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June 18, 1987

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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Leading Without Sight

Arkansas Baptist

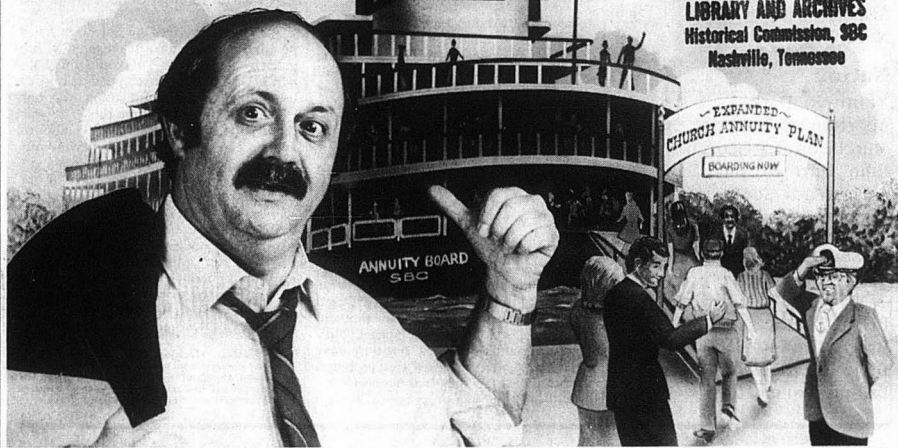
June 18, 1987

They know
the river!

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IT'S UPLIFTING

The Painful Side Of Love

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa—The more Pete and Liz Pieter have learned to love non-whites in South Africa, the more they've gained—and lost. Though gains have outweighed losses, they have merged into a bittersweet blend in the lives of the Pieters (not their real name).

The Pieters, both Afrikaners, teach school, and he's pastor of an interracial church in a South African city suburb. But they grew up in the heartland of Afrikaners, whites mainly of Dutch descent who carved out a place for themselves in South Africa in the 17th century.

The couple's spiritual metamorphosis from the racial exclusivism characteristic of many Afrikaners has caused love and joy to blossom in their lives. But it's also fueled some pain—turning them into "lepers" in the eyes of their families and other Afrikaners back in their home province. Their folks, who hold a narrow white supremacy view, just can't understand their children's open-minded approach to racial relations.

Many Afrikaners cling stubbornly to their Old Testament-filtered convictions that they're modern "Israelites" to whom God gave the land, and that he created blacks on a lower level as water carriers and

woodcutters. Question marks nagged at the Pieters over the years as they grew up in that mindset.

But a New Testament-oriented view—that God looks on the heart and man on the outward appearance—assumed control after a growing encounter with Jesus Christ and an opportunity to see people of color as human beings.

That opportunity came during a year they lived as caretakers on an Afrikaner-run farm while working their way through theological training. They started a Sunday school among the so-called "coloreds" working on the farm. As they ministered to their needs, things began to change.

"It came gradually," Liz Pieter said. "We began to love them as people."

Then they began to confront the owner and foreman of the farm about treatment of the "colored" South African term for people of mixed race.

"We became lepers and were asked to leave," she said.

It was the final transition—the cutoff point with their cultural roots.

"We can only speak with our parents on a superficial level," she added. "It's heart-breaking. We love them and the communities where we grew up."

"We pray that someday God's love will break that down. The solution for South Africa is spiritual revival."

GOOD NEWS!

What Do You Mean, 'Saved'?

Ephesians 2:1-10, 13-15, 18-22

A study of Ephesians teaches that being saved is both a fact and a process. It is all right to say, "He was saved last week," as long as you remember to say, "He is being saved now, and he shall be saved in the end."

Paul speaks in Ephesians about what we are saved from, what we are saved by, and what we are saved to. These three propositions can point us to the full meaning of "being saved."

What we are saved from. To be saved is to be rescued from sin and death. In 1956, the survivors of the wrecked ocean liners *Stockholm* and *Andrea Dorea* were brought to port in New York City. Dazed victims sat in hotel lobbies, restaurants, and public places. They had lost luggage. They were dirty and ill-clothed, but they were alive. They had many unresolved problems in their lives, but they had been saved.

Without someone to rescue us, human

beings are spiritually dead, ruled by selfish desire and the powers of evil, but God has sent a Savior to bring us back to life and safety.

What we are saved by. Salvation has a positive meaning also. It means new life given by God's grace. This could only happen as God shares himself personally with us, giving us his love and taking away our evil. Jesus Christ has done this. The way of salvation is faith, personal acceptance of and trust in Christ. Since it is beyond our power to begin with, and since it is a gift to us from God, we cannot be saved by our own efforts.

What we are saved to. God does not save us just so we can be saved. He saves us so we can carry out his purpose for our lives. Salvation is a calling to become his new creation. Immediately after saying that we are not saved by works (v. 9), Paul says we are saved to good works (v. 10), because this was God's original plan for our lives.

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Witnessing Deterrents

J. EVERETT SNEED

The evangelistic results that we hear from across the state are quite positive. It appears probable that our evangelistic results will be decidedly higher this year than they have been in several years. In order for us to continue to reach individuals as Christ would have us to do, everyone—laity and clergy—must be involved.

The instructions to carry the gospel was given to every Christian. Jesus said, "... as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jo. 20:21). But many Christians have never spoken to another person about a relationship with Christ. A variety of excuses are offered for this inactivity.

Perhaps the oldest, most devastating excuse is that reaching the lost is solely the job of the pastor and the paid staff. This philosophy had its beginning in the Dark Ages when an unscriptural emphasis on the division between the "clergy" and the "laity" developed. This concept places all of the responsibility of the church's business and witnessing in the hands of the ordained ministry. This approach almost resulted in the death of Christianity.

A modern counterpart of this unholy division between the ordained and the unordained is the idea that the pastor is "hired to do the congregation's witnessing." First, the pastor is not a "hired man." He is "employed" by God, who owns the church. The congregation only provides him support. Second, no one can delegate his responsibility to witness to another. Each Christian is to be a witness in word, deed, and life.

Another deterrent to verbal witnessing is worldliness. The Christian whose life is stained with sin is reluctant to talk to friends or relatives about his or her experience with Christ. Worldliness also produces spiritual dullness. The Christian who is living an un-Christian life will become apathetic regarding the lost.

Another widespread false concept is that the lost are to be reached at church. Such an idea will result in only a few people being won to Christ each year. Most of the unsaved will not attend church. Thus, it becomes every Christian's responsibility to carry the good news of God's redemption to them.

Another false concept is that God has arbitrarily chosen who will be saved and who will be lost. This fatalistic concept



results in no witnessing activity. Those holding to this concept maintain that God has already made a decision, and those whom he chooses to save will be saved, regardless of human activity. Under this concept, the only purpose of the pastor is to edify (build up) the elect. This doctrine is devastating to evangelism.

The Bible, however, clearly states that man is a free moral agent with the right of choice. It is true that the Scripture teaches that God does foreknow all things, even from the beginning of time. This is indicated both in its usage in the Scripture and by the Greek word itself. The word translated "foreknowledge" in the Greek is *prugno*. It means "a knowing first or beforehand." The Bible, however, makes it clear that predestination, "to mark off first, or to determine beforehand," is based on

God's foreknowledge.

There are two truths that exist side by side. These are man's absolute freedom of choice and God's foreknowledge or predestination. These truths can be best explained through illustrations. It has been suggested that one draw two parallel lines. One of these lines represents man's free agency and the other represents God's foreknowledge and predestination. These lines from a human standpoint, appear to run together. But just as railroad tracks appear to meet in the distance and really are always the same distance apart, these concepts never conflict.

This apparent conflict is resolved in the heart of a loving God.

The most important question is, "How can more Christians be involved in witnessing?" First, reaching the lost must be clearly accepted as a church's major priority. Everything that is done must be geared to reaching, involving, and training the members.

Training in personal evangelism methods must be provided for every member. Currently the Arkansas Evangelism Department has the best tools in the history of Southern Baptists available for training individuals in witnessing.

New converts should be immediately involved in witnessing activities. When a person has been a Christian for a number of years and never verbalized a witness to another, it is difficult for him to become involved. But when a newly converted person is provided witnessing training, he usually will be a witness all of his life.

The greatest joy for any Christian is to see another accept Christ. Let's remove the deterrents so that more people can experience this thrill.

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DON MOORE

You'll Be Glad To Know

"Anytime is the right time to do right!" I keep saying that and evaluating whether that is a good maxim for life or not. So far I have not found a situation in which that does not hold true. It is simple enough that you wonder if it is really accurate. I believe it is.

I've used this statement in invitations at the close of sermons. I've used it in counseling. It's correct! "Anytime is the right time to do right."

There is a problem with this that is not simple. It is not always easy to know what is right. Every man is not left to his own feelings as a standard for what is right or wrong, as "situation ethics" and "secular humanism" would have us believe. Such



thinking makes man his own authority. Such thinking ignores the clear teaching of Scripture. "The calling of God is not to impurity but to the most thorough purity, and everyone who makes light of the matter is not making light of a man's ruling, but of God's command. It is not for nothing that the spirit God gives us is called the Holy Spirit" (1 Th. 4:7-8, Phillips).

It is right to be close to people. It is also right to express your love and appreciation for people. But it is also right to express that love and appreciation in such a way that no questions will be raised by either party or by observers about the relationship. What a touch or hug means to one person may not be the same as what it means to another. In this day of need for someone to care, many are vulnerable to reading into genuine expressions more than was intended. The number of people whose lives and ministries are being destroyed by accusations of indiscretions causes me to say with Paul, it is right "to abstain from all appearance of evil" (1 Th. 5:22). The Holy Spirit's word on this is, "It is a good principle for a man to have no physical contact with women" (1 Co. 7:1,

Phillips). We must remember "God will punish all who do offend in this matter (sexual impropriety)" (1 Th. 4:6, Phillips).

While free to do many things, we are really only free to do right.

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

DANIEL R. GRANT

One Layman's Opinion



Logic And Lottery

On a recent visit to Raleigh, N.C., I had occasion to see a provocative and prominent four-column headline in *The News and Observer*, "Lottery Called Entertaining, a Worthy Idea." I was appalled that a newspaper with such a reputation for excellence and sophistication would give this kind of space to this particular point of view. The headline was followed by an editor's note explaining that the writer was an artist with a degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and a mother of three children who went through the North Carolina public school system.

The headline, the editor's note, and the whole article oozed with respectability, Americanism, and sweet reasonableness. The well-educated mother of three made three basic points, but I found myself wondering how many readers got beyond the headline to the supporting arguments. I further wondered how many pursued her logic to its ultimate conclusion. For example:

(1) She said compulsive gamblers will find something to bet on, so we might as well provide them with a state lottery and tax it to fund our public schools for the benefit of our children. Taken to its ultimate conclusion, this would argue that public sale of marijuana, cocaine, or heroin to drug addicts (and potential addicts) is just fine and dandy, so long as drug pushers pay taxes to the public schools.

(2) The mother wrote that we should not oppose a state lottery because prohibition against alcoholic beverages was tried once and "look what happened." This argument is the same as saying, "Because one effort to outlaw a social evil (70 years ago) was controversial and voted out, we should never again try to outlaw any other social evil." This logic would oppose efforts to prohibit the abuse of children, rape, or

Woman's Viewpoint

Change: A Growth Opportunity

BETTY DEMPSEY



Change—a six letter word that can spell delight, disaster, opportunity, growth, death, new life; or it's something we seek, or run from, rejoice in, or regret. Some change is sought after, or is a natural expected result or something that is thrust upon us.

I have been living through changes that were thrust upon me—the death of my mate. I went through the different stages of the grief process: shock, numbness, denial, anger, panic, physical illness, guilt, depression, and finally recovery. I lived through the "firsts": the first Christmas, first anniversary, first birthday, the first year. The "firsts" are the hardest, and I feel until you have gone through these you can't really begin to heal. For you see, I had learned about the different

stages of grief and what things are hardest when my daughter of 24 died suddenly six years before my husband. I wish I had known then that the feelings I was having were part of a normal grief process.

Grief is not a popular subject and one that I'm sure makes you uncomfortable as you read this. However, it is a part of living and something each of us will experience if we live long enough. The length of time spent in certain phases is dependent to a large degree on how you allow the Lord to minister to you, and how you allow

your friends and family to help you. James 1:12 says "Happy is the person who remains faithful under trials, because when he succeeds in passing such a test, he will receive as his reward the life which God has promised to those who love him" (GNV).

How exciting that we can know as we walk through our valley of the shadow of death, that on the other side is that wonderful reward of peace, contentment, freedom from loneliness, and a new and closer relationship with our Lord. A change that we have certainly not sought but has been thrust upon us can result in an opportunity for us to know the power of our Lord in a new and exciting way, if we allow it.

Betty Dempsey is an active member of Park Hill Church, North Little Rock.

discrimination on the basis of race, age, or sex, all because one particular prohibition was poorly supported and poorly enforced many decades ago.

(3) The writer made the amazing argument that "gambling would be good, in the same sense that buying raffle tickets to benefit a worthy cause is good." I hope I am wrong, but I have an idea the Gallup Poll would find that the majority of American people agree with her on this. Unfortunately, this is the old, old logical snake pit tempting us all to believe that a good end justifies evil means. All the raffles in the world for good causes cannot change the evil nature of gambling that teaches the insidious philosophy of seeking to get something for nothing.

The urge to get something for nothing is already plenty strong in the land without giving it the stamp of approval of public policy and government promotion.

Daniel R. Grant is president of Ouachita Baptist University.

Letters to the Editor

Why do we do it?

Why do we do it? What? Well, when we go to church and come in for the worship period, find us a seat, then sit down, hoping to relax and "enter into worship," some one "has to jump us up and down all the time," until the preacher begins his sermon—here we finally get to worship! Why all this "physical calisthenics?"

I understand that many people are leaving their churches for this very reason: not allowed to worship, rest, or meditate! What do the "programizers" have in mind? Why do they think they have to "make the people stand up, sit down, turn around, shake hands, repeat after me?" Are they afraid that the congregation "might go to sleep?" If they did, would this be a sin?

When the preacher "finally settles down to bring his message," what a relief! Now, we can truly worship and relax our nerves. And, if we want to, "turn our minds loose for a moment," and "think about some of those things we like to think about," or not think about, if we wish.

In making a study on true worship, we learn that many decisions are made—some, spiritual, some social, some economic, etc.

If the churches of America "will just leave their congregations alone for an hour," so they can truly worship, without being disturbed, America might just have "another spiritual awakening!" How we need it!—Ottis E. Denney, Norton, Ohio

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Notice: Because the June 25 *Arkansas Baptist* will focus on coverage of the 1987 Southern Baptist Convention in St. Louis June 16-18, "Helpline" will not appear until the July 2 issue.

Leading Without Sight

by J. Everett Sneed
Editor, Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

Larry D. Finley, pastor of the Tilton Church, is blind, yet he is a full-time pastor. Finley can see some but not enough to recognize who an individual is.

Finley can read letters, if they are an inch and a half to two inches in height and on a dark background. He has a reading machine which enlarges words and converts a white background to a dark one. Finley said, "I'm not far from totally blind, but I'm going to use the vision I have as long as I have any."

Finley first discovered he would eventually lose his sight when he was 14 years old. He said, "It came as a shock, but I had to accept it." His sight has progressively become worse across the years.

Finley has worked at a variety of jobs. He has worked loading and unloading trucks; he has been an auto mechanic; and he has worked as a maintenance engineer for the Justice Building in Little Rock. Finley says, "The wide diversity of jobs in which I have served has helped me as a pastor, since I know a little about a lot of different things. I can talk to people about the kind of work they do."

In June 1980 Finley and his wife moved to the farm where his parents lived when he was born. Finley and his wife had a small son who was severely crippled. People frequently came by to pray for their son. Finley, who was not a Christian at the time, recalled saying, "You can't get far enough back in the hills to escape from these Christians."

Finley and his wife were both lost. He recalls that the Lord spoke to him one day

while he was cutting wood. His cousin was pastor of a church near where the Finley's lived and had been praying for the Finley's as well as for their son.

Finley recalls that he came to the house and said to his wife, "I can't fight this any longer. I am going to accept Jesus as my Savior. Mrs. Finley said, "Me too."

After the Finley's were converted, they began attending the Finley Creek Church regularly. Finley said, "I was willing and eager to serve there, in any way possible every Sunday."

The Finley Creek Church is a small country church and, at that time, had services only on Sunday morning. But the Finleys and some other families decided they wanted services on Sunday night and Wednesday night as well.

After a couple of years of intense involvement in the Finley Creek Church, Finley felt called to preach. He recalls, "I was willing to do anything the Lord wanted me to do. I believe this is one of the reasons why I am where I am now."

About this time, the Finley's were expecting their second child. They were concerned because of Finley's severe hereditary eye disorder. Mrs. Finley came to Little Rock so she could receive the best possible care at the time of the birth of their second child. The Finley's were gone from the farm for approximately three months. Finley recalls that he was miserable because he was away from his home church.

When the Finley's returned to the farm, the Finley Creek Church had a new pastor, Mike Downey. Downey asked Finley, "Is God calling you to preach?"

Finley was pretty sure, but soon knew beyond any doubt. Doors began to open for him to speak in his home church and in other churches. He said, "I knew the Lord was going to use me. I didn't know if he was calling me to be a pastor or an evangelist."

Finley was licensed to preach by the Finley Creek Church on Dec. 5, 1982. He preached in several churches in the area. Almost everyone knew him and many of the churches in the

ABN photo / J. Everett Sneed



Finley's reading machine allows him to use the little sight he has left.

area gave him the opportunity to preach.

After a few months, the Mt. Pleasant Church became pastorless. Finley had already decided he needed to attend college. The Mt. Pleasant Church asked him if he would serve as interim pastor until it found a permanent pastor or until Finley left for college. He agreed.

It was the first of the year in 1984 when Finley prepared to go to Southern Baptist College in Walnut Ridge. He recalls that he was scared. He said, "It was almost like preaching my first sermon to think about going to college."

Finley was 32 years of age and was starting college with a family. He didn't know how he would meet his obligations. In retrospect, Finley said that he and his family lived better while they were in college than they did before.

Finley planned to start attending SBC with the spring semester in 1984. At this time, he discovered there was a training program for visually handicapped people at Arkansas Enterprise for the Blind. During the summer, the Little Rock-based agency assisted blind people with a college preparatory course. John Lamberts, a professor from the University of Central Arkansas, Conway, conducted the class in conjunction with Arkansas Enterprise for the Blind.

Finley came to Little Rock for a month's evaluation in April. During this time he began learning Braille, mobility, and other specialized training for blind people.



Larry Finley and his wife Beverly relax at home.

He returned to the farm and packed up all of his belongings in a U-Haul. The new pastor of the Finley Creek Church, Arthur Barber, took the Finley's to Southern Baptist College. Finley unloaded his furniture, his wife, and his children and returned to Little Rock.

Finley stayed in Little Rock until Aug. 9, when he finished the college preparatory course. The course included the completion of the first semester of freshman English through the University of Central Arkansas. The rehabilitation service helped Finley with this activity. Finley recalls, "It was a very rigorous course. Dr. Lamberts said that, if we could make it through this course, we could complete our college training."

Finley started in a class of 15 as the 14th in academic achievement. When he completed the course, Finley was fifth from the top in the class. He recalls, "This was a very rough time for me, but it really did prepare me for college."

Life at Southern Baptist College was a real spiritual blessing to the Finleys. Professors, college staff members, and students assisted Finley. He said, "In some state schools, a student is just another number, but at Southern every student is a person. I enjoyed the school tremendously and dramatically improved my knowledge and skills. I couldn't have achieved what I did without the help of professors, college staff, students, and my wife."

Finley completed the associate of arts degree with a B+ average. He has highest praises for the school both academically and for its spiritual emphasis.

Finley came to Tilton from Southern. The church first called him as a supply preacher. He supplied at Tilton from September to October, and the church called him as pastor.

**'I was willing to do anything
the Lord wanted me to.'**

Although the church membership is small, it ministers to a large geographic area. It requires a great deal of driving and Mrs. Finley takes her husband wherever he needs to go. The members also are willing to assist with the driving whenever they can.

Finley does some things differently. For example, he tapes the Scripture that he uses with his messages and plays it over the church's public address system, rather than reading it. He uses Braille to read the names on the prayer list to the congregation. He also uses his cane and his guide dog to assist him in getting around.

Finley's hobbies are bicycle riding and bowling. He recalls that, when he was a student at Southern, people were amazed to see him riding a bicycle. His wife would

ride in front of him and tell him whether to go to the left or the right. Finley said, "This is one time when you have to do exactly what your wife says."

Finley is excited about the opportunities at the Tilton church. He believes the future is bright for the church as he and the congregation follow the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

'Why Have You Waited So Long?'

Southern Baptists should be overwhelmed by the world's urgent need to hear of salvation in Christ Jesus, believes Martha Hairston.

Hairston, a native of Warren who recently returned from 35 years of missionary service in Brazil, is burdened for young people to consider mission service as a priority for their lives.

"People are searching for a foothold in life, but in Brazil you don't have to search," she asserts. "There are challenging opportunities all around. Though you might think it is inconvenient from a human standpoint, that's part of it."

When a missionary in Brazil shares the good news of God's love, people respond, Hairston reports. Because of the pervasive influence of Roman Catholicism, many people already know they are sinners, she says. When the gospel is presented, it is heard as a "wonderful message of hope," and people respond eagerly.

That creates an optimistic atmosphere for Christian work, explains Hairston, who was president of the Seminary for Christian Education in Recife for 27 years. Brazilian Baptists launch into their work with optimism, confident that a happy, positive presentation of the gospel will be victorious.

Hairston sees that optimism as one of the basic strengths of Brazilian Baptists. Despite the enormity of the task that confronts them, they attack it with enthusiasm, to the extent that struggling mission congregations often sponsor preaching points before they themselves are fully established. In contrast, Southern Baptists back in the States often seem to take for granted the desperate need others have for the good news of Jesus Christ, Hairston observes. Satisfied with what they have, they have lost a sense of urgency about the world's millions.

With the need so great, the news so good, and the people so eager to respond, the world's lost may rightfully ask, "Why have you waited so long to come and tell us?"

Bookshelf

Victory Beyond Life's Sunset by Doris Mitchell Liseyby

Victory Beyond Life's Sunset was written as a result of the struggles experienced by Mrs. Doris Mitchell Liseyby while her husband Ray H. Liseyby battled cancer. Mrs. Liseyby recalls that, during the terminal illness of her husband, she found very few books that dealt with the struggles they were facing. After his death, she wrote the book based on the journal she had kept during his illness.

In the book, she deals with her and her husband's struggles with cancer, which invades almost every family. She includes in-depth autobiographical material, as well as family pictures, to show how a family continues to function as a close-knit unit during an extended illness.

Doris Mitchell Liseyby was the oldest of 10 children born to Wallace E. and Mary Jewell Graves Mitchell. She was brought up on a farm in Cleveland County near Kingsland In 1938, she married Ray H. Liseyby, who also was reared near Kingsland. He was a graduate of Ouachita Baptist College and was a coach and school teacher for many years. She graduated from Henderson State Teacher's College and Texas Woman's University, Denton. She also has studied at the University of Houston.

Both of the Liseyby's taught in Arkansas and Texas. After taking early retirement, they returned to Arkadelphia. The Liseyby's have three adopted children.

Mrs. Liseyby's book is recommended for those who are struggling with prolonged illnesses or for the families of such individuals. The book gives insight into how one Christian woman found peace in the face of death. Mrs. Liseyby says, "My purpose is to assure each person and each family of God's ultimate victory when we look to him with faith and hope."

The book is available from the Baptist Book Store in Little Rock or can be ordered directly from Doris M. Liseyby, P.O. Box 648, Arkadelphia, AR 71923.

A SMILE OR TWO

For adult education, nothing beats children.

—Myrna Loy

The man who first called it the *easy* payment plan was a might careless with his adjectives.

LOCAL & STATE

Arkansas All Over

MILLIE GILL

People

Jeff Thomas has accepted a call to join the staff of Nalls Memorial Church in Little Rock as part-time minister to youth. A native Arkansan, he is the son of Rev. and Mrs. Bert Thomas of Searcy. He is a 1987 graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and currently is enrolled at the University of Central Arkansas. Thomas served as a 1986 Home Mission Board summer missionary on the staff of Baring Cross Church in North Little Rock.



Kevin Dunn of Monticello has been named part-time music director and youth activities coordinator at Rison Church. He also has served as a music director at Tinsman First Church and Enon Church in Monticello. Dunn and his wife, Cheryl, have a son, Daniel, two.

Jana Hall is serving Immanuel Church, Little Rock, as summer youth intern. She is

a senior sociology major at Ouachita Baptist University.

Bill Brown was graduated May 15 from Luther Rice Seminary with a master of divinity degree. He is completing 16 years of service as pastor of Bayou Meto Church, Jacksonville.

Raymon A. Carneal has resigned as pastor of Joyce City, Smackover, to serve as pastor of Central Church in Martin, Tenn.

Michael Yort of Shawnee, Okla., is serving Waldron First Church as summer youth director.

Robyn Benton of Springdale and **Christy Erion** of Conway have received \$1,000 Young American Award scholarships for the 1987-88 academic year at Southwest Baptist University, Bolivar, Mo.

Tricia Craig of Rogers and **Kristie Disman** of Pochontas have received \$500 Young America Award scholarships for the 1987-88 academic year at Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Mo.

Rick Whitaker completed three years of service June 7 at Harrison First Church as minister of administration and activities.

Danny Joe Burroughs of Bisceo is serving England First Church as summer youth director. He is a graduate of Southern Bap-

tist College, where he served as an outreach coordinator. He also served for two years as a summer missionary and has served a Newport church as activities director.

Leta Jones has resigned as kindergarten/day school director at Pulaski Heights Church in Little Rock following four years of service.

W.E. McDaniel of Newport died May 29 at age 72. His funeral service was held June 1 at Newport First Church, where he served as a deacon. Survivors include his wife, Inez McDaniel, and two daughters, Paula Brown and Rebecca Ann Ryan, both of California.

Lance Witt has resigned as pastor of Immanuel Church, Danville, to serve as pastor of Hagerman Church in Sherman, Texas.

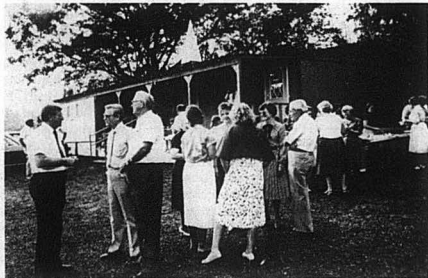
Briefly

Hunter First Church will observe homecoming June 28 in conjunction with the annual Hunter School reunion June 27. All former pastors, members, and non-resident members have been invited to par-

ABN photo / Millie Gill



Five members of Wynne Church recently returned from an Argentina partnership evangelism mission trip. Their work resulted in 65 decisions, 44 of which were professions of faith. There were 20 commitments to the preaching ministry and one commitment to home mission work. Team members meeting with a group of pastors from Buenos Aires were (front row left to right) Haynes Ragsdale, Tri-County Association Director of Missions Robert Tucker, Robert Crockett, Pastor Don Dunavant, (second row) Bill Garner and Rick Proctor.



Congo Road Mission observed its first anniversary June 7 when members of Benton Trinity Church, the sponsoring church, joined them for an evening worship service. Mission Pastor Jesse Holcomb moderated the service. The mission, organized with eight members, now has a membership of 31. Pastor Harold Stephens of Trinity Church, and James Swedenberg, director of missions for Central Association, also participated in the service. An old-fashioned homemade ice cream social followed the anniversary service.

ticipate in activities which will include Sunday School, morning worship, a potluck luncheon at noon, and an afternoon service from 1:30-3 p.m. Walter Crossen of Vanndale will speak at the morning worship service.

Carlisle First Church will observe Missions Advance Day June 28, according to Pastor Charles Chesser. Jimmie Sheffield, associate executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, will be speaker.

East Side Church in Fort Smith you will be in Corpus Christi, Texas, July 31-Aug. 8 to assist Southview Mission with a Vacation Bible School.

Mansfield First Church is assisting this month was a Vacation Bible School in the El Dorado area. They also are leading a revival there.

Haw Creek Church at Waldron is completing building improvements that include a 24x32 foot addition, housing two bathrooms, a kitchen, and fellowship hall.

Booneville First Church held a Church Growth Concepts seminar led by Cliff Palmer June 7-10.

Gardner Church in Hamburg will celebrate 25 years of service July 26 with activities from 10 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. All members and former members are to be special guests. Coordinating the celebration are Ted Rial, Allen Waldrup, Dennis Byrd, Marcie Carpenter, Dottie Shields, and Thelma McGaughey.

Benton County Association sponsored a seminar on prayer June 11 in the associational office. Minette Drumwright, an associate with the Foreign Mission Board and a former Arkansan, was leader.

Barcelona Road Church in Hot Springs Village men will observe Father's Day June 21 with a 7:30 a.m. breakfast. The work was launched in May when 29 attended a meeting at which John Ross, director of development for Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services, was speaker. Luther Powell has been elected Baptist Men's president, and Bob Edwards is serving as Brotherhood director.

Highfill First Church ordained Charlie Lacy, music director; Dennis Chapman, Sunday School director; and Donald Lawson, Church Training director, to the deacon ministry June 14. Pastor Jack H. Barnes served as moderator.



Pine Bluff First Church, at a recent Sunday School banquet, honored four workers who have collectively served over 115 years in various Sunday School leadership positions. Recognized were (left to right) Robert Dew, Louise Ellis, and Ed Wollerman. Not pictured is Martha Gordon.

Fairfield Bay Church celebrated its 15th anniversary May 17 by honoring Pastor Hilton Lane with a "This Is Your Life" program which recognized his 15 years of service as pastor. Program personalities, who assisted with the organization of the church, included David Miller, Little Red River Association director of missions; Refus Caldwell, Conway-Perry Association director of missions; Payton Kolb, a member of Pulaski Heights Church in Little Rock; and Cathy Stallings Dean of Hazen. A third member of the organizational missions committee who was unable to attend but sent a letter was Bill Burnett of Searcy.

Park Place Church in Hot Springs youth are in Briceville, Tenn., June 12-22, assisting churches in Clinton Association with a nursing home ministry, a survey, and a Vacation Bible School.

Clinton Immanuel Church recently ordained Allan Rolen to the preaching ministry. Participating in the service were Dexter Rogers, Danny Brown, Doug Stewart, Lester Carl Nixon, director of missions for North Central Association, Bobby Jewel, and Al Alters. Special music was provided by the Bobby Jewel Family.

Hot Springs First Church youth will leave July 16 for Muncie, Ind., where they will conduct Vacation Bible Schools in churches which Central Association churches have assisted in the Arkansas-Indiana Linkup.

Old Union Church at Benton will observe

homecoming June 21, recognizing 157 years of service with special activities.

Owensville Church celebrated 60 years of service June 7 with activities which included a noon meal, an afternoon musical program, and an evening program that featured the Calvary Singers.

OBU Inaugurates New Phone Service

ARKADELPHIA—In a continuing quest to more effectively communicate with its various publics, Ouachita Baptist University has recently established a nationwide incoming toll-free telephone number, primarily for use by prospective new students and their families, according to Randy Garner, director of admissions counseling at OBU.

The telephone number is 1-800-342-5628. "Another way of remembering the number is to simply think 1-800-DIAL-OBU," said Garner.

"The effect of having the toll free number is enormous, in that the University's offices will gain the advantage of more expeditiously and efficiently handling requests, particularly from those students and families who are looking to attend the school," he said.

The toll-free telephone number will be linked to offices only.

Fear Leaves Youth In Dark About Sex

by Norman Jameson
Oklahoma Baptist Messenger

OKLAHOMA CITY (BP)—Many girls who walk into Crisis Pregnancy Center in Oklahoma City, scared and alone, would not be there if their parents, pastors and youth directors had not been so afraid of talking frankly with them about sex, claims Sylvia Boothe, director of the center.

Convinced that is true, Boothe is campaigning to alert families and church staff members that their fear, or neglect, contributes to a parade of young women through her door who have reason to believe they are pregnant. "At least address the problem," she says. "Challenge them. They can live up to goals. Teenagers are not animals; they don't have to follow their instincts.

"Call them to chastity. Tell them they can decide in advance to be chaste and how important that is. For those who already have lost their virginity, tell them they can choose to be chaste again, that there is such a thing as secondary virginity."

Oklahoma is the only Baptist state convention to sponsor crisis pregnancy centers. It has centers in Oklahoma City, 13 months old, and Tulsa, 18 months old.

The Oklahoma City center counseled nearly 800 women in person during its first year, the Tulsa center almost as many.

A basket of roses adorns the pulpit of one Oklahoma City church, closely involved with the local center, one red flower for each baby born when its mother decided not to have an abortion because of counseling received at the crisis pregnancy center.

Forty-one long-stemmed red roses now stand brightly in the basket.

Boothe, once in youth work as a missionary in France, says teens want to be challenged in church. Instead, they are being entertained and will go to whatever church is providing the best entertainment.

If church workers would inform themselves, they could kill the myth that a baby will give a girl something to love, like a doll, and counter the school locker-room talk that says a boy doesn't become a man until he fathers a child.

A church that holds aloft a high moral standard but does not educate its youth on how to achieve and maintain that standard against secular pressures abdicates its right to set the standard, Boothe insists.

"Girls will have an abortion on the basis of not wanting their parents or church to know they were sexually active," she reports.

So there's the dilemma—sexually active youth in a home and church environment that condemns such activity but which

fears addressing it directly in a way which would help youth combat both their "instincts" and the constant pressure of peers.

That basic conflict—strict Puritan principles on one hand and failure to address those principles directly on the other hand—is one of the things that puts Oklahoma's teen suicide rate among the highest in the country.

Statistically, just 37.8 percent of the women seeking counseling at Crisis Pregnancy Center in Oklahoma City are pregnant. But 100 percent have reason to believe they could be. Other statistics show 38.5 percent of the women are Baptist; 69.8 percent white; 36.8 percent aged 15-19; and 59 percent single.

Boothe still feels sex should be taught in the family. But many parents, she says, are ill equipped to do it, a small truth "the world" inflates into a big lie with the claim parents really don't know anything.

In Christian schools and churches where Boothe speaks, she finds youth frustrated because their parents won't discuss sexuality. The youth sense their parents' fear that talking about sex will encourage experimentation—if they don't talk about it, nothing "bad" will happen.

Churches can help parents step past this

fear into the truth that open discussion encourages responsible action. Boothe says. But they cannot if they are afraid or uninformed. Of course, their ignorance causes their fear. How can pastors and youth ministers become informed? "Like I did," Boothe says. "I read everything I could."

Boothe lists several organizations that provide information: Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, Box 25266, Nashville, Tenn. 37202; National Right To Life, 419 7th St. NW, Suite 402, Washington, D.C. 20004; James Dobson, Box 500, Arcadia, Calif. 91006; Concerned Women of America, 122 C. St. NW, Suite 800, Washington, D.C. 20004; Christian Action Center, 701 W. Broad St., Suite 405, Falls Church, Va. 22046; and Southern Baptists for Life, P.O. Box 470050, Suite 128, Tulsa, Okla. 74147-0050.

Her current and best hope for a school curriculum is Respect for Sexuality, or Sex Respect. It teaches abstinence and family involvement with sex education. Boothe encourages churches to get a copy and consider it for their use. Write Respect for Sexuality, 347 S. Center, Bradley, Ill. 60915.

"There are more parents talking about sex than we realize. Still, I think church is the greatest tool for helping."

CLC Forges Anti-Abortion Statement

by Tim Fields
SBC Christian Life Commission

ST. LOUIS (BP)—A diverse group of Southern Baptists have forged a statement on the sacredness of human life designed to unite forces against abortion in the 14.6-million-member denomination in spite of differing views on the controversial issue.

During the two-day consultation on alternatives to abortion sponsored by the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, the group also outlined steps for education and action in an effort to help stop the estimated 1.2 million abortions performed each year in the United States.

The pastors, laypeople and denominational workers hammered out the statement—designed to set aside differences which have caused division in the denomination and to move beyond disagreements on allowances for abortion

under certain circumstances—in order to call all Southern Baptists to action on the issue.

The group voted 27 to 2 to adopt the following statement on abortion:

"Human life from conception is sacred and must be protected and nurtured in all its aspects. Abortion at any stage of pregnancy is ending human life and is a grave act with tragic spiritual, emotional, physical and social consequences. In those incidents in which this divine ideal is not fulfilled, there can be redemption in God's grace. Therefore:

—'Let us speak forcefully and unequivocally against abortion on demand and with all vigor encourage alternatives to abortion.

—'Let us pledge ourselves to be compassionate, aggressive agents of God's grace in nurturing human life and in taking

God's grace to those caught in the tragedy of abortion."

Prior to the vote, CLC Chairman Lynn P. Clayton called the statement "a declaration of war against abortion that all Southern Baptists can move on."

Larry Lewis, newly elected president of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board said: "I see this as a common ground statement that this very diverse group can come together on for this particular meeting." Lewis added the statement does not address the human life amendment, the use of tax money and euthanasia.

CLC Executive Director N. Larry Baker told participants the statement simply is an expression of participants in the consultation but will be used by the commission as "a call to concern to galvanize Southern Baptists around the abortion issue."

Navigating the River

Pilots who steered the magnificent riverboats up and down the Mississippi had one thing in common: a flawless knowledge of the river. Each pilot acquired his knowledge by spending countless hours listening to and observing other pilots and steering a boat. It paid off. The pilot's knowledge and skill kept his boat in the shifting channel, assuring the passengers of a secure journey.

What the Annuity Board knows can keep Southern Baptist ministers and other church staff from getting snagged on the "river" of retirement. Consider how the Annuity Board's programs can help you avoid these dangers along the way.

—Inflation eats away at your buying power. The only way to keep up with inflation as you build a retirement account is to make regular contributions based on a percentage of your salary. The expanded Church Annuity Plan is based on this principle.

—Emergency expenses can bump you out of the channel and bruise your retirement account. Life, health and disability insurance can rescue you from such emergencies. The Annuity Boards know the needs of Southern Baptists and offers insurance protection to meet those needs.

—Shallow benefits at retirement are the result of too little, too late. The expanded Church Annuity Plan is flexible and can add depth to your retirement benefits by helping you maximize the effects of time and regular, consistent contributions.

—Taxes drain your financial resources. Because of the Annuity Board's tax status, making contributions to the expanded Church Annuity Plan can help put more money in your pocket today and tomorrow.

—Get-rich-quick schemes can rob you. You can put your confidence in the Annuity Board. For 69 years now, the official Southern Baptist pension agency has been serving those who serve the Lord.

To recognize these almost seven decades of service, the Southern Baptist Convention has designated June 28 as Annuity Board Sunday.

The Board, established by the denomination in 1918 to provide relief and annuity benefits for retired ministers and widows, has grown to be the world's second-largest church pension agency with more than \$2 billion in assets. The Annuity Board has helped thousands of the Lord's Southern Baptist servants reach retirement with enough income for the rest of their lives.

June 28 would be a good time for

Southern Baptist churches to recognize and thank the Lord for these retired ministers and their widows. Many remain active and effective in ministry, free of worry about financial needs because they made adequate preparation for retirement.

Annuity Board Sunday would also be an appropriate time for churches to commit to a retirement policy that will benefit the faithful Baptist servants who are still fully active in ministry. The most effective way for Southern Baptist churches to help ministers to prepare for retirement is to adopt the expanded Church Annuity Plan as the official church retirement policy.

The Annuity Board has poured its acquired knowledge and experience about retirement planning into the expanded Church Annuity Plan.

These 69 years of being "at the wheel" on "Retirement River," successfully negotiating the shifting channel of pension fund management, has given the Annuity Board a deep knowledge of retirement planning.

The expanded Church Annuity Plan steers past the potential disasters, helping you arrive safely at your destination—a retirement with enough income for as long as you live.

Your ticket to a secure future starts with your personal commitment to make regular percentage contributions to your retirement income account.

Your commitment leads to: matching funds from your church; matching funds from your state convention; supplemental disability/survivor benefits; competitive earnings; early retirement options; less taxes; freedom from dependence upon others; financial security; peace of mind.

Just two steps up the gangway and you are on the boat bound for retirement success:

—Step 1. Your church votes not to adopt the expanded Church Annuity Plan and an officer of the church signs the Cooperative Agreement.

—Step 2. Return the signed Cooperative Agreement to your state convention. Upon approval by your state convention, you will receive the expanded Church Annuity Plan from the Annuity Board.

The Annuity Board can help guide your church to adopt the expanded Church Annuity Plan. For information about how you can get on board, contact James Walker, Arkansas Baptist State Convention, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203; telephone 376-4791 or call the Board directly toll-free at 1-800-262-0511.

'They know the river.'



'And what they know can help you.'

Annuity Board Sunday, June 28, is set aside on the convention's calendar to highlight the ministry of the Southern Baptist agency that has been piloting on the "Retirement River" for 69 years now, helping thousands of the Lord's servants reach their retirement destinations.

June 28 would be a good time for the Southern Baptist churches to *recognize and pray for these retired ministers and their widows.*

The day's emphasis is also an appropriate time for churches to *commit to a retirement policy that will benefit the faithful Baptist servants who are still fully active in ministry.* The most effective way for Southern Baptist churches to help ministers prepare for retirement is to **adopt the expanded Church Annuity Plan as the official church retirement policy.**

For information about the **expanded Church Annuity Plan**, contact the Annuity Board representative of your Baptist state convention. Or call the Annuity Board toll free, 1-800-262-0511.

Annuity
Board
Sunday
June 28, 1987



Annuity Board
of the Southern
Baptist Convention
P.O. Box 2190
Dallas, TX 75221-2190

Murchison Goes To Georgia

Rodger B. Murchison, assistant to the president and director of capitol funding at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., has resigned his post to accept a call as associate pastor of First Church, Augusta, Ga.

An Arkansas native, he is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas O. Murchison of Coy. He is a graduate of Baylor University, Waco, Texas, and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, the former Margaret Mitchell of Pine Bluff, have two children.

Hurt Undergoes Surgery In Dallas

DALLAS (BP)—John J. Hurt, editor emeritus of the *Baptist Standard*, Texas Baptists' weekly newsjournal, is recuperating in Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas following emergency abdominal surgery June 8 to repair a hemorrhaging aneurysm.

Hurt's surgery was believed to be unrelated to an incident of the previous week when he became lost and drove his automobile into an eastern Dallas County pond. He was hospitalized for three days after going for two days without food or blood pressure medication.

Following that incident, he was released from the hospital June 6 but awoke early June 8 with abdominal pain.

He is expected to remain in intensive care for several days and in the hospital for about two weeks.

Hurt, 78, retired in 1977 after 11 years as editor of the *Standard*. He previously had been editor of the *Christian Index*, Georgia Baptists' newsjournal, for 19 years. He is a native of Arkansas, where his father, John Hurt Sr. was editor of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* from 1904-1905.

CIS Offers EASY Ordering

NASHVILLE—Southern Baptist churches can now order curriculum literature and other Southern Baptist Sunday School Board materials the EASY way.

A new Electronic Access System (EASY) is available from the materials services department of the board for churches which have IBM or IBM compatible computer systems.

The materials ordering software diskette and a data order form diskette will be sent free of charge to interested churches by the

board's Church Information System (CIS).

Charles Livingstone, director of the materials services department, said he believes the new EASY system will result in churches receiving literature orders two to three days sooner. That opinion is based on a test conducted with the new system in 20 churches. He said accuracy also should be improved because orders will not be copied onto another form after they are received at the board.

A new data order form diskette will be sent to participating churches each quarter, featuring new products and price changes.

Interested persons may contact the CIS section, 127 Ninth Avenue North, Nashville, TN 37234; telephone (615) 251-3604.

Drummond Urges Recommitment To Evangelism

by Linda Lawson
Baptist Sunday School Board

NASHVILLE (BP)—Southern Baptists can have a future as great as their past in evangelizing the world, but it will require a hard look at the present and a "heart commitment" to the priority of evangelism, a seminary professor said.

"I cannot lead my students to lead people to Christ if I do not lead people to Christ," said Lewis Drummond, the Billy Graham professor of evangelism at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. "They must see in us a commitment to action. Let's lay the foundation again."

Drummond spoke during the 96th anniversary observance of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board on the board's contributions to evangelism.

He urged Southern Baptists to learn from the experiences of British Baptists and become relevant to today's world. Drummond, who taught at Spurgeon's College in London, said the strong evangelistic thrust of Baptists in Great Britain was blunted by urbanization, secularization and humanism which also threaten the Christian movement in the United States.

"The Bible Belt days are gone," said Drummond. "We had better learn to cope."

Noting that the Bible Belt was "woven" out of the second great spiritual awakening in the early 1800s, Drummond said a key to the future is for Southern Baptists to seek revival, a "deep profound moving of the spirit."

"We've got the foundation. We've got the structure. We've got the commitment. I am convinced, if we can just get hold of God and never give in, our future will be as great as our past," said Drummond.

Tracing the history of Southern Baptists and the Sunday School Board, Drummond said evangelism has been "the heartbeat and the heart cry."

"Evangelism has permeated every facet of the Sunday School Board up to the present moment," he said. He cited books published by the board including "Building the Standard Sunday School" by Arthur Flake in 1922, "Christian Witnessing" by Frank Leavell in 1932, "Using the Sunday School in Evangelism" by Leonard Sanderson in 1958 and "New Testament Evangelism" by Herschel Hobbs in 1960.

He noted the number of tracts produced by the board and distributed through churches increased from 3.2 million in 1944 to 13 million in 1953. "Only God can record what the little tract has meant in evangelism," said Drummond.

He said the "Million More in '54" campaign led to inevitable quips by some, "keep them alive in '55."

"We did, you know. We reached the mountain peak in 1955 and 1956 in reaching people," he recalled.

At the same time, Drummond noted the number of Southern Baptists it takes to win one person to Christ in one year has increased from 20 to 43 since 1940. Also, he said, church growth experts have predicted flat or negative growth for the denomination in the next decade.

"This ought to disturb us," Drummond said. "We have an illustrious history with illustrious results, but I believe we have an illustrious future."

"We must seek God for a fresh touch from heaven upon us. That's what will give us an illustrious future."

Calendar Runs Out Before May CP

NASHVILLE (BP)—The calendar ran out before all of May's Southern Baptist Cooperative Program receipts came in.

Books closed on national Cooperative Program receipts on the last business day of the month, May 29, two days before the last Sunday, May 31. Consequently, not all the money Southern Baptists gave to the convention-wide budget in May was counted in the monthly total, reported Harold C. Bennett, president and treasurer of the convention's Executive Committee.

The May total was \$10,189,783, or 11.4 percent behind receipts for May of 1986, which were more than \$11.5 million, Bennett announced.

The shortfall is "pretty typical" of months when a Sunday falls after the Cooperative Program books close, said Tim A. Hedquist, Executive Committee vice president for business and finance.

Churches Viewed As PACs

by Charlie Warren
Tennessee Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE (BP)—The Tennessee Supreme Court has ruled churches that speak out on referendum issues must declare themselves to be political action committees and file disclosure statements.

The 5-0 decision overturned an earlier ruling by the Tennessee Court of Appeals that favored 13 Jackson-area churches accused of operating as a PAC to fight liquor by the drink. Representatives of 10 of the 13 churches subsequently have reaffirmed their decision to appeal the case to the United States Supreme Court.

John Lee Taylor, pastor of West Jackson Baptist Church and spokesman for the 13 churches, read a statement prepared by the group that met May 29.

"We have reviewed carefully one of the cardinal principles on which our democracy was founded—the separation of church and state," the statement declared. "The issue for which we contend continues to be of such consequence to the exercising of our religious faith that we have reaffirmed our decision made earlier to pursue it to the highest court of our country.

"Our legal counsel team has been asked to file our appeal at the earliest possible date," the statement continued. "Our attorneys anticipate the United States Supreme Court's willingness to hear our case.

"We should like to state again in unequivocal terms that we are churches. We are not political action committees. We believe that as churches, we have the constitutional right to exercise our religious faith publicly without interference by the state.

"Morally and doctrinally, we are conscience bound to address issues that may or may not appear on a ballot in an election. Because we confront publicly a moral issue that has become a part of an election process does not transform us from being a church to being a political action committee.

"The ramifications of this issue impact the religious community across America, not just 13 churches in Jackson, Tenn.," the statement concluded. "There will be other moral issues on ballots that churches must confront as a matter of faith and practice without being labeled political action committees across our land. The preservation of the doctrine of the separation of church and state must be preserved."

In its decision, the Tennessee high court wrote, "We think that the sole determinative issue is whether the act (the Ten-

nessee Campaign Financial Disclosure Act) violates the free speech clause of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. We find it unnecessary to address the other issues to resolve this case."

The justices also noted: "The recent history of campaign financial abuses as well as the growth and possible dominance of special interest political action committees make the state's disclosure requirements necessary to allow the public to have some gauge by which to assess the sources, content and frequency of campaign publicity and activity.

"As enacted, the Campaign Financial Disclosure Act does not and cannot control the quality or content of speech," the court opinion continued. "It does not limit contributions or expenditures made during a campaign; it is neutral in all respects as regards the groups to whom it applies and the types of activities at which it is specifically aimed.

"If any group wished to engage in financing outcome-specific election campaigning, whether involving a candidate election or referendum, the people of the state, including these plaintiffs, have the right to know the extent of such financial involvement during the campaign in order to maintain a balanced and informed view of the campaign," the statement added. "Accordingly, we conclude that the Campaign Financial Disclosure Act of 1980 is constitutional in every respect."

Lee Boothby, the attorney for Americans United for Separation of Church and State who presented oral arguments on behalf of the churches during the April 7 hearing at the Tennessee Supreme Court, noted there is an advantage to losing the state high court decision.

"There is an advantage in the sense that you have more control of the questions that go up if you lose," Boothby said, adding that whoever appeals to the nation's high court gets to present the issues relevant to the appeal.

On Aug. 21, 1986, the Tennessee Court of Appeals, Western Section, ruled 2-1 that the Tennessee campaign Financial Disclosure Act is unconstitutional as applied to referendum elections because it violates the First Amendment right of free speech.

The appeals court ruling reversed a Chancery Court decision that would have required churches that speak out on referendum issues to file financial disclosure statements. However, the appeals court judges ruled such churches are political action committees under the disclosure act.

The case erupted when the 13 churches,

nine of which are Southern Baptist, refused to file disclosure forms related to their involvement in opposing an August 1984 local-option liquor election. That referendum was defeated by 40 votes, but a later referendum was successful.

On Aug. 29, 1984, Tennessee Attorney General Michael Cody issued an opinion that churches which had spent at least \$250 in seeking to defeat the liquor-by-the-drink referendum were political action committees and were subject to filing the forms within 48 days after the election.

The churches refused to comply and instead brought suit against the state of Tennessee on the grounds that the Financial Disclosure Act, as interpreted by Cody, violates the freedom of religion guarantee of the First Amendment.

The Tennessee Supreme Court's ruling in effect means that while the case awaits a decision by the U.S. Supreme Court, churches that spend more than \$250 addressing referendum issues would be considered political action committees and would be required to file disclosure statements. Churches also would be required to provide the names of any individuals who contributed \$100 or more toward the defeat of a referendum.

The decision comes at a time when Tennessee voters are likely to face local referenda regarding the location of horsetracks which will allow pari-mutuel gambling. Ivy Scarborough, a Jackson attorney who is representing the churches, said church members can still fight the pari-mutuel threat without the churches themselves becoming political action committees.

He said "people of like minds" could establish political action committees to raise funds and work to defeat the issue.

He urged pastors to be aggressive and not be intimidated or inhibited by the Tennessee Supreme Court decision.

"Pastors... must not, under any circumstances, allow themselves to be muzzled," Scarborough said.

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Convention Uniform

Goodness Is Not Enough

by Jim Byrum, Toltec Church, Scott
Basic passage: Romans 2:1-3:20

Focal passage: Romans 2:1,17-24;
3:9-12,19-20

Central truth: All people are sinners.

There is a common thread that binds mankind together. It is sin. Sometimes sin takes the form of the grossest immorality and basest idolatry. At other times it takes the form of a spirit of condemnation or pride in the human heart. Sin is the transgression of the law.

Knowledge of God's law does not prevent man from sinning. The law was not given for that purpose. It was given to show mankind that they are sinners. Paul says that when the law came, sin increased. The law makes people want to sin more because of their sinful nature. This was illustrated vividly on TV years ago. The "Candid Camera" crew had set up their cameras behind a fence with a knothole about eye level. On the sidewalk side of the fence the crew had placed a sign above the knothole which read, "Do not look!" The camera started to roll. There was a steady stream of eyeballs looking through that knothole. The sign was removed from above the knothole and immediately the eyeballs were gone.

Knowledge of God's certain judgment does not prevent man from sinning. Paul wrote in Romans 1:32 that those grossly immoral pagans lived wickedly "knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them."

What is the answer? How can a sinner be saved from the guilt and punishment of sin and be transformed so that sin no longer has control over his life?

First, he must confess that he is a sinner. God must do something in him to bring conviction of sin and sorrow for sin. The Holy Spirit applying the Law of God is one way that God does this.

Second, he must have some knowledge about Jesus. Jesus is the only way. Someone must tell him the good news that Jesus is the Son of God, that he died on the cross for his son, that he arose from the grave, and that he is coming again.

Third, he must repent. To repent means to turn from one's old way of life to a new way of life. It means to turn from sin to Jesus.

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Life and Work

Salvation By Grace

by Bert Thomas, Valley Church, Searcy
Basic passage: Acts 15:1-35

Focal passage: Acts 15:1,2,4-11

Central truth: Salvation is by grace alone.

The hymn "Amazing Grace" has often been called the Baptist theme song. Written by John Newton, it teaches that salvation is by God's grace alone.

Believers in the Antioch church were primarily Gentiles. Problems arose when unauthorized members from the Jerusalem church visited Antioch and taught that Jewish Christians must submit to the Jewish rite of circumcision to be saved. Paul, Barnabas, and other Antioch leaders went to Jerusalem to discuss this serious doctrinal problem with leaders of that church. This meeting is called the Jerusalem Council. From our background scripture in Acts and other New Testament references we may assume some things about this false doctrine.

(1) These men misinterpreted and misapplied scripture. Perhaps they quoted from Genesis 17 to Leviticus 12 to prove their point. Paul refutes their argument from Romans 14 which teaches that circumcision was an outward sign of God's covenant with Israel. Men who take scripture out of context and use human logic and wisdom will arrive at false doctrines.

(2) They appeared scholarly and informed. They were from the Jerusalem church and had a background in Jewish tradition.

(3) They used scare tactics. You cannot be saved by God's grace alone. You must do something else.

Paul exposed this false doctrine. From Galatians 2:4-5 we learn more about his defense of salvation by grace alone. The very reason these men wanted to require circumcision was to bring Gentile Christians under bondage to Judaism. "We did not yield to submission even for an hour" (Ga. 2:5). Men still want to determine who may or may not be saved by requiring that all who desire salvation must come through them.

The issue of salvation by grace alone was not settled by the Jerusalem Council. God settled it! The Holy Spirit inspired Luke to record how the early churches solved this doctrinal problem. Well-meaning people still try to add requirements for salvation. The Word of God stands firm and sure regardless of what man may attempt to do.

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Bible Book

Songs Of Joy

by Jimmie Sheffield, ABSC associate executive director

Basic passage: Psalms 127; 133; 139

Focal passage: Psalms 127:1-4; 133:1-3; 139:1-12

Central truth: The psalmists' descriptions of depending on God, the value of unity, and the abiding presence of God provide the basis for establishing priorities.

The psalms under study for this lesson involve praising and celebrating true values, unity, and God's presence. True values are discovered as one looks at the way we structure our lives as well as looking at our own families.

The psalmist says in Psalm 127 that there is vanity in any kind of effort without God.

The value of a family is discussed in verses 3-5. When a person recognizes the blessings of a family, he will begin to put real value in the family. The more values he places on the family, the more blessings he receives, and the cycle continues.

Psalm 133 describes unity, brotherly love, and the results of unity. The psalm begins with a declaration. The wonder of living in unity is wonderful and pleasant.

The psalmist used two images to describe this wonderful state of unity. First, he says it is like the anointing oil running down Aaron's head and beard. Aaron represents the priesthood which God established. Priests were set aside by the ceremony of anointment. The oil used in the anointment was specially formulated and holy (Ex. 30:22-33).

The second image deals with the dew on Mount Hermon. The dews of Mount Hermon were exceptionally heavy and they brought moisture to the thirsty lands. The hills of Zion are over 100 miles from Mount Hermon. The psalmist is speaking symbolically of the blessings of God which fall upon the highest point in the land and run down to the lower points.

Psalms 139 deals with the presence of God. He is everywhere. A person cannot escape the presence of God on this earth. Because of God's presence, he knows everything we do or think. How sobering! That reality can cause celebration or conviction.

A study of these psalms may lead us to rethink our priorities. That's good. This same study should cause us to celebrate constantly God's goodness to us.

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Bridge Dedication Draws 2,000

by Marsha Key

Missionary press representative, Togo

MORETAN, Togo (BP)—Dedication of two vital bridges and a pharmacy built in Togo by Southern Baptist volunteers drew a crowd of 2,000 people, media coverage and favorable comments about Baptists from the Togolese government.

The May 27 celebration highlighted the close of a three-year partnership project between North Carolina Baptist volunteer workers and Togo Baptists. Project workers drilled 113 wells and constructed 16 water catchments, two bridges and a pharmacy.

The project also resulted in health education seminars for 42 villages and development of a literacy program. Evangelistic efforts helped start 42 churches and preaching points, with 1,200 people baptized and 1,000 awaiting baptism.

As Togolese government officials gathered at the ceremony, Togolese air force planes flew over to salute the partnership effort. The event was publicized on Togolese television and through the Voice of America radio broadcast to Africa.

The Togolese chief administrator for the region complimented Baptists on their work and said, "Healed bodies are important, but they would be of no use if souls were not made well.

"Someday the souls of those who believe in Jesus will go to live with God," the official added. "But while we are on earth, our souls live in bodies that we must take care of. Baptists are not only caring for our bodies, but also our souls."

Forty-two North Carolina Baptists, including representatives of the state Brotherhood and Woman's Missionary Union, were at the dedications.

The bridges are improving commerce in an area that was nearly cut off from the rest of the country during the rainy season. Already the bridges are resulting in road improvements and new local markets. And because of new accessibility, the gospel is spreading into once-remote villages.

The pharmacy will be important for a wide region, making the physical quality of life better.

Baptist Family Gains 1st Million

WASHINGTON, D.C. (BWA)—Again this year, Baptist churches from every continent have reported significant membership gains to the Baptist World Alliance. The increase worldwide totals nearly 1 million members, repeating the consistent growth pattern of the BWA's 136 constituent bodies around the globe.

BWA affiliates in seven world regions reported 978,415 more members, for a total of 34,169,392. They also gained 56 more churches, to make 129,285 local congregations. The 1986 totals were 33,190,977 members in 128,289 churches.

100,000 Bibles Headed For Russia

WASHINGTON, D.C. (BWA)—The Baptist World Alliance will make the largest gift ever of Russian-language Bibles to Christians in the Soviet Union.

The gift will mark the 1,000th anniversary of the Russian Orthodox Church next year.

Permission to import the Bibles came only a few weeks after a permit was granted to the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists to import 75,000 volumes of a Russian-language translation of William Barclay's *Commentary on the New Testament*, a joint project of the BWA and the Mennonite Central Committee.

United Bible Societies, which has made large Bible shipments to the U.S.S.R. through legal channels in recent years, will cooperate in the Bible project through paper supplies, printing, or shipping.

One thousand of the Bibles will be study editions for pastors, and another 1,000 will be pulpit Bibles. An additional 10,000 German-language Bibles and 8,000 Moldavian-language Bibles also will be imported.

The Russian Orthodox Church dates its beginnings from the year A.D. 988, when Prince Vladimir of Kiev was baptized in the Dnieper River. Anniversary services began in June in Orthodox centers at Kiev, Moscow, Vladimir, and Leningrad and will continue throughout 1988 in the U.S.S.R.

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WORLD

Dollar Slide Hits Foreign Missions

by Erich Bridges
SBC Foreign Mission Board

TOKYO (BP)—While American evangelists feld over millions, missionaries in Japan are counting dollars.

The value of the U.S. dollar has plunged to its lowest level against the Japanese yen since World War II. And the fall of the once-mighty dollar on overseas markets is not just hurting Japanese corporate giants like Honda and Mitsubishi. It is hurting the work of missionaries.

Southern Baptist mission work worldwide is paid for with dollars, which missionaries convert to local currencies. When the value of the dollar drops against a local currency, missionaries lose buying power. That affects both their living expenses and their work funds.

Periodic cost-of-living salary adjustments from the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board cover missionaries' personal needs. But there are no "cost-of-working" adjustments. Lost buying power overseas has the same impact on foreign missions as a decrease in mission offerings from U.S. churches.

"We've tightened our belts, and we are more careful because we aren't sure what is going to happen," said Japan missionary Phyllis Goss. "It's scary when you're on the field and this is happening. You want to do things, but there's not the money to do it."

The 201 Southern Baptist missionaries in Japan have been doing a lot of belt-tightening and budget-tightening lately. So have their colleagues in Europe and western Africa. The dollar has been sliding not only against the yen, but also against the French, Swiss and Belgian francs, German mark, English pound, Austrian schilling and other currencies.

To be effective, missionaries must travel, train national believers, start new churches, produce materials and do many other things that cost money. And when the money is tight, "cutting back" on work budgets is easier said than done.

"We have a lot of missionaries who ride bikes, who walk, who take other alternative forms of transportation if the nature of their work allows it," reported Keith Parker, director for Europe. "But this is a dollar question, a stewardship question. You can find cheaper places to live farther out. But if you save money on rent, do you really save if you have to commute in a car and pay all the upkeep and insurance?" Fuel costs in Europe, he added, are "phenomenal."

The Japan missionaries plan their work

for each new year with a fixed number of dollars, which they eventually convert to yen. They anticipated getting 220 yen for each dollar last year but averaged only 165. They planned for 160 yen to the dollar this year, but during the spring the exchange rate dropped below 140. That adds up to more than a 30 percent drop in buying power during the past 18 months.

"It affects you at every level," said Gerald Burch, interim mission business manager in Japan. "What you had planned to do during the year, you wipe one third off the top off that."

The dollar-yen exchange had inched back to around 145 by early June, but some economists do not expect it to rise much more this year. New Japan mission programs are on hold, and existing ones have been reduced. Travel is now at a bare minimum — too expensive.

The Japan missionaries rarely gather in one place except for annual mission meetings. Those in isolated areas feel the loneliness. So do their children. Meanwhile 22 new missionaries arrived last year, most with children, adding large new strains to work and education budgets.

Missionaries from neighboring Taiwan, South Korea and Hong Kong have shifted some budget funds to their Japan colleagues. The Foreign Mission Board's East Asia office has sent extra money. But the Japan budget is still running in the red. And deficits will carry over to next year.

On the plus side, Southern Baptist missionaries in Japan and elsewhere enjoy two big financial advantages which many missionaries from other denominational groups lack. First, they receive full, regular financial support from churches through Southern Baptist Cooperative Program giving and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions.

Second, when their personal buying power drops (or jumps) because of dollar exchange rates, inflation or local economic conditions, they receive cost-of-living salary adjustments, as often as necessary. "So you can't paint the picture too bleak," said Burch.

But Japan has gobbled up \$1 million in missionary cost-of-living adjustments since the beginning of 1986. That is much more than the rest of Asia and Africa combined, and more than a third of the total spent worldwide.

The dollar may regain its former strength overseas. But the cost of missions will keep rising in the advanced economies of Japan and Europe. Is it worth it?

"There's always the option of not sending additional missionaries out here or cutting the work force here," suggested Japan mission treasurer Richard Curtis. "There's been discussion of it."

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