the school are Mission Service Corps volunteers.

"Not many can say they saw one-fourth of their student body come to know the Lord," said Almarine Cotten, MSC volunteer and teacher at the Baptist school 2,800 miles south of Hawaii.

Cotten, who is in Texas for the summer, said Bible classes are taught at the academy everyday. "And we try to relate every subject to God and how he works."

She noted the 10 students who made professions of faith came during the last three months of school on a one-to-one basis and had asked about Jesus. "I believe it was an outgrowth of our teaching all year," she said.

"We saw a change in the lives of the children who accepted Christ, and they began to behave differently," Ms. Cotten said. "We are going to go back and do some follow-up and discipling. For many, the only teaching they will have will come from the school."

American Samoa is a U.S. territory and part of the Hawaii Association.

The Samoa Baptist Academy, sponsored by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board and Happy Valley Church in Samoa, is open to all children living on the island. There are

six MSC volunteers working at the academy, four of whom serve as the teaching staff.

Baptist mission work in Samoa began in 1977, and there are now four congregations on the island. They include Samoan, Korean, Tongan and English congregations. There are plans to begin work with the Chinese fishermen.

The people of Samoa have a Polynesian background and are very family-oriented, Cotten said.

"It would be hard for anyone to go against the beliefs of their family," she said. "But even if the adults won't listen to the gospel, they usually don't hinder the children from being open to Christianity. We have found an openness among the younger people, and they are searching."

Cotten, a native Texan, has served in Samoa for a year and will go back at the end of this month for at least one more year.

"For years I said 'Lord, I'll do whatever you want me to.' Last summer the Home Mission Board asked me to pray about going to Samoa. I just knew that was the Lord's will, and he opened the doors for me to go," Ms. Cotten said.

Last year there were 40 students at the academy. Pre-enrollment for this year has reached 57, according to Ms. Cotten. "And we need more teachers to help with our growing numbers," she said.