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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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March 26, 1987

Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine



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**Effective
hospital visiting**

Helpline feature
page 10

On the cover



BSSB photo / Jim Veneman

Hospital visitation: for many pastors, an overwhelming responsibility; for many laypeople, an intimidating assignment. This month's Helpline feature offers some straightforward advice on effective hospital visitation (p. 10).

In this issue

14-17 planning for '88

The tentative 1988 Arkansas Baptist State Convention diary offers a look ahead at proposed state convention plans for next year.

18-19 firing threatened

Larry Baker, the SBC Christian Life Commission's new executive director, has been on the job less than two weeks, and already several board members and "fundamental-conservative" leader Paul Pressler are predicting he will be fired at the CLC's fall meeting. The ABN brings you a full-length Baptist Press feature on Baker's background and positions, as well as details of complaints against him.

Corrections

The Jan. 15 ABN should have reported that Kurt Bryant of Fort Smith is serving as a journeyman missionary in San Jose, Costa Rica.

The Feb. 19 ABN should have reported that Bobby Adams of Russellville previously has served as pastor of three churches.

Missionary escapes injury during robbery

KAMPALA, Uganda (BP)—Southern Baptist missionary Sharon Pumpelly narrowly escaped a bullet wound in mid-February when she and her husband, Larry, were robbed inside their home.

The Pumpellys were saying a late-evening goodbye to visiting neighbors at the security gate to the fence around their home when five robbers approached and forced them back inside the house. The robbers took Pumpelly's watch and all of the electronic equipment in the house.

The one shot fired during the robbery

ricocheted off the floor and whizzed by Mrs. Pumpelly, smashing the sliding glass door directly behind her, according to John Faulkner, the Foreign Mission Board's associate director for mission work in eastern Africa.

The next night the Pumpellys slept in their hallway during a gun battle behind their house. They believe police set up a trap to catch the robbers but ran into a skirmish with a group rebellious to government forces, Faulkner said. To their knowledge, no suspect was apprehended.

Nigerian Baptist churches burned in religious riots

ZARIA, Nigeria (BP)—All eight Baptist churches in Zaria, Nigeria, and six in nearby Kaduna were burned in religious rioting that left at least 11 people dead in northern Nigeria during the second week of March.

Pastors and their families in Zaria escaped, but several were left destitute and homeless, according to telegrams March 11 and 12 from Don Reece, administrator of the Nigeria Baptist Mission. James and Marie Johnston of Anchorage, Ky., and Shreveport, La., respectively, the only Southern Baptist missionaries in the city, were reported to be safe.

The Baptist Pastors' School in Kaduna, where a number of missionaries are stationed, had canceled classes but was undamaged and being protected by soldiers, reported Kathy High of Greensboro, N.C., missionary there, by telephone March 13.

The school, which has more than 200 students, has sent out pastors across northern Nigeria, home of Nigeria's fastest-growing Baptist work in recent years. Partly because of the school's influence, there are about 45 Baptist churches in Kaduna and another 50 to 60 in the outlying areas around the city.

Baptists mobilize relief for Ecuador

QUITO, Ecuador (BP)—Southern Baptist missionaries and Ecuadorian Baptists are mobilizing relief efforts in Quito, Ecuador, where 1,000 people are either dead or missing after two powerful earthquakes March 5 and 6.

Warehouse space has been set up to receive about 40 tons of food, blankets, clothing, and tools from Southern Baptists. A three-member disaster relief team headed by Cameron Byler from the SBC Brotherhood Commission in Memphis, Tenn., planned to leave Miami, with the provisions by commercial cargo jet March 18.

Ecuadorian Baptists and missionaries will distribute food in Quito, where many of the thousands left homeless are living with

relatives. They plan to use food distribution as a way to share the gospel.

The disaster team also will work with two missionaries who set up a communications center in Lago Agrio, a town east of the affected area. The team will be examining the need for additional volunteers from state Brotherhood organizations, who could help rebuild homes and schools.

The earthquakes shook mountain snowcaps loose and sent water, mud and debris sliding into river valleys. Sludge and floods inundated entire villages, swept away whole sections of road, and snapped the country's most important oil line as the overflow rumbled down the eastern face of the Andes Mountains and into the Amazon River basin.

Baptists among prisoners released in Soviet Union

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—Twenty-five Baptists are among the prisoners released recently in the Soviet Union, according to two Soviet Baptist officials who visited the United States in early March.

Alexei Bichkov, general secretary of the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists, and Michael Zhidkov, a union vice-president and director of their educational division, made the report.

The two men said they have talked with several of the Baptists recently released, including Anatol Redin, a pastor from Rjazan, south of Moscow. He and the others will be resuming their church work, Zhidkov reported. The two Baptist officials said they

have sent telegrams or telephone messages to many released prisoners and have visited personally with others.

The men also said Soviet officials have removed from the government code two articles related to alleged "anti-Soviet behavior" under which many religious people have been imprisoned.

The encouraging sign of prisoner releases comes as Christians in the Soviet Union prepare for the celebration in 1988 of 1,000 years of Christianity in what is now the Soviet Union. Baptists are included on a committee with Russian Orthodox representatives to plan special projects for the year.

A dynamic, not dogmatic doctrine

The editor's page

J. Everett Sneed



Often it is difficult for non-Baptists to understand us. One of the difficulties others have in comprehending us is the fact we hold to the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. Out of this doctrine comes our church polity and the fact that we do not have a creed. Baptists believe the only source of authority for faith and practice is the Bible.

One of the amazing truths of the Bible is the priesthood of all believers. The Bible states clearly that Christ is our high priest and that every Christian is a priest. Peter stated this truth clearly as he said, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that you should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of the darkness into the marvelous light" (I Pe. 2:9).

This marvelous truth is that every believer has direct access to God through Christ. As a priest, a Christian does not need any other human being to stand between him and God. It means a Christian who is truly in tune with God will receive the personal guidance of the Holy Spirit.

If every individual has direct access to God through Christ, it follows that no outside force should have authority over the local congregation. Hence, Southern Baptists believe in the autonomy of every local congregation. There is no individual, church, association or convention which can compel any local church to do anything it doesn't wish to do.

Authoritarian individuals or groups say the doctrine of the individual priesthood of the believer is one of the most dangerous doctrines ever promulgated. They maintain a creed and individuals to enforce it must keep individual believers in line. But Southern Baptists know this doctrine to be biblical, and therefore they accept it as an integral part of God's redemptive work to be preached, proclaimed, and practiced.

The question arises, "How then can doctrinal purity be maintained?" Doctrinal purity has long been a prime concern among Baptists. For this reason, Baptists have always insisted that the Bible is the only source for authority and practice. Unity in Baptist life has been maintained by adherence to God's Word.

Other factors which have assisted Baptists in maintaining doctrinal integrity is the insistence that every individual who becomes a church member has had a personal experience with God through Christ. If every individual is redeemed, and all are guided by the same Holy Spirit who interprets the same Word of God to them, considerable unity should be expected.

A second thing which assists Baptists in maintaining doctrinal unity is the way we accept churches into local associations.

Historically the district association has been the point at which determination of doctrinal purity of local churches has been made. A congregation which does not adhere to the Scripture as its source for authority and practice is not accepted as a part of the local associational fellowship.

Doctrinal purity has further been protected in Baptist life by messengers' function in associations, state conventions, and the Southern Baptist Convention. The messengers determine the trustees of agencies and institutions. These trustees in turn have the responsibility of employing individuals who are doctrinally sound.

The biblical doctrine of the priesthood of all believers does encourage a certain degree of diversity. Diversity, when kept in bounds, is healthy. It means that new ideas will be explored. But diversity should never go beyond the bounds of the authoritative Word of God.

When problems do arise, they should be considered in a climate of trust and respect and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The final standard must always be the Word of God.

When individuals follow the guidance of Holy Scripture, the doctrine of priesthood of all believers should not create a problem in Baptist life. The doctrine is one of the most important of all teachings of the New Testament. In the Old Testament era, only the high priest could enter the Holy of Holies, and then only on the Day of Atonement. But when Christ died on the cross, the veil of the Temple was rent in twain from top to bottom, providing access for all believers into the Holy of Holies.

The Temple had many divisions. First, there was the Court of the Gentiles, where anyone could go regardless of nationality or religion. Beyond the court of the Gentiles was the court or area for women and children. The next area or court was maintained for Jewish men. The fourth division was the holy place, where the priest made daily sin sacrifices for the sins of all the people. This area was separated from the Holy of Holies by the veil of the Temple. Paul summarized the new relationship which took place after Christ's atoning death by saying, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28).

All believers are priests through God's redemptive work at Calvary. All of us are on the same level and may enter into the fullest and deepest relationship with God. There is no select group that has any monopoly on God or his grace. All can come before his presence with all boldness. In so doing, God will assist us in doing a mighty work for him.

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Able to reach our world

by Paul Sanders

It is a joy to cooperate with other Southern Baptist churches in sharing Jesus Christ with a lost world. Even though our church has a very limited field, we can reach at our location, we are not limited in helping reach our world.

It is a joy to be a Southern Baptist and have a part in a world-wide ministry. I'm so grateful we do not just support two or three missionaries as an individual church, but that we help support some 3,500 home missionaries and almost 3,500 foreign missionaries, plus children's homes, schools, student work, and so much more.

It is a joy to give though the Cooperative Program and know we are obeying our dear Lord and helping to support those he has called. We can be a part of evangelism and discipleship and help fulfill the Lord's Great Commission.

We firmly believe that what the Lord calls

us to do, he provides the means, though his people, to do it. As we have had the need to build buildings, add staff, and see local needs increase, we have also seen the need to increase our Cooperative Program giving. Our church has gone from less than 10 percent to 17 percent, plus our annual mission offerings, associational, and state offerings. Our church is blessed when they get their vision beyond what can be done in their local church and give to reach a world for Christ. God has given us his message, his mission, and his means.

Pray for the Lord to help your church give more for our Master's work beyond your local community. May the Lord bless your generous spirit and grant you his joy in giving.

Paul Sanders is pastor of Geyer Springs First Church in Little Rock.

59 churches invite task force speakers

"Missions Advance 87-89" has 59 churches already making a decision to have a task force speaker. These churches and pastors are listed below. Your church can have one of the trained speakers. Call the Baptist Building for more information. (Jimmie Sheffield, 376-4791).

Arkadelphia First Church, Lynn Worthen; Arkansas City Church, Kenneth Overton; Augusta First Church, J. R. Debusk; Banks Church, Hardy, Sherman Wells; Beech Street First Church, Texarkana, Mike Huckabee; Benton First Church, Randal Everett; Berryville First Church, Rich Kincl;

Bethel Church, Prescott, Bennie Blount; Blytheville First Church, Larry Kindrick; Booneville First Church, Allen Thrasher; Brinkley First Church, Jim McDaniel; Brookview Church, Little Rock, Brad Rogge; Calvary Church, Benton, Oscar Golden; Central Church, Magnolia, Joe Statton; Claud Road Church, Pine Bluff, Bill Passmore; Clinton First Church, Frank Shell;

Cotter First Church, Graden Melton; Crossett First Church, Al Sparkman; Crossroads Church, Blytheville, Warren Watkins; Crystal Hill Church, Little Rock, Sid Carswell; DeQueen First Church, Victor Gore; East Side Church, Fort Smith, Trueman Moore; Elmdale Church, Springdale, Mark Brooks; Eudora Church, Jimmy Wallace;

Fayetteville First Church, Jere Mitchell; Fordey Church, Lawson Hatfield; Fort

Smith First Church, Roy Gean, Jr.; Gassville First Church, John Casey; Hicks First Church, Jerry Page; Hot Springs First Church, Roy Buckelew; Immanuel Church, Carlisle, Ken Williams; Immanuel Church, Texarkana, W. V. Garner; Ironton Church, Little Rock, Bob Shaddox; Jasper First Church, Don Rose;

Lamar Church, Les Frazer; Life Line Church, Little Rock, Tom Cunningham; Marion First Church, Eugene Ray; Mena First Church, Bill Bowen; Monticello First Church, Dennis Dodson; Mountain Home First Church, Roy Fowler; Mt. Ida First Church, Don Jones; Nashville First Church, David Blase;

Park Hill Church, North Little Rock, Cary Heard; Parkway Church, Lake Village, Sanders Brooks; Pea Ridge Church, Charles Womack; Piggott First Church, Clyde Spurgin; Pine Bluff First Church, John McClanahan, Portland Church, Phillip Drennan, Prairie Grove First Church, Brad Sheffield, Pulaski Heights Church, Little Rock, Bill Elder;

Sherwood First Church, Michael Anders, Siloam Springs First Church, Homer Shirley; Southside Church, Booneville, Chester Gray; Stuttgart First Church, Jerre Hassell; Sugar Loaf Church, Lloyd Blanton; Tiller Church, Klois Hargis; Watson Chapel Church, Pine Bluff, Sonny Simpson; Wilmot Church, Philip Bowles; and Woodland Church, Clarksville, Homer Haltom.

Testimony from the Committee of 10

by Jimmy Wallace

How thankful I am to be a part of God's plan! The early days of my Christian life were spent in a Baptist church, but it was not Southern Baptist. Therefore I didn't realize what the Cooperative Program was or what it could accomplish. After joining a Southern Baptist church, I still didn't fully comprehend the scope of our methods or the potential of our ministry. It has truly been a learning experience for me to understand what we really do through the Cooperative Program.

It has been enriching serving on the Committee of 10 and the Task Force of 100. My understanding has grown even more to realize we are part of a plan which can literally shake the world for Christ. It is biblical in origin and practical in application. I like being a part of something that good.

The majority of our meetings for the Committee of 10 were held in 1986. We looked at our overall accomplishments through Cooperative Program work. We reaffirmed it is probably the very best approach to joining together to win the world. Other attempts have started but failed to bring us to where we are today in mission support and ministry around the globe. Our committee meetings also provided us an opportunity to look at the ministries of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. Again we came away with a reaffirmation that Arkansas Baptists have a mission, and that we are on the move to accomplish it. But our meetings also showed us that we do have a crisis.

Our committee looked at the crisis and realized that there is one solution: the local churches of Arkansas definitely need to know about the crisis and will then in turn rally to meet the need. The plan was formulated to train a Task Force of 100. That Task Force includes Arkansas Baptists from every walk of life. Their mission is to carry the news to every church in Arkansas and then let our churches make the next moves. Our Task Force as been trained and stands ready to carry out their task.

The next two years will be thrilling to see what God is going to do. It has been the feeling from the groundwork up that God is in the plan. We can be thankful that God has allowed us to be his tools of ministry. I would personally encourage every pastor and every church to utilize the Task Force in helping to inspire, encourage and motivate us to be the best stewards possible for Christ's sake.

"Let a man also account of us, as the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (I Cor. 4:1-2).

Jimmy Wallace is pastor of the Eudora Church.

MK birthday prayer calendar: April

Missionary kids attending college in Arkansas

21 Angela Bryant (St. Vincent) OBU Box 4530, Arkadelphia 71923

Letters to the editor

Cease our name calling

We Southern Baptists are blessed to have Dr. Larry Baker leading the Christian Life Commission. I believe Dr. Baker is the best qualified man we have for the position. I have known him for over 25 years and have found him to be a doctrinally sound, Bible-believing and teaching Southern Baptist.

The Christian Life Commission has long served as the conscience of Southern Baptists and been on the cutting edge of our thinking and our actions. When it ceases to fulfill this place, it will have outlived its usefulness. We must continue to think and be challenged. We cannot afford to put our minds and Christian experience in a box. Above all, we cannot put limits on the Holy Spirit.

I think it is sad that we now libelously label a Christian brother just because we do not agree with him totally or he is not our choice for a position. Such action amounts to firing another bullet in an act of denominational suicide. It is my prayer that we will cease our name calling before someone must prove his accusations and labels in court.—Jimmy W. Anderson, Leachville

HMB appoints former Arkansans

Two former Arkansans have been appointed as missionaries by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board in Atlanta.

Tom Martin of Hamburg and wife, Sandra, will serve in Hampton Township, Mich., where Martin will be a mission pastor. For the past six months, he has served as church extension coordinator for the Bay Association in Bay City, Mich.

A graduate of Ouachita Baptist University, Martin also attended Oakland Community College in Pontiac, Mich.; Wayne State University in Detroit; and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

A former US-2 missionary, he has also served as pastor of two Michigan churches.

The Martins have two children.

Truman "T.B." Smith, a native of Monette, and wife Lorene have been appointed as missionary associates to Pennsylvania. Smith, who has served as pastor of First Church of Clio, Mich., since 1983, will be director of missions for the Conemaugh Valley Association.

He has attended Southern Baptist College, Walnut Ridge; Michigan Baptist Institute, Flint, Mich.; John Wesley College, Owosso, Mich.; and Luther Rice Seminary, Jacksonville, Fla.

Smith's pastorates have included the Cauthern mission, Lake City; Eight Mile Church, Paragould; Buffalo Chapel Church, Caraway; and churches in Michigan.

Smith and his wife, Lorene, have four children.

Arkansas ACTS boards charter state organization

Representatives of seven Arkansas affiliates of the America Christian Television System (ACTS) met in Pine Bluff March 5 to adopt a charter for a new statewide ACTS organization, ACTS of Arkansas.

ACTS board members from Little Rock, Pine Bluff, Fort Smith, Jonesboro, Springdale, Magnolia, and Arkadelphia chartered the new organization with six statements of purpose: (1) to increase the number of Arkansas cable TV outlets for ACTS, (2) to cooperate in the production of in-state programming, (3) to educate Arkansas Baptist churches about ACTS, (4) to provide video

assistance and air time to the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, (5) to encourage Baptist institutions to provide training in television as a means of furthering the gospel, and (6) to assist the national ACTS network.

According to Mike Huckabee, ACTS of Arkansas president and pastor of Beech Street Church, Texarkana, the new organization will provide consultation and assistance for groups interested in bringing a Baptist witness to their local television outlets.

For more information, contact Huckabee at 774-5165 or Mark Brooks, pastor of Elmdale Church, Springdale, at 751-9746.

OBU preview day set for April 10

ARKADELPHIA—The admissions counseling office at Ouachita Baptist University will sponsor a Preview Day for interested high school juniors, seniors, and their parents in Arkansas and surrounding states on Friday, April 10, according to Randy Garner, director of the admissions counseling office at OBU.

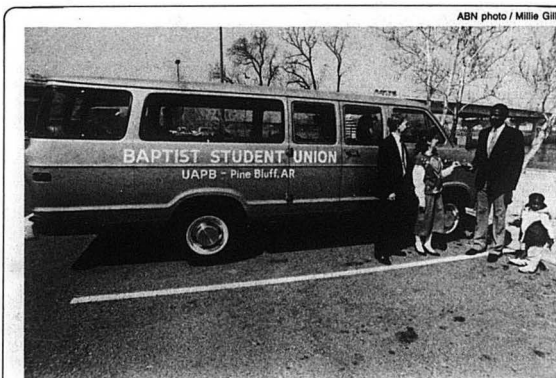
"Each year we schedule three Preview Days over the course of the fall and spring semesters to acquaint and further assist prospective students in deciding on a college home," said Garner. "We are expecting approximately 100 students and their parents to take advantage of this opportunity to see the school and meet some of the students and faculty."

Registration and a continental breakfast will be served to the students and their

parents at 9 a.m. in Evans Student Center, with a special welcome by Dr. Daniel R. Grant, president of OBU. Class visitation and a panel discussion with OBU students and faculty will follow, as well as the noon chapel service and lunch in the banquet room of Evans.

During the afternoon, campus tours will be given to those interested, while the final event of the day will be Tiger Tunes. This program features individual musical performances by six campus groups to be held at 7:30 p.m. in Mitchell Hall Auditorium.

Advanced tickets of Preview Day are \$4 per person with the registration deadline set for April 3. For more information or pre-registration material, contact Randy Garner, OBU Box 3776, Arkadelphia, AR 71923, phone (501) 246-4531, ext. 110.



ABN photo / Millie Gill

Van donated—A 1987 Dodge 15-passenger van has been presented to the Baptist Student Union at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff by A. O. Smith of Stamps as a memorial to his wife, Ruth Smith. UAPB BSU Director Franklin Scott and his daughter, Stacey Michelle (right) were presented keys to the van by the Smith's granddaughter, Dede Moore of Little Rock, and her husband, Bryan Moore. The van was used March 19-22 when students attended a convention in Birmingham, Ala. In 1970, the Smith's provided funding for a chapel at the Pine Bluff school.

by Millie Gill / ABN staff writer

people

Paul Seal observed his fifth anniversary of service March 15 as minister of education at Mountain Home First Church.

Keith Sandefur has resigned as pastor of Sallito Heights Church, Conway, to serve as pastor of Colt Church.

James Griffin has resigned as pastor of Bono Church, Damascus.

Ed Hardin of Dell died March 13 at age 80. He was a retired farmer. His funeral services were held March 15 at Dell Church where he actively served as a deacon and had served for many years as Sunday School secretary. Survivors include his wife, Bertha Hardin of Dell; a son, Ben Gill of Dallas, Texas; a brother, Bill Hardin of Blytheville; two sisters, Betty Houston of Dell and Selma Palmer of Chattanooga, Tenn.; and three grandchildren.

Charles Pullin is serving as pastor of Eden Church, Hamburg.

Jerry Ray is serving as pastor of New Hope Church, Lonoke. He was licensed to the preaching ministry by Beebe First Church.

David Moore will begin serving April 19 as pastor of Immanuel Church in Pine Bluff, coming there from South Side Church in Dothan, Ala. Moore is a graduate of Samford University, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, and Baylor University. He has served as a full time pastor of churches since 1975. His wife, Becky, holds a degree in music from Baylor University. They are parents of two daughters, Holly, nine, and Joy, five.

briefly

Runyan First Church in North Little Rock broke ground March 22 for a multi-purpose building, estimated to cost approximately \$140,000. Participating in the service were Pastor Bill Philliber and building committee members, including Bob Tobey, chairman, Becky Fortenbury, Dwayne Thomasson, Lonnie Burrow, and Herbert Stark.

Sheridan First Church ordained Dwan East, Doug West, David Brown, Kelley Erstine, and Joe Mathews to the deacon ministry March 15. Pastor Samuel Adkins served as moderator.

Douglasville Church in Little Rock will be in a revival April 5-8 with R.D. Harrington as evangelist. Pastor Glen Smith will direct music.

Whiteville Church celebrated payment of the indebtedness on its parsonage with a dedication service in the March 1 morning worship hour. A potluck luncheon and open house at the parsonage concluded activities.

Indianhead Lake Church in Sherwood was in revival March 8-11 with David Cone serving as evangelist. Pastor Jack Kwok reported one profession of faith and three additions by letter.

Wooster Church broke ground for a new church plan March 1.

Mayflower Church is building a two-story educational building which will house church offices, a library, and classrooms.

Brumley Church at Conway elected a Baptist Men's group Feb. 8. Elected as officers were Jack Whitley, president; Art Montgomery, vice-president; and Melvin Jeffrey, secretary-treasurer.

Jonosboro First Church senior adults will be honored with an appreciation ban-

quet March 28, hosted by youth of the church.

Atkins First Church deacons have initiated a home prayer ministry which has resulted in an increased attendance in church programs.

Pulaski Heights Church in Little Rock sponsored a parent-teen dialogue March 13-16 with approximately 100 participating. Dr. and Mrs. Robert L. Maddox were leaders. The Maddox's recently published "Get Off My Back," a 156-page paperback book intended to help teenaged readers cope with their frustrations dealing with peers, parents and difficult situations such as drug abuse, love, poverty, divorce and other adversities of modern living. Mrs. Maddox spoke to a Women's Fellowship Friday luncheon, sharing experiences of the year spent in the Carter White House where Dr. Maddox served as a speech writer and "religious liaison."

South Highland Church in Little Rock will host a "Walk Through the Bible Seminar," a six hour overview of the Old Testament, March 28, beginning at 9 a.m. Registration information can be obtained from the church.

ABN photo / Mark Kelly



Building dedicated—First Church, Cabot, dedicated a new educational building in special services March 15. Cutting the ribbon for the afternoon open house were Tommy Marshall, building committee chairman, and Bob Shell and Scott Copus, both of Baldwin and Shell Construction Co. of Little Rock, the contractor for the project. The 20,000-square-foot facility provides space for a fellowship hall, classrooms, a music room, and staff offices. It was constructed at an approximate cost of \$800,000, including some remodeling of existing space adjoining the new structure. Del Medlin is pastor of the congregation.

Bryant always asks the 'heaven question'

by Gene Herrington

"What do you think it will take to get a person to heaven?"

That question has opened hundreds of witnessing opportunities for Lawrence C. Bryant of Warren and for the hundreds of Christians who have participated in one of the more than 100 seminars led by Bryant and his wife, Helen.

When he retired from the business world in which he was highly successful, Bryant found more time for the Lord's work. His priority now is Laborers in the Harvest, dedicated to motivating Christians to sharing the Good News.

When the Lord saved Bryant in 1958 at the age of 43—after having been a member of the church since the early teen years—he gave birth to a burning desire to share with others.

He relates how, just after he was born again, he called a meeting of his 160 workers in his poultry processing plant in Greenville, Miss., together to share what the Lord had done for him.

Where does he personally share Jesus? "Wherever the Holy Spirit gives direction," he says. "No one comes into my home without receiving the witness."

He shares about an experience while undergoing tests at St. Vincent's Infirmary in Little Rock. While waiting for his turn, he asked "the question" of a woman, also waiting. After her reply that she did not know, he told her to read the book of John and find out about the Jesus John was writing about. Another woman joined them, and she too did not know the answer. Bryant asked the first woman, "who was lost," to share what he had just told her.

"There is no set pattern for presenting the witness, but the plan that we suggest in Laborers in the Harvest gives the Christian

a simple, straightforward outline," one said. "Any plan is good, but some of them require using almost on a day to day basis to be comfortable with them."

One of the pioneers in the integrated poultry industry in Arkansas and Mississippi, Bryant found time even in the busy business world to promote the cause of Christ. While in Little Rock, he organized the Christian Business Men's Committee, and did likewise in Greenville and Warren.

Six years ago, the Bryants began the seminars after one in their home church proved so successful.

"The key to Christians witnessing is getting over the fear of what people will think of them," Bryant said. "We also need a plan to follow, and many of them are good." He pointed out an advantage of "the heaven question" is that it is not one that can be answered "yes or no" and gives opportunity to share the truth. A feature of the Laborers of the Harvest seminars is a self-examination sheet. "Many church members have been saved simply by facing up to the truth," he said.

On Saturday night of each seminar, teachers and deacons meet to "see what we are trying to do." The four regular services—Sunday School, Church Training and the two worship hours—major on motivation. Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday sessions are one and a half hours long and include demonstrations, explanation of the witness and counseling helps.

"The size of the church is unimportant," Bryant said. "We go where the Lord opens the door."

Gene Herrington is a former managing editor of the Arkansas Democrat and a member of Olivet Church in Little Rock.

Help abused children Sunday, April 26

The Arkansas Coalition Against Violence To Women And Children is asking churches in Arkansas to observe Sunday, April 26, as "Child Abuse Awareness Sunday."

Many Baptists, and others, have been taught from childhood that unkindness is a sin. Kindness is a fruit of the Spirit. "Be ye kind one to another..." (Eph. 4:32) is a fundamental Christian truth. One who is cruel to children, physically or mentally, is ordinarily looked upon with disgust and disfavor.

Unkind behavior toward children, learned from parents or otherwise, needs correcting. Pulpits in our land need to declare such. Those guilty of cruelty to children or anyone else need to hear about the correc-

ting the Lord can do through both Christian conversion and discipling.

Violence against children has greatly increased in recent years. Many reasons have been suggested. The best is that the gospel hasn't been properly shared. Violence portrayed on television, in movies, and in pornographic magazines has been a contributing factor. Such has even infected the lives of professed Christians, as likely attested by the recent slayings of a missionary daughter and mother in Liberia.

A resource packet for religious leaders has been prepared by the coalition. To assist in observing "Child Abuse Awareness Sunday" this packet can be obtained by writing or calling the following: Arkansas Coalition Against Violence To Women And Children, 433 Hall Building, 209 W. Capitol Avenue, Little Rock, AR 72201; (501) 375-2225. The cost for the packet is \$2.25, which covers mailing expense.—**Bob Parker, director, Christian Life Council**



Parker

Parents need to act early for SBC child care

ST. LOUIS (BP)—Parents who plan to take their preschool children to the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting June 16-18 in St. Louis have been encouraged to act soon if they want to use convention-sponsored child care.

"It is time now to preregister preschool children for SBC child care," announced Convention Manager Tim A. Hedquist. For convention purposes, preschoolers are defined as children who have not yet started first grade.

Space in Cervantes Convention Center will limit childcare registration, Hedquist said, noting overflow areas primarily will be used to seat 30,000 SBC messengers in the facility.

But unlike the 1986 convention in Atlanta, preschool children will be allowed on the convention floor when accompanied by their parents, he reported.

Older children in grades 1-6 will not be allowed on the floor unless they are registered messengers, he added. Day care will be provided for these children by the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission, and preregistration is not necessary.

Preschool child care will be provided for all seven business sessions of the annual meeting—three Tuesday, June 16; two Wednesday, June 17; and two Thursday, June 18, said Child Care Director Lucille Shrimpton. Cost will be \$5 per child per session, not to exceed \$25 for all seven sessions.

Preschool facilities will open 30 minutes prior to each session, Shrimpton said. Parents will be required to pick up their children after each session, even those interrupted only by mealtimes. Although snacks will be provided during sessions, meals for children will not be available.

The childcare operation will be staffed by volunteers from area churches, and directors will be convention-approved preschool workers from the Illinois and Missouri Southern Baptist state conventions, she reported.

The children will be divided into three age categories: bed babies and toddlers, twos and threes, and fours and fives, she said. The operation will be staffed with one worker for every three babies and one worker for every four of the older preschoolers.

Preregistration packets are available by writing: SBC Preschool Child Care, c/o Fee Fee Baptist Church, 11330 St. Charles Rock Rd., Bridgetown, Mo. 63044.

a smile or two

The most disappointed people in the world are those who get what is coming to them.

Living within your means is likely to make people wonder if there is anything else peculiar about you.

God's resources spring from 'rock' to meet human needs

by Mark Kelly

A Southern Baptist missionary. Appointed to West Africa. A region racked with yellow fever. Famished by crop failure. A hostile Moslem society in the throes of disintegration.

Even veteran missionaries like Norman and Beverly Coad had to ask, "Lord, what do we do with these people?" as they took the field in Mali, their sixth assignment through the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

That desperate question — "What do we do?" — was the very one Moses asked God when the Hebrews grew rebellious at waterless Rephidim (Ex. 17:1-7). Coad told participants in the 98th annual meeting of Arkansas Woman's Missionary Union March 17-18 at First Church, Camden. Appropriately, the answer God supplied for Coad was similar to the one he gave Moses.

The first element of the answer to Coad's prayer came to him through Matthew 5:7. In the Malian translation of that verse — "Blessed are those so moved by compassion that they must act" — he found a word which communicated the heart of Baptist missions. Coad's point of contact with his tortured people would be that Baptists are a people who care so much about others that they are driven to action.

Furthermore, Coad added, as the Hebrews' need was met by God's resource—bringing water miraculously from a rock (Ex. 14:6)—so the many needs of Mali would be met by God's Southern Baptist "rock," the tremendous strength of the denomination's cooperative missions program.

Coad listed the needs they saw around them: a yellow fever epidemic threatening to surge across the border from Burkina Faso, women by the score dying of tetanus after childbirth, malnourished children killed by "minor" illnesses like measles, and a voracious famine so massive it was gaining international attention.

Coad wondered how could they meet even a fraction of the many monumental needs. He heard his answer in God's command that Moses "stand by the rock." Coad asked for help, and the Foreign Mission Board responded. But the response was possible only because of the massive resources available through the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program, he noted.

Coad launched a medical campaign against the yellow fever threat. Blankets and vaccine came from Southern Baptists. U.S. doctors teamed up with Malian physicians to inoculate thousands of people. Disaster was averted.

Regarding the famine, funds for hunger relief were available through the SBC Foreign Mission Board, but existing channels for aid distribution in Mali were corrupt, Coad ex-

plained. Assistance often wound up lining the pockets of the rulers, leaving the starving to their awful fate.

The insight was nothing short of inspired: Coad recruited Malian Baptists to staff his own corruption-free network to distribute his grain. Not only did it insure that every bit of assistance reached those in need, it also gave new status to believers who in the past had been severely persecuted for their faith.

In 1984, the network fed 400,000 people for three months, while the country waited for a hoped-for harvest that would never come, Coad said. The next year, they fed 900,000 people, a number equal to the population of Dallas, Texas. The Malian Baptists cared for and ministered to their hungry brothers and sisters, regardless of whether they were Moslem or Christian. In their "no strings attached" ministry, the fruit of the Spirit was "devastatingly evident," Coad said.

The Malians were like the Hebrews in one other respect: they also tested God, asking, "Is he among us or not?" Coad added.

Sitting around the fire during their evening meals—meals which had been provided by Southern Baptists—the Malians began to reflect on the question, "Who feeds us?" They agreed it was not the Moslems, who had taken their money, built mosques in every town, and promised crops. The fact was not lost on the villagers that the persecuted, outcast Baptists were the ones providing the grain.

Moslems believe all men are pre-destined to either heaven or hell, Coad explained. Good works are the only evidence whether or not one is heaven-bound. Without question, the grain-distributing Baptists, not the Moslems, were the ones who truly knew God, many villagers concluded.

Bringing God's resources to bear on human needs in Mali resulted in tremendous advances in Baptist mission work, Coad reported. One village, completely resistant to the gospel just a year earlier, built a church building on its own initiative and sent to the Baptist mission for a preacher. Their message: "We are ready to believe."

And existing churches found that, in the wake of the famine-relief efforts, the receptiveness of individuals to the gospel had been heightened. Coad said one four-member church baptized 150 new converts last year.

He also recalled one man who walked 600 miles to the Baptist mission compound so he could talk with Coad. Asked why he had walked such a great distance, the man told Coad he didn't know, that he simply felt something "pushing" him to come.

The pilgrim spent several days learning more about the Jesus who made men care so much about each other, Coad remembered. As understanding began to dawn on

(FMB) photo / Joanna Pinneo



Christians in Mali were constantly persecuted by that country's Moslem majority until Baptist relief efforts during the 1984-85 drought and famine bridged some of the barriers of prejudice. In many villages today, formerly outcast Christian families open their wells to neighbors whose wells have run dry. Moslem hearts and minds have been changed because Baptists cared enough to minister to their needs.

him, he began to consider giving his life to Jesus.

He confronted Coad with a challenge: "If I accept this Jesus, my family might throw me out, isn't that right?" Coad agreed that was true. "They might even kill me?" Coad admitted that had happened before.

After a thoughtful silence, the man declared, "He is worth it," and prayed to receive Jesus.

As great as the world's needs are, God's resources are adequate to meet them, Coad asserted. As Southern Baptists allow Christ to stand beside them in their work together, God will continue to "bring water from the rock" to satisfy the needs of a thirsting world.

Mark Kelly is managing editor of the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine.

Helpline

for the local church

Tornado season? Well, yes it is! But it is also revival season! Who wants to think about tornadoes? No one, really. Does anyone want to think about revivals? Yes! About half of us were saved during revival meetings. We have a special place in our hearts for revivals. Somehow, when revival time comes, we have the feeling there may be someone like us who will accept the Lord and his salvation that week.



Moore

That is exciting! Another smaller group likes to think about revivals, those who are actively seeking to win souls to Christ. They have such expectant hearts that their prayers and witness will pay off.

But, to be honest, not everyone is excited about revival. Lazy, backslidden and inactive church members couldn't care less.

Faithless, fruitless, calloused and indifferent, they not only do not expect anything to happen, they have already decided how little they will do and will be the first to criticize whatever does happen.

We need revival! We need it bad! Backsliders need it. The lost need us to have revival!

Good News Arkansas—Jesus Loves You! This is a theme around which you can plan revival efforts this year. We have provided a special witnessing tract around that theme. A "Torch of Love" run is being carried on throughout every association and county in the state to help you publicize your concern and efforts in getting the gospel to everyone in Arkansas during 1987. An eager and alert pastor will seize upon these tools to increase the possibilities for revival. If you haven't done it for the spring revival, be sure to do it this fall. Some 221 churches baptized no one in 1986. Let's pray and work together and trust God to help us all reach some this year.

Three to four thousand youth—that is how many will be attending the State Youth Convention, April 17. This annual event is traditionally one of the highlights for youth ministries all over the state. Many pastors and scores of adults also come along for this celebration of Christian challenge. Charles Page is an effective speaker, and "Harbor" is a great singing group. The emphasis will be on discipleship, perhaps the area of greatest need for young people seeking to be God's salt in the earth.

While we are on youth, college students, summer missionaries, volunteer youth leaders, pastors, and staff could get some good help on your summer youth ministries. Richard Ross, a youth ministry consultant, will be doing Training Conferences just to help those involved in summer youth ministries. To get as close to you as possible, three conferences will be held. These will be at Ouachita, Southern Baptist College and the Baptist Building. The dates are April 20-22.

Do you have less than 151 enrolled in your Sunday School? O.K., you can come to the Small Sunday School Leadership Update meeting near you. Ideas on growth, outreach, products and materials for small Sunday Schools will be shared with you. We are determined to be of help to our smaller churches. These will be held at First, Reyno; Pleasant Lane, Crossett; First, Alpena; Bellaire, Dermott; First, Griffithville. If you missed one of the earlier meetings, perhaps you can make one of these. That date is April 16, 1987, and the time is 7-9 p.m.

Andy Anderson is coming! Creator, motivator, and helper are just a few of the words that could be used to describe his relationship to the Growth Spiral. Churches, large and small, have found the Growth Spiral the finest tool around for helping

churches set goals and plan their activities. He is coming for an Advanced Growth Spiral Workshop, April 21, 9 a.m. to 3:45 p.m., at Park Hill Church, North Little Rock. Those attending should have already attended the basic conference on the Growth Spiral. This is an Advanced Growth Spiral Conference.

Acteons, Acteons! You will not want to miss this! A mission fair, a recognition service, testimonies and contact with some of the great leaders in world missions. This can happen for you at the Acteons Encounter, April 3-4, at Ouachita Baptist University. Bill and Susan Steeger, missionaries to South Africa; Bud and Jane Gray, former missionaries to South Africa; Dr. Dan Grant; and several missionary kids will be giving you their best. "Acteons, a lot of the hope of the world rests on you."

April activities arrive in full bloom

by Don Moore

Who can most easily be touched about missions? You guessed it, "younger children." This is why we do our best to train someone in every church to work with Mission Friends. On April 4, we will have such a training event for Mission Friends leaders. It will be at Calvary, Little Rock. Every church can have and should have a Mission Friends group. Some of you reading this should take it upon yourself to do this in your church. We would love to help you. This training is our best way.

"Coming of Age"—will be the theme for the first ever Southern Baptist Senior Adult Convention, which will be held in Fort Worth, Texas. Bob Holley, who is not a senior adult, but has an AARP card, will help you with your plans to participate in this historic convention. For those whose church cannot take a van or bus load, he has chartered a bus. The dates are April 27-29. Both senior adults and their leaders need to make contact with Bob Holley immediately. This should be a fabulous experience!

Ministers of education—Once every five years, a national conference is conducted just for you. Of course, you may include your age-group coordinators in this special experience. The best in the business will be sure to be there to share with you. I would think this could breathe some new life and ideas into your ministries. The meeting is in Nashville, April 20-22. Get the details from Bob Holley. Pastors and lay people, who really would like to show appreciation and invest in a more effective ministry for their educational program, could see that costs for this are covered.

New pastors/staff and their wives—You are invited to an orientation time for you who are new in the state, or who are serving for the first time as a pastor or staff person. Previous participants have found this to be most valuable in getting established in the state. The dates are April 13-14. We can help you with travel and lodging. Call 376-4791 (ext. 5102) to register. Bring the spouse if at all possible.

Key leader meeting—April 27-28—Park Hill, North Little Rock. A must for all associational leaders.

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

Hospital visitation need not be traumatic for visitor, patient

by Mark Kelly

As hard as many pastors work, their supplies of time and energy never seem equal to the many demands made on them. In a small church, hospital visitation in particular may require far more time than the pastor has to give, especially when the sick are scattered among several hospitals in different towns.

An obvious solution—and one brought to deacon bodies many times by pastors—is for church members to help by sharing in the ministry of hospital visitation. But many church members—and even some pastors—feel inadequate to the task, not knowing how to act or what to say to the patient and his family.

Regardless of the reason for their misgivings, most people can gain the confidence they need to minister to the hospitalized by understanding and following several basic guidelines, according to Ed McDonald, director of pastoral care for Baptist Medical Center and Arkansas Rehabilitation Institute in Little Rock.

Before you go . . .

Dr. McDonald explains two actions which can do much to alleviate the uneasiness many feel about hospital visitation.

First, McDonald suggests arranging for a staff-conducted tour of the hospital. By visiting areas one is likely to encounter, a person becomes better acquainted and more comfortable with the surroundings. The tour helps the visitor understand rules, visiting hours, and other restrictions. In addition, being able to distinguish between routine and unusual circumstances enables the visitor to focus more clearly on the patient's needs. An uncomfortable visitor makes the patient uncomfortable as well, McDonald points out.

Second, understanding that the purpose of the visit is to register concern for the patient and not to say or do "the right thing" makes it easier to feel like the visit was successful. If a visitor has communicated to the patient that he cares about him, he can feel good about his call. And demonstrating concern doesn't even require seeing the patient every time. Under some circumstances, leaving a card and some reading material may be the best way to say, "I care."

Points to watch

McDonald also suggested eight guidelines which will make a sickroom visit go more smoothly.

(1) Don't force the patient to shake hands with you when you enter the room. Especially after major surgery, patients find it difficult to get comfortable in bed, and a patient may find it annoying or painful to exchange a handshake.

(2) Notice how the patient is situated and be sure to place yourself in his comfortable line of sight. Decisions about which side of

the bed to move toward and whether to stand or sit should be based on the patient's comfort and convenience, not the visitor's.

(3) If there are others in the room, take the initiative to introduce yourself to them. The patient may find it difficult or even impossible to introduce you himself.

(4) Refrain from greeting the patient with the stock question, "How are you doing?" Instead, use observation statements: "I heard you were in the hospital. I wanted to come by and let you know we are thinking about you." The visitor is there to express concern, not pry into the nature of the patient's illness.

(5) Let the patient control the conversation. Hospitalized persons usually have very little control over what happens to them. Directing the flow of a conversation may be the only point of control the patient experiences that day.

(6) Limit the length of your visit. Five minutes is plenty to express your concern. A 10- or 15-minute visit may be too tiring on the patient.

(7) Realize that there are times not to visit. If many other friends are visiting, it may help to coordinate with each other to spread the visits out. Immediately before surgery, a visit with the family is probably better than with the patient, who may already be experiencing the effects of surgery-related drugs. In addition, visits the day after major surgery should be limited to three minutes, if made at all.

(8) Consider the family's needs. In some cases, an observant visitor can relieve a family member standing watch, giving a much-needed break. In other cases, the family member may need someone to take them out for a cup of coffee or meal and give them a chance for company.

Common questions

McDonald also mentioned two often-asked questions which address major concerns of first-time hospital visitors.

"Should I pray?" As important as prayer is, there are times when it might be inappropriate or unwanted by the patient. A visitor who asks, "Do you want me to pray?" puts the patient in the awkward position of being unable to refuse. A sensitive visitor might instead say in closing, "I pledge to

you my prayer support," leaving the patient the privilege of then asking for prayer.

"What about gifts?" Flowers and plants are not always appropriate for the sickroom, McDonald explained. Scents pleasant under other circumstances may be offensive to someone who is ill. Often balloons and books can provide better cheer and diversion for the patient. A small digital clock or travel alarm also may be appreciated.

Advice to avoid

Two bits of popular "comfort" offered the patient often do more harm than good and should be avoided, McDonald asserted.

"I know just how you feel." Unless the visitor has been precisely where the patient is, this is always untrue. In fact, such a statement is selfish, because it calls attention away from the patient and back toward the visitor. If the visitor has in fact experienced the same trauma, it is better to share the feelings themselves rather than simply claiming to know what they are.

"It was God's will this happen to you." Although usually well-intended, such a statement can cause spiritual turmoil for the patient, allowing him to blame God for his trauma. Far better is to help a patient identify ways God can work for good through his circumstances.

An ambassador of grace

The hospital visitor comes as a representative of God's grace to register concern for the patient and share the patient's experience, McDonald emphasized. As a result, the visitor's caring presence means far more than anything said or done.

"You are not there to cheer them up to tell them, 'It's going to be all right,'" he explained. "You go to care for them and help them where they are."

A caring visitor will not force a "witness" on the seriously ill person or push on him the visitor's ideas about how to deal with the circumstances, McDonald said. He pointed out that King Saul was wrong to force his armor on David for the fight with Goliath, when David's real need was to discover how God would use the shepherd's own resources to defeat the giant.

If a caring visitor enables a patient to identify his needs and discover his own resources for dealing with them, he has helped the patient move significantly toward real spiritual growth as a result of his illness and confinement, McDonald concluded. Understanding that lifts a tremendous burden from the visitor's shoulders and enables both visitor and patient to experience caring Christian fellowship and grow in the grace of God.

Mark Kelly is managing editor of the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine.

For further reading

Don't Sit On The Bed, by William G. Justice (Broadman Press, 1973)

The Hospital Handbook, by Lawrence Reimer and James Wagner (Morehouse Barlow Co., 1984)

Pastoral Care and Counseling, by William Hulme (Augsburg Publishing House, 1981)

Missions Advance 87-89

Task Force begins work

Approximately 100 pastors, laypersons, and directors of missions have been trained to speak in churches as part of "Missions Advance 87-89".

This emphasis has the following purpose:

(1) to challenge churches through preaching, speaking and personal contact to adopt a plan of advance in Cooperative Program support by showing: the biblical basis, the effectiveness of the Cooperative Program, and the need of growth; and

(2) to interpret the crisis we are facing in Cooperative Program support.

A list of the task force members was printed in the February issue of *Vision*. You may also secure a list of these persons by writing or calling the associate executive director's office at the Baptist Building.

You can secure a task force speaker by one of two ways. You can contact one of the task force members directly, or you can call the associate executive director, and he will supply you with several names of speakers available on the date you specify. Then you can contact the speaker of your choice.

The goal of "Missions Advance 87-89" is to make a presentation in every church during the next two years. You will want to be part of this project. It has far-reaching implications for our convention goal of moving to a 50/50 division of Cooperative Program gifts between state and Southern Baptist mission causes.

Write or call now for a special "How to Implement 'Missions Advance 87-89'" leaflet. Write to: Jimmie Sheffield, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR, 72203—**Jimmie Sheffield, associate executive director**



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For more information, contact:

Ben Pilgreen, First Baptist Church
501 N. Main, Fordyce, AR 71742
phone: 352-7133

Family Ministry

Senior Adult Celebration features White

Dr. Billy White, pastor of Second Church, Little Rock, will be the inspirational speaker at the annual Senior Adult

Celebration on May 28-30. "Coming of Age" will be the theme of this year's celebration for senior adults and leaders of senior adults. The program will begin with a banquet at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday and continue through Saturday morning.

A leadership conference for leaders of senior adult ministry, including pastors and staff members, will be led by Dave Ward from the First Church



White

of Knoxville, Tenn. Leaders will receive helps for planning and conducting a comprehensive program of senior adult ministry in the church.

The Senior Adult Celebration will focus on worship, fellowship, leadership training and inspiration. A special feature on Friday night will be an outdoor chuck wagon barbecue supper and entertainment.

The cost for the conference is \$20, which includes registration, the banquet and barbecue supper. Rooms are available on campus for \$3.50 per night (double occupancy) or \$5.50 per night (single occupancy). For registration information or additional information, write Robert Holley, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203; phone 376-4791.—**Bob Holley, director**

Brotherhood

34th Royal Ambassador Congress April 24-25

The 34th Arkansas Royal Ambassador Congress will be held on April 24-25 at Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia.

The congress is for Crusaders, Pioneers, church staff, and interested parents, friends, and fans. It is a chance to meet with boys and men from all over the state, swap ideas, make some new friends, learn and do, and have loads of fun.

The cost for the entire congress this year will be \$9 if you choose to eat all three meals there. The breakdown is as follows: dinner on Friday—\$2.50, breakfast on Saturday—\$1.75, and lunch on Saturday—\$2.25. The total cost of all three meals is \$6.50 or you can eat only the meals you want to pay for, as in the past. However, a \$2.50 registration fee will be assessed this year that must be paid by each R.A. boy and counselor.

Cooperative Program

Cooperative Program Day planned for April 12

"Reach the Lost—Give" is the theme for the 1987 Cooperative Program Day scheduled for April 12. This theme directs our attention toward the Bold Mission Thrust Goal—"sharing the gospel with everyone on earth by the year 2000." (If April 12 will not be appropriate in your church, consider scheduling the emphasis for another Sunday.)

Cooperative Program Day presents a good opportunity for inspiration and information. For those who are familiar with the Cooperative Program, this day can offer encouragement and challenge. For those in your church who have little or no understanding of our Baptist cooperative way of supporting mission work, this day

Accommodations for overnight are left up to you. You may simply want to bring a sleeping bag and find a spot on one of the gym floors. Or you may want to bring your camping gear and camp out. There is no charge for any of this. Of course, there are motels in the area for those who don't want to rough it. Another thought is OBU students who might let an RA or two stay overnight. I think everyone can find a place and will have good time.

If you haven't ever been to an R.A. Congress, some of the exciting events you'll find there include: R.A. Racers competition, swim meet, campcraft activities, recreation activities, and track events. This is an exciting time for all involved! For further information contact: Brotherhood Dept., ABCS, 520 W. Capitol, Little Rock, AR 72203.

presents a great time to introduce the Cooperative Program.

Materials available from the Baptist Building to help you in planning and implementing this day include: "Plans for Lay Involvement in Cooperative Program Day" (one per church), "Cooperative Program Day-Leadership Guide" (one per church), Cooperative Program Day posters (order as many as you need), and Cooperative Program Day bulletin inserts (order enough for distribution on Sunday morning).

To obtain these materials, call or write: Jimmie Sheffield, Arkansas Baptist State Convention, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR, 72203; (501)376-4791.—**Jimmie Sheffield, associate executive director**

Church Administration

Conferences highlight spring activities

Pastor-Deacon Conference—Bob Sheffield, deacon ministry consultant in the Church Administration Department at the Sunday School Board, will speak and lead a leadership conference at the Pastor-Deacon Conference on May 1-2. The conference for pastors, deacons and their wives will meet at the Olivet Church in Little Rock. Sessions will begin on Friday night at 7 p.m. and conclude at noon on Saturday.

Conference topics will include "Strengthening Deacon Family Ministry," "Planning Deacon Meetings and Retreats," and "Equipping Deacons to Confront Conflict." There will be a separate conference for the wives of pastors and deacons. Plan now for this fellowship, worship, and training opportunity for pastors, deacons and their wives. For information regarding registration and lodging, write Robert Holley, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203.

Area Summer Youth Ministry Conferences will be held in three locations during the week of April 20. Richard Ross, youth ministry coordinator at the Baptist Sunday School Board, will be leading the conferences for church staff, college students, volunteer and part-time youth leaders, and anyone interested in youth ministry for the summer.

The conferences will be held at Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia, on Monday, April 20; Southern Baptist College, Walnut Ridge, on Tuesday, April 21; and at the Baptist Building, Little Rock, on Wednesday, April 22. The times at each location will be from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. The content will cover a philosophy of youth



Sheffield



Ross

ministry, planning and programming ideas for the summer, and the latest resources for ministering to youth. No prior registration or fees are involved. Plan to join us at one of these three locations for a day of information and inspiration.

The Youth Ministers' Retreat on Thursday and Friday, April 23-24, at Holiday Inn Lake Hamilton in Hot Springs, is for full-time youth ministers serving on a church staff. Of course, volunteer and part-time youth ministers are also welcome. The retreat also will be led by Richard Ross and will include times of sharing together along with the latest from Dr. Ross. The retreat will begin at 1 p.m. on Thursday and end at noon on Friday. Cost of the retreat is \$10 per person. Lodging at the Holiday Inn Lake Hamilton is \$39 per person for a single and \$22.50 for a double.

For more information, contact the Church Training Department, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203; 376-4791.—**Bob Holley, director**

Stewardship/Annuity

Pre-retirement planning seminars May 4-7

Some people spend more time planning their vacation than they do their retirement. Others wait until the last decade of active employment to start building a retirement account.

Pre-retirement planning is essential for a good retirement plan. The Annuity/Stewardship Department has scheduled four pre-retirement planning seminars for those who want to improve income during their retirement years.

The four seminars are set for: May 4, Van Buren, First Church, 7 p.m.; May 5, Nashville, First Church, 7 p.m.; May 6, Little Rock, Baptist Medical Center, 9:30 a.m.; and May 7, Wynne Church, 7 p.m.

Four retired pastors will discuss ministry opportunities during retirement.

Other topics will address income needs and sources of retirement income. Specialists will look at income from annuities, Social Security, and investments.—

James A. Walker, director

Sunday School

Growth Spiral Conference

Yes! Help is on the way! Andy Anderson, Ken Marler, Ron Pratt, Bob Metcalf, Osa Marie Wittenmayer, and Martha Durepo will be here on April 21 at the Park Hill Church in North Little Rock to lead our State Growth Spiral Conference.

This conference will be like no other we have ever had, in that we will have both Advanced and Base Conferences. Ken Marler of the growth section of the Baptist Sunday School Board will lead the general officers conference for the Base conference. Ron Pratt will lead the adult age group conference, with Bob Metcalf leading the youth age group conference, Osa Marie Wittenmayer leading the children's age group conference and Martha Durepo leading the preschool age group conference.

We will begin at 8:30 a.m. with registration, 9 a.m. with welcome and devotional, and conclude at 4:15 p.m. There is a \$10 registration fee per conferee to cover the cost of materials and refreshments.

Lunch will be furnished at the church at a cost of approximately \$3 per person.

See you there! (If you have a question, please give me a call at 376-4791).—**Ed Hinkson, associate**



Hinkson

Family Ministry

Discovering God's will for families

"Discovering God's Purpose for Families" is the theme for the 1987 Christian Home Emphasis in Southern Baptist churches.

Christian Home Emphasis is six weeks devoted to identifying and meeting the needs of families beginning on Mother's Day and extending through Father's Day. Christian Home Week, the week before Mother's Day, sets the stage for the six week emphasis. Detailed suggestions for Christian Home Emphasis are found in the 1986-87 Family Ministry Plan Book distributed as an insert in the May 1986 Baptist Program. The church Family Ministry Enrichment Committee is responsible for planning and



Jackson

organizing the emphasis. The Church Council can serve as a planning group in churches without a Family Enrichment Committee.

Christian Home Emphasis events can include Christian Home Week, a rally in Celebration of the Christian Family, Family in Bible Study Day, a special sermon series, and special activities for Mother's Day, Father's Day, and Children's Day.

The 1986-87 Family Ministry Plan Book provides planning helps and descriptions of resources developed to support the emphasis. In addition to the study material, planning and promotion resources are available. For more information, contact your state Church Training Department, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203. To order copies of promotional material, write the Family Ministry Department, 127 Ninth Avenue North, Nashville, TN 37234.—**Gerald Jackson, associate**

Church Training

MasterLife/MasterBuilder workshops in May

Our annual MasterLife and MasterBuilder Workshops will be conducted the week of May 18-22 on the campus of Ouachita Baptist University. Both workshops will begin on Monday evening and conclude by noon on Friday.

The MasterLife Workshop will equip pastors and other church leaders to lead a MasterLife group in their churches. MasterLife is a group discipling process to equip adults with a strong spiritual foundation and to help develop leaders and potential leaders in a church. It is a 26-week training program that is being used by a growing number of Arkansas churches to develop members spiritually. Val Prince of Fresno, Calif., will be one of the co-leaders of the MasterLife Workshop.



Holley

The cost of the MasterLife Workshop is \$82.50 (\$72.50 for accompanying spouse), plus rooms and meals. Rooms are available on campus for \$3.50 per night (double occupancy) and \$5.50 (single occupancy). The \$82.50 registration fee for each person should be mailed to the Church Training Department.

The MasterBuilder Workshop is a 13-unit course of study designed to enable MasterLife alumni to develop leadership qualities. The workshop is open to MasterLife alumni who want to prepare to lead MasterBuilder groups in their churches. The registration for the MasterBuilder Workshop is \$50 for up to four persons from one church, plus \$17.65 for a set of materials. The leader of the MasterBuilder Workshop will be Dr. Charles Sharp, executive director of the Colorado State Convention. To register for either of these workshops, send name and registration fee to the Church Training Department, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203—Bob Holley, director

Baptist Student Union Glasgow—1988

Scottish Baptist youths recently released a flock of 143 doves in downtown Glasgow near the conference site of the 11th Baptist Youth World Conference.

Each dove represented a country in the Baptist world family. Media organizations from across Scotland focused on the event as heralding one of the major aims of the conference—that of building a better world.

"Jesus Christ Rules" will be the theme of the conference. Up to 10,000 youth from around the world are expected to attend. It will be the largest international conference ever held in Scotland. Usually a conference is held every five years.

The dates of the conference are July 27-31, 1988. Your Arkansas Student Department plans a tour to the conference, as it did to Toronto, Canada, in 1958; Beirut, Lebanon, in 1963; and to Berne, Switzerland in 1968.

For further details, please write the Student Department.—Tom Logue, director

Next month in Arkansas: April

April 2, District Bible Drill and Speakers' Tournament, Mountain View First Church, Jonesboro Central Church, district Bible drill and speakers' competition for children and youth (CT)

April 3, District Bible Drill and Speakers' Tournament, Wynne Church, Little Rock Olivet Church, see April 2 (CT)

April 3-4, Acteens Encounter, Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia, semiannual event for girls grades 7-12, providing missions education, inspiration, challenge, and fellowship (WMU)

April 4, Missions Friends Leaders Training Conference, Little Rock Calvary Church, annual training event for leaders of Mission Friends organizations (WMU)

April 16, Small Sunday School Leadership Updates, Reyno First Church, Crossett Pleasant Lane Church, Alpena First Church, Dermott Bellaire Church, Griffithville First Church, leadership training for Sunday Schools with 150 or less enrolled (SS)

April 17, State Youth Convention, Statehouse Convention Center, Little Rock, emphasis on worship and personal discipleship for junior and senior high youth (CT)

April 20, Area Summer Youth Ministry Conference, Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia, annual training opportunity for persons who will be serving as summer youth ministers (CT)

April 20-22, National Conference for Ministers of Education, Nashville,

Tenn., held once every five years for educational staff persons and their spouses (CT)

April 21, Area Summer Youth Ministry Conference, Southern Baptist College, Walnut Ridge, see April 20 (CT)

April 22, Area Summer Youth Ministry Conference, Baptist Building, Little Rock, see April 20 (CT)

April 21, Advanced Growth Spiral Workshop, North Little Rock Park Hill Church, advanced training for church staff and Sunday School leaders to help them set and achieve growth goals (SS)

April 27-29, Senior Adult Convention, Fort Worth, Texas, first-time national convention offering worship, fellowship, and inspirational opportunities to senior adults and their leaders (CT)

May

May 1-2, State Acteens Encounter, Southern Baptist College, Walnut Ridge (WMU)

May 1-2, Pastor-Deacon Conference (CT)

May 4, Pre-Retirement Planning Conference, Van Buren First Church (S/A)

May 5, Pre-Retirement Planning Conference, Nashville First Church (S/A)

May 6, Pre-Retirement Planning Conference, Little Rock Baptist Medical Center (S/A)

May 7, Pre-Retirement Planning Conference, Wynne Church (S/A)

May 8-9, GA Mother-Daughter Camp, Camp Paron (WMU)

May 11-13, Mid-South Conference on Preaching, Memphis, Tenn. (CT)

May 16, Baptist Young Women Retreat, North Little Rock Mill Valley Camp (WMU)

May 18-22, MasterLife/MasterBuilder Workshops, Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia (CT)

May 28-30, Senior Adult Celebration, Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia (CT)

Abbreviations: Bhd - Brotherhood; CLC - Christian Life Council; CT - Church Training; Ev - Evangelism; M - Music; SS - Sunday School; S/A - Stewardship/Annuity; WMU - Woman's Missionary Union

Tentative 1988 Arkansas Baptist State Convention Diary

January

- 3 Christian Wills Emphasis
- 4-8 At Home Week, Baptist Building, Little Rock
- 4-8 January Bible Study Week
- 7-8 Staff Retreat, DeGray Lodge
- 8-14 Recreation Lab, Lake Hale, Fla.
- 10 Witness Commitment Day
- 11 Area Growth Spiral Workshop, Beech Street Church, Texarkana
- 11 Area Growth Spiral Workshop, First Church, Forrest City
- 11 Spring Registration, Southern Baptist College, Walnut Ridge
- 12 Area Growth Spiral Workshop, First Church, Camden
- 12 Spring Registration, Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia
- 12 Area Growth Spiral Workshop, First Church, Dumas
- 14 Macedonian Missions Meetings, Texarkana
- 14 NB-State Joint Committee, Baptist Building, Little Rock
- 18 Area Media Library Conference, Fayetteville
- 19 Area Media Library Conference, Mountain Home
- 21 Area Media Library Conference, Little Rock
- 22 Baptist Building Banquet, Little Rock
- 25 Baptist Doctrine Study Preview, Geyer Springs First, Little Rock
- 25-26 State Evangelism Conference, Geyer Springs First, Little Rock
- 27 Tax Seminar, Geyer Springs First, Little Rock
- 27-29 BSU Directors' Workshop, St. John's Center, Little Rock
- 31 Baptist Men's Day

February

- 1 State VBS Clinic, Central Church, North Little Rock
- 11-12 Prayer for Spiritual Awakening, Camp Paron
- 12-13 State Missions Rally, Little Rock
- 14 Race Relations Day
- 14-20 Focus on WMU
- 15 Area Leader Training Conference, Little Rock (CT)
- 16 Area Leader Training Conference, Fort Smith
- 18 Area Leader Training Conference, El Dorado
- 18-19 ASSIST Team Training, First Church, North Little Rock
- 19-20 Homecoming, Southern Baptist College, Walnut Ridge
- 21-24 Home Mission Study
- 24-26 DOM Retreat, DeGray Lodge
- 25 Small SS Leadership Updates, First Church, Desha
- 25 Small SS Leadership Updates, Friendship Church, Clinton
- 25 Small SS Leadership Updates, Lake Ouachita, Mt. Ida
- 25 Recognition Banquet for DOMs, Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia
- 25 Small SS Leadership Updates, Claude Road Church, Pine Bluff
- 25 Small SS Leadership Updates, Cadron Ridge Church, Conway
- 26-27 State Single Adult Conference
- 26-27 Volunteer/Part-Time Workshop, Camp Paron
- 28-4 Sunday School High Attendance Campaign

- 29 World Hunger Conference, Fayetteville
- 29-4 Christian Focus Week

March

- 1 Macedonia Missions Meeting, Little Rock
- 3 Macedonia Missions Meeting, Fort Smith
- 4-5 Mini-Rec Lab, Camp Paron
- 5 Youth Festival, Second Church, Little Rock
- 7 Christian Civic Foundation meeting
- 7-10 CWT National Seminar, First Church, Ozark
- 7-13 Spring Break, Southern Baptist College, Walnut Ridge
- 11-21 Spring Break, Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia
- 12 Volunteer/Part-Time Workshop, First Church, Hughes (M)
- 14 Homebound/Cradle Roll Workshop, First Church, Batesville (SS)
- 14 Homebound/Cradle Roll Workshop, First Church, Rogers
- 14 Music in Evangelism Workshop, Calvary Church, Hope (M)
- 14-15 State Ingathering Conference, Holiday Inn, Little Rock (CT)
- 15 Homebound/Cradle Roll Workshop, First Church, Harrison
- 15 Homebound/Cradle Roll Workshop, First Church, Mountain Home
- 17 Homebound/Cradle Roll Workshop, Markham Street Church, Little Rock
- 17 Homebound/Cradle Roll Workshop, Park Place Church, Hot Springs
- 18-19 State WMU Annual Meeting, Immanuel Church, Little Rock
- 19 Drug Education Seminar, Fort Smith (CLC)
- 21 District Bible Drills, First Church, Hope
- 21 District Bible Drills, First Church, Huntsville
- 21-22 Statewide Pastor's Retreat
- 21-24 Witnessing/Giving Seminar, Ridgecrest Assembly, NC
- 22 District Bible Drills, First Church, Paris
- 22 District Bible Drills, First Church, Warren
- 24 District Bible Drills, First Church, Mountain View
- 24 District Bible Drills, Central Church, Jonesboro
- 25 District Bible Drills, Olivet Church, Little Rock
- 25 District Bible Drills, Wynne Church
- 25-27 Leadership Training Conference, Camp Paron
- 26 Young Musicians Festival, First Church, Fordyce
- 26 Young Musicians Festival, First Church, Forrest City
- 26 Young Musicians Festival, First Church, Russellville
- 26 "Start-a-Church" Sunday
- 26 Young Musicians Festival, First Church, Harrison
- 26 Mini-Resort Conference, Eureka Springs
- 26 Young Musicians Festival, Trinity Church, Texarkana
- 6-13 Week of Prayer for Home Missions

April

- 1 State Youth Convention, Statehouse Convention Center, Little Rock
- 7-8 Minister-Mate Marriage Retreat, Horseshoe Bend Church
- 7-9 Tiger Tunes Weekend, Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia

Helpline

- 8-9 Acteens Encounter, Southern Baptist College, Walnut Ridge
- 9 Mission Friends Super Saturday, Calvary Church, Little Rock
- 11-12 New Pastor/Staff Orientation, Baptist Building, Little Rock
- 11-12 Interfaith Witness Conference, Fayetteville
- 11-14 Witnessing/Giving Seminar, Glorieta Assembly, NM
- 14 Small SS Leadership Updates, Nall's Memorial, Little Rock
- 14 Small SS Leadership Updates, Corner's Chapel, Pathway
- 14 Small SS Leadership Update, Hatfield Church
- 14 Small SS Leadership Updates, Swifton Church
- 14 Small SS Leadership Updates, Sang Avenue Church, Fayetteville
- 14-15 Interfaith Witness Conference, Texarkana
- 14-16 NE Arkansas Bible Conference, Mt. Zion Camp, Jonesboro
- 15-16 Children's Reach/Teach Workshop, Camp Paron
- 15-16 Acteens Encounter, Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia
- 18-22 National Youth Ministry Conference, BSSB, Nashville, Tenn.
- 19 Advanced Growth Spiral Workshop, Central Church, North Little Rock
- 21 Small SS Leadership Updates, Oak Grove Church, Paragould
- 21 Small SS Leadership Updates, First Church, Barling
- 21 Small SS Leadership Updates, Second Church, Camden
- 21 Small SS Leadership Updates, Wynne Church
- 21 Small SS Leadership Updates, Highfill Church
- 23 Handbell Festival, Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia
- 26 Key Leader Meeting, Park Hill Church, North Little Rock
- 28 Area Summer Youth Ministry Conference, Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia
- 28 Church Building Conference, Markham Street Church, Little Rock
- 29 Minister of Education Retreat, Holiday Inn, Hot Springs
- 29 Area Summer Youth Ministry Conference, Southern Baptist College, Walnut Ridge
- 29-30 State RA Congress, Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia
- 30 Area Summer Youth Ministry Conference, BSU Center, UALR, Little Rock
- May**
- 2 Area Summer Youth Ministry Conference, BSU Center, UAM, Monticello
- 3 Area Summer Youth Ministry Conference, BSU Center, U of A, Fayetteville
- 2-3 Chaplaincy Awareness Conference, Camp Paron
- 6-7 Pastor/Deacon Conference, Calvary Church, Little Rock
- 7 State Tournament/Ensemble, Life Line Church, Little Rock (M)
- 7 Commencement, Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia
- 7 Backyard Bible Club/Mission VBS Clinic, Levy Church, North Little Rock
- 9 Weekly Worker Meeting Workshop, East Side Church, Fort Smith
- 9 Weekly Worker Meeting Workshop, First Church, West Memphis
- 9 Weekly Worker Meeting Workshop, Parkway Place Church, Little Rock
- 9 Golden Age Evangelism Conference, Barcelona Road Church, Hot Springs Village
- 10 Weekly Worker Meeting Workshop, Central Church, Jonesboro
- 10 Weekly Worker Meeting Workshop, Second Church, El Dorado
- 10 Golden Age Evangelism Conference, First Church, Hardy
- 10 Weekly Worker Meeting Workshop, First Church, Springdale
- 13 Spring Commencement, Southern Baptist College, Walnut Ridge
- 14 Drug Education Seminar, Blytheville
- 14 Wild River Country, North Little Rock
- 15 ABN Day of Prayer for 1988
- 16-20 State MasterLife/MasterBuilder workshop, Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia
- 16-17 Church Planting Conference, Camp Paron
- 19-22 Spring Campers On Mission Rally
- 20 Baptist Building Picnic
- 20-21 GA Mother-Daughter Camp, Camp Paron
- 23-25 Senior Adult Celebration, Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia
- 23-27 Church Building Tours
- 30 World Hunger Conference, Monticello
- 31-5 Student Summer Mission Orientation, Mills Valley Retreat Center
- June**
- 2-3 Student Summer Mission Supervisors Training
- 3-4 GA Mother-Daughter Camp, Siloam Springs Camp
- 4-5 RA Camp Staff Training, Camp Paron
- 6-10 RA Camp-1st Week, Camp Paron
- 10-11 Man and Boy Mini Camp, Camp Paron
- 13-17 Arkansas Baptist Assembly Week 1, Siloam Springs Camp
- 13-17 RA Camp-2nd Week, Camp Paron
- 14-16 Southern Baptist Convention, San Antonio
- 17-18 GA Mother-Daughter Camp, Camp Paron
- 20-24 Arkansas Baptist Assembly Week 2, Siloam Springs Camp
- 20-25 Super Summer, Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia
- 27-7 Arkansas Baptist Assembly Week 3, Siloam Springs Camp
- 27-30 Young Musicians Camp, Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia
- 28 Prayer for Spiritual Awakening, Baptist Building, Little Rock
- 30-7 Christian Citizenship Conference, Little Rock
- July**
- 2-8 WMU Conference, Ridgcrest Assembly, NC
- 4-8 Arkansas Baptist Assembly Week 4, Siloam Springs Camp
- 4-15 High School Baptist Young Men Mission Project, Indianapolis, IN

Helpline

- 7 NB-State Joint Committee, Baptist Building, Little Rock
- 11-15 Arkansas Baptist Assembly Week 5, Siloam Springs Camp
- 18-19 Mid-Summer Student Summer Missionaries Retreat, Camp Paron
- 18-22 National Baptist Boys Camp, Camp Paron
- 18-22 Arkansas Baptist Assembly Week 6, Siloam Springs Camp
- 23-29 WMU Conference, Glorieta Assembly, NM
- 25-29 Music Arkansas, Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia
- 25-29 National Baptist Girls Camp, Camp Paron
- 25-29 Arkansas Baptist Assembly Week 7, Siloam Springs Camp
- 28-29 Weekday Early Education Workshop, Park Hill Church, North Little Rock

August

- 1-5 National Baptist Young Ladies, Camp Paron
- 5-6 Pastor-Director Retreat, Paron, Jonesboro, and El Dorado
- 7 On-To-College Day
- 11 Small SS Leadership Updates, Cedar Grove Church, Arkadelphia
- 11 Small SS Leadership Updates, South Side Church, Heber Springs
- 11 Small SS Leadership Updates, Mt. Vernon Church, Benton
- 11 Small SS Leadership Updates, Wilmar Church
- 11 Small SS Leadership Updates, First Church, Flippen
- 12-13 State DiscipleYouth Workshop, Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia
- 12-13 Children's Choir Leader Clinic, Immanuel Church, Little Rock
- 15 Area Growth Spiral Workshop, Eastside Church, Paragould
- 15 Area Growth Spiral Workshop, Second Church, Conway
- 16 Area Growth Spiral Workshop, First Church, Alma
- 16 Area Growth Spiral Workshop, Eagle Heights Church, Harrison
- 19-20 Assn. WMU Officers Retreat, Camp Paron
- 19-20 Volunteer/Part-Time Workshop, Southern Baptist College, Walnut Ridge (M)
- 19-20 Small SS Workshop, Siloam Springs Camp
- 20 Drug Education Seminar, Texarkana (CLC)
- 21-28 Church Music Growth Week
- 23-24 Fall Registration, Southern Baptist College, Walnut Ridge
- 25-26 Special Workers Institute, Immanuel Church, Little Rock
- 26-27 Assn. C.T. Leadership Conf., Park Hill Church, North Little Rock
- 29 Area Brotherhood Conference, Central Church, Magnolia
- 29 IMPACT 88, Central Church, Magnolia (WMU)
- 29-31 State Conference on Aging, Little Rock
- 30 Handbell Workshop, First Church, Jacksonville
- 30 Fall Registration, Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia
- 30-31 IMPACT 88, First Church, Fordyce
- 30-31 Area Brotherhood Conference, First Church, Fordyce

September

- 1 Baptist Foundation Month
- 1 Area Brotherhood Conference, Second Church, Hot Springs
- 1 IMPACT 88, Second Church, Hot Springs
- 2-5 Single Adult Labor Day Weekend, Glorieta Assembly, NM
- 9 Missionary Orientation, Baptist Building, Little Rock
- 9-11 Fall Campers On Mission Rally
- 10 Baptist Youth Day, Magic Springs, Hot Springs
- 11 Foundation Sunday
- 12 Music in Evangelism Workshop, Calvary Church, Batesville
- 12 IMPACT 88, First Church, Forrest City
- 12 Area Brotherhood Conference, First Church, Forrest City
- 13 Assn. S.S. Leadership Night
- 13-14 IMPACT 88, First Church, Paragould
- 13-14 Area Brotherhood Conference, First Church, Paragould
- 15 IMPACT 88, Markham Street Church, Little Rock
- 15 Area Brotherhood Conference, Markham Street Church, Little Rock
- 16-17 Church Growth Pastor's Retreat, Petit Jean State Park
- 18-25 Season of Prayer for State Missions
- 19 World Hunger Conference, Blytheville
- 19 Bivocational/Small Church Evangelism Conference, Southern Baptist College, Walnut Ridge
- 19-23 AR Senior Adult Chautauqua, Glorieta Assembly, NM
- 20 Bivocational/Small Church Evangelism Conference, Northvale Church, Harrison
- 22 Bivocational/Small Church Evangelism Conference, Grand Avenue Church, Hot Springs
- 22 Worship Seminar, First Church, Little Rock
- 23 Large Church Workshop, First Church, Little Rock
- 23-24 State Sunday School Conference, Geyer Springs First, Little Rock
- 25-10 Sunday School Preparation Week
- 26 IMPACT 88, East Side Church, Fort Smith
- 26 Area Brotherhood Conference, East Side Church, Fort Smith
- 27-28 Area Brotherhood Conference, First Church, Rogers
- 27-28 IMPACT 88, First Church, Rogers
- 29 IMPACT 88, First Church, Mountain Home
- 29 Area Brotherhood Conference, First Church, Mountain Home
- 30-10 NE Arkansas Small SS Workshop, Cedar Glades Church, Imboden

October

- Tri-State Camporee, Memphis, TN
- 1 Volunteer/Part-Time Workshop, First Church, Smackover
- 3-6 CWT National Seminar, Geyer Springs First, Little Rock
- 6 Senior Adult Festival, First Church, Hot Springs
- 7-8 Recreators Retreat, DeGray Lodge (CT)
- 7-8 Bivocational Pastors Conf., Olivet Church, Little Rock
- 7-9 BSU Convention, Little Rock
- 8 VENTURE! Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia
- 8-29 Parent and Pastors Day, Southern Baptist College, Walnut Ridge

- 9 World Hunger Day
- 10-14 State Building Tours
- 10-14 AR Senior Adult Chautauqua, Ridgecrest Assembly, NC
- 15 Volunteer/Part-Time Workshop, First Church, Ozark
- 15 GA Missions Spectacular, Park Hill Church, North Little Rock
- 16 Baptist Health Day
- 20-21 Music Men/Sing Women Retreat, Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia
- 20-21 Baptist Women Retreat, Camp Paron
- 21-22 Baptist Women Retreats, Camp Paron
- 24-25 State Conference/Discipleship, Immanuel Church, Little Rock
- 25 Assn. VBS Dir. Planning Mtg., Baptist Building, Little Rock

- 7 World Hunger Conference, Pine Bluff
- 8-11 Regular Missionary Baptist State Convention
- 11-13 International Retreat, Camp Paron
- 12 Hunger Hike, Little Rock
- 12 Homecoming, Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia
- 14-18 General Missionary Baptist State Convention
- 15 State January Bible Clinic, Baptist Building, Little Rock
- 19 Interfaith Hunger Ingathering, Little Rock
- 20-23 Foreign Mission Study
- 22 Lay Evangelism Schools, Baptist Building, Little Rock
- 22-24 Consolidated Missionary Baptist State Convention
- 28 "M" Night
- 29 Child Care Day

November

- 1-2 Arkansas Baptist State Conv., Park Hill Church, North Little Rock
- 5 State RA Fellowship Luncheon, Little Rock
- 5 Drug Education Seminar, West Memphis
- 6-11 National RA Week
- 7 Language Pastors Training, Baptist Building, Little Rock

December

- 1-2 Career Assessment Conference, Little Rock (CT)
- 4-11 Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions
- 8-9 Evangelism Workshop, Camp Paron
- 25 Student Day At Christmas
- 29-30 Joy Explo-88
- 29-30 All-State Band, Youth Evangelism Conference

Sunday School Advanced Growth Spiral Conference

Park Hill Baptist Church, NLR

April 21, 1987

9:00 a.m. - 4:15 p.m.

Learn how to increase your:

- Sunday School enrollment
- Baptisms
- Offerings
- Worship attendance

(A Base Conference, led by Ken Marler, also offered)



*Andy Anderson
BSSB*

- Enrolling prospects
- How to find prospects
- When and how to start new units
- Organizing units
- Space and equipment needs
- Worker training
- Worker enlistment
- Workers' meetings

Registration fee: \$10 per person, lunch at church approximately \$3.00 per person

1960s campus 'stew' gave Baker first taste of ethics

by Marv Knox
Baptist Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Black power. Vietnam. New Morality. The Battle of the Sexes.

Graffiti and protest posters listed the menu of ethical stew served to students nationwide when Larry Baker led the Baptist Student Union at Texas Woman's University in the 1960s. But while the hippies and students who kept the fires hot have gone on to Yuppie quiche, that ethical stew has fed Baker for life.

Baker, the new executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, recalls his first taste of Christian ethics:

"It was the early 1960s, and lots of ethical issues were boiling. The race issue was intense. It was an issue for the churches, an issue for individuals, an issue on the campus, an issue in BSU programming. That was also the time when issues related to the Vietnam war were really boiling. It was the time of the so-called 'New Morality' and the so-called 'Sexual Revolution.'

"In that setting—on the university campus dealing with students—ethical issues came often and intensively. It was out of that situation that I determined I ought to give my primary attention to them. So I made the decision to go back and do advanced study in ethics."

Baker, who joins the Christian Life Commission March 15, returned to Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary to complete a doctor of theology degree in Christian ethics.

His doctoral studies at Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas — under noted Southern Baptist ethicist T.B. Maston — continued a spiritual journey that began in Caddo Heights Baptist Church in Shreveport, La., when Baker trusted in Christ as an elementary schoolboy. He committed his life to ministry in that congregation, and he entered the pastorate while still a student at East Texas Baptist University.

Pastorates affirmed his commitment to ethical issues, particularly race relations, Baker notes: "When I was in the pastorate, both in Hamilton, Texas, and Monroe, La., there were some very traumatic events, related in one instance to a group of young people and in the other to a congregation. These undergirded for me the importance of my commitment to the field of ethics and my involvement in it."

Later, "the doors of opportunity opened for me," he recalls. He has taught Christian ethics at Southwestern Seminary and at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo., where he eventually became academic vice president and dean of the faculty.

Along the way, both while he trained seminary students and ministered in churches, he stayed involved in grassroots application of Christian moral concern. He

served on Baptist associational Christian life committees, the board of Texas Alcohol and Narcotics Education Inc., the Southern Baptist Resolutions Committee, the Association of Marriage and Family Therapists, the Missouri Baptist Christian Life Commission, the Center for Urban Church Studies, the Urban Training Cooperative and a variety of civic improvement organizations.

Baker's inclination toward hands-on involvement in Christian ethical issues grows out of his experience. But it is buttressed by his Southern Baptist background, he says. His family had been Southern Baptist for at least three generations before he was born. A fifth generation of the family, his son-in-law, is preparing for ministry at Southwestern Seminary.

The new Christian Life Commission leader credits Southern Baptists for shaping him. He notes an SBC congregation was "the only church I knew" during the formative years when he learned what it meant to be a Baptist and committed himself to minister among Southern Baptists.

With that background, Baker notes he brings to the commission a commitment to help Baptists deal with social and moral issues that confront them every day of their lives: "A primary goal will be to help Southern Baptists take hold of the challenge for Christian ethical living and moral standards in our society — to recapture a sense of excitement about implementing the gospel in our society. I think we have lost some of that. The complexity of the issues that we face often discourages us from being excited about the possibility of doing something."

The commission can help generate that excitement again by "finding ways to provide handles and approaches for individuals and churches," he explains. "Most of our churches, about 65 percent of them, have less than 300 members. The feeling that many of those pastors and churches and church members have is, 'We can't really do much because we're not very large.' So we must think in terms of helping them implement the moral visions where they are and provide them with resources, programs and encouragement. That is the challenge and the opportunity."

Baker lists six major social/moral issues confronting most Baptists:

— Family "continues to be the primary issue and area of need."

— Racism, or "human rights or concerns for persons without regard to race, is a basic issue. . . . What we've seen recently in New York and in South Carolina and in Georgia are but dramatic evidences of a problem that is widespread."

— Hunger is a problem "where we've done a good bit, a significant amount really, but there is still a great deal more to be done and a good deal more that can be

done."

— Responsible citizenship is an issue often misunderstood. "We still tend to think that voting either in the primary or general election is the primary way we express our citizenship. That's a significant way, but there are other ways that need to be implemented."

— Personal morality, or individual ethics, "is an important dimension that we need to look at and deal with. . . . There is a lot of pressure on Christians to adopt the lifestyle that is prevalent in our society and a lot of pressure that would say, 'It really doesn't matter whether you have a high personal moral standard or not.' One of the things we can do is address that issue and encourage people."

— Abortion is "the issue that is the most immediate and in that sense the most pressing. In terms of sequencing the flow chart, the commission simply will have to take assertive action with reference to the abortion issue. The distance between the polarities on the abortion issue is so great that we never will be able to have universal agreement, but it is possible to develop an approach that will have broad agreement and represent adequately Southern Baptists and their concerns."

During the January commission meeting when he was elected by a 16-13 vote, Baker acknowledged he is assuming the helm of a divided agency. Commissioners are divided over whether the CLC should take more conservative positions on ethical issues, a situation that roughly parallels the theological-political controversy within the entire convention.

In the face of that challenge, Baker pledged to the commissioners to be a "team player."

"My judgment is that you may be more united than divided," he told them. "As executive director, I would attempt to lead this body. I have never claimed to have all the wisdom on all the issues. Disagreement on some issues does not preclude us from being sensitive and open."

Relief Houseparents Needed

Relief houseparents needed at emergency receiving home for children in Camden. Looking for mature Christian couple, preferably with no children living at home. Work four days, off ten. Salary, benefits, supervision provided. For details, call 777-1896 or write Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care Services, P.O. Box 912, Hope, AR 71801.

Firing threats circulate as Baker takes CLC helm

by Marv Knox
Baptist Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Larry Baker may have only a six-month tenure as head of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, according to commissioners on the short end of a 16-13 vote to hire him earlier this year.

That vote was taken during a special called meeting of the commission Jan. 15. That meeting was marked by criticism of the process by which Baker was nominated and his ethical views, particularly on abortion.

In fact, several commissioners have told reporters Baker might be unseated at the next full commission meeting in September. At least five seats on the 31-member commission will change hands in June, when messengers to the SBC annual meeting elect trustees for all SBC agencies.

Baker joined the commission March 15. He has been academic vice president and dean of the faculty of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

He was nominated for the CLC post by a seven-member search committee appointed by and including then-chairman Charles Wade, a pastor from Arlington, Texas. Commissioners who wish to see the CLC take a more conservative position charge the search committee was stacked to favor a more moderate candidate.

"It's a very unfortunate situation that has occurred," said Hal Lane, pastor from Eutawville, S.C. "I felt we had not been included in the search process. It seemed obvious they (supporters of a moderate candidate) had an agenda they wanted to continue, no matter what."

"I assume that my colleagues on the board who supported Dr. Baker's coming are reasonably intelligent and therefore that their ruthless exercise in hardball politics was deliberately provocative," added James Paul Wood, pastor from Atlanta. "The trustees were promised several things by the search committee, including advanced information regarding any candidate's positions. We also were told there would be a good-faith effort to bring someone who would be acceptable to most of the board. These promises were not kept."

Wade defended the nomination process: "It was comprised of the executive committee, which was elected by the board. Then I added to that committee a layman from the East Coast, a laywoman from the West and a pastor from the Midwest. Not a person on the list is a liberal. Every one is biblical, conservative and had good experience of service on the commission."

"Nine new members have come on the commission since the search committee was appointed," he added. "Up until this year, when we would have votes on issues, we didn't have divisiveness. I wasn't trying to appoint from one group; we all felt we were one group."

Wade said he could understand the frustration of commissioners who said they felt left out of the selection process, but he said they "weren't even on the board" when the search committee was appointed. He also contended commissioners were sent notice of Baker's nomination in advance of the called meeting to elect him.

Beyond his nomination, commissioners opposed to Baker's election cite problems with his position on abortion. He has described four situations in which he believes abortion "may be allowed as an exception." They are threat to the life of the mother, rape, incest and "perhaps in the case where catastrophic deformity to the fetus is involved."

While commending Baker for ranking abortion as one of the "certain moral issues (that) have priority over others in terms of their urgency," Wood said Baker holds "essentially a pro-choice position, and therefore, I could not endorse him as head of the Christian Life Commission and will not be able to support his continuing."

Lane noted Baker must be the "point man" for presenting ethical issues for the commission. "His view always would be linked synonymously with the CLC position," the trustee added. "If he's going to be the point man on this, no matter what the (CLC) literature says, his position will be seen as the position of the commission."

Wade said Baker has taken "a strong stand against abortion." He described Baker as "someone out of the heart of Southern Baptist life. This is not an extremist, not someone who has taken radical positions on ethical issues that would offend significant areas of our convention. We found someone in the mainstream by training, church experience and service through the seminaries."

But Baker's position on abortion is built upon unacceptable "situation ethics," said Rudolph Yakym, a commissioner and layman from South Bend, Ind. Baker insists "abortion is never justified, but excused," Yakym quoted, adding: "If you apply this to all areas of ethics, it's situation ethics, which he (Baker) denies, but his words belie his position. Any way you read that, it's situation ethics."

Given the circumstances, Baker's administration may be in danger when commissioners meet in September.

"From my own personal point of view, I still find Dr. Baker unacceptable," Lane said. "My own personal feeling is that he probably will be replaced at the September meeting."

Baker "has accepted what is clearly a setup for a position as a high paid martyr," Wood added. "He knew that he was not acceptable to nearly half the board, and clearly this did not deter him. Having heard him express his views on a number of issues, I lack confidence in his leadership. That will be hard to change. I have no plans to move for

his dismissal in September, but I anticipate being one of those who would support such a move."

However, not all of the trustees who voted against Baker's election will vote to ouster him, Wade predicted: "Some of those who voted against him will vote to sustain him if he gives strong leadership to the commission. There are fair-minded members of the commission who will give him a chance to give leadership. I don't believe they will fire him in September."

"Given the current status of affairs, anything is possible," Yakym noted. "I know of no plans to terminate him. One thing that is really important for all . . . to be aware of is that conservative or moderate or liberal, left or right, we're all concerned about the will of God being performed by the Christian Life Commission and in our own lives. That's our paramount concern."

Speculation about Baker's tenure has moved beyond the CLC commissioners. Paul Pressler, the Houston appeals court judge who has been active in the movement to direct the Southern Baptist Convention toward a more conservative position, was quoted by the Atlanta *Constitution* as saying, "Baker will be fired in September."

Pressler told Baptist Press the article did not include all his statement, but he offered a clarification: "The process by which Baker was hired was extremely faulted. Conservatives were excluded from the selection process, not allowed to ask questions of Baker before the meeting of the board and given very little time during the meeting."

"Such actions by the liberal militant temporary majority do not promote harmony and are disruptive to cooperation within the convention. I would be very surprised if the trustees of the Christian Life Commission did not correct this injustice which has been done to Southern Baptists."

With controversy as a backdrop, Baker said he plans to spend the early months of his administration building relationships. A priority item will be visiting commissioners in their own homes and churches. Another will be setting a broad agenda representative of the entire convention.

"I am committed to being the commission's leader for all Southern Baptists," he stressed. "I believe our common faith in Christ can bind us together, and I believe the tie that binds us together rises above all of our differences and everything that would divide us. My commitment is to do my best to make it possible for all of us to work together in this strategic cause."

"People have asked me about the matter of division, and I have said to them, 'Well, I believe the Christ who brought Simon the zealot and Matthew the publican into the same disciple band can unite us in his service.' I'm committed to working toward that and for that."

'Frank exchange' marks meeting of FMB, Genesis Commission

by Bob Stanley
Foreign Mission Board

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—Leaders of the Genesis Commission and the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board met March 10 in Richmond, Va., for what was described as a "frank exchange" of concerns and ideas.

In a joint statement issued March 13, both the commission and the board indicated each will proceed as previously planned with its work in Mexico, where the commission will begin its evangelistic thrust.

Two Southern Baptist pastors and a layman organized the Genesis Commission late last year with a dual mission of soul-winning and starting churches. They announced they will begin work in Mexico but also might spread to other countries.

The group has drawn criticism from some Southern Baptists—including Foreign Mission Board President R. Keith Parks—who believe the commission will compete with the board and perhaps cause confusion among Baptists in Mexico and other countries where the denomination already has evangelistic work under way through the mission board.

At Parks' invitation, two leaders of the new commission came to Richmond for lunch and a two-hour meeting with Parks and three other representatives of the board.

The joint statement concluded: "There was a frank exchange of both concerns and ideas which should be mutually beneficial. The commission plans to move ahead immediately in enlisting national workers to help start churches in Mexico. The Foreign

Mission Board will continue in a one-work approach with the National Baptist Convention of Mexico."

The statement said the board representatives "shared information about the board's central emphasis on evangelism that results in churches and told how missionaries work cooperatively with national Baptist leadership as soon as such leadership develops."

Genesis Commission leaders Bill Darnell and John Morgan, in turn, outlined the commission's "dual purpose of soul-winning and church planting and told how it expects to use national Baptist workers in Mexico and other countries where the commission might later work." They told Parks "the commission is in no way an arm of any political group in the convention."

Darnell, former pastor of the Kirby Woods Church in Memphis, Tenn., is executive director of the commission, which is based in Houston. Morgan is pastor of Sagemont Church in Houston. The organization's other major leader is businessman Randy Best, a member of Second Church in Houston. Best was unable to attend the Richmond meeting.

In addition to Parks, board representatives were William R. O'Brien, executive vice

president; Harlan Spurgeon, vice president for mission management and personnel; and board trustee Mark Cortis of Winston-Salem, N.C. Cortis, in Richmond to lead the board's spiritual emphasis week, is chairman of the newly created Americas Committee of the trustees. The committee relates to work in Mexico and other countries where the board has missionaries in North and South America.

In a statement earlier this year, Darnell said the need for new churches in Mexico is apparent. "Mexico's present economic and political climate make them (the people) vulnerable to many dangerous influences," he said. "Therefore, the Genesis Commission is making rapid strides toward launching a major effort to spread the gospel and plant new churches in Mexico."

Southern Baptists, through the Foreign Mission Board, have had representatives in Mexico since 1880, although most of the growth in work there has occurred since World War II. At the end of 1986 the National Baptist Convention of Mexico, to which the board's work relates, reported 568 churches and 797 missions and preaching points with 55,259 members. Baptisms last year totaled 6,989.

Mother accepts Christ


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AB
Annuity Board, Southern Baptist Convention

Home Mission Board declines to rescind women's policy

by Jim Newton
Home Mission Board

ATLANTA (BP)—In a 44-24 roll-call vote, directors of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board defeated a motion to repeal a policy directors adopted in October that prohibits future financial support of ordained women serving as local church pastors.

There was no debate or discussion on the motion, offered by outgoing first vice chairman Marvin Prude, a retired refining company president from Birmingham, Ala.

In other actions, the directors tabled a policy which would have prohibited appointment of missionaries who "speak in tongues" and voiced concern about the effect on missions giving of fund-raising efforts by Southern Baptist Convention agencies.

The motion asking for the board to rescind its policy on ordination of women came during miscellaneous business.

Prude asked the directors to "repeal the action taken at the October 1986, meeting and return to its former policy of funding all Home Mission Board positions based on qualifications of the applicant without regard to gender or ordination." Prude added the motion "is directed toward Church Pastoral Aid support for ordained women."

It was the first roll-call vote, in which board members' votes were part of the record, in recent history of the board. No vote count was taken and recorded in the minutes in

October on the new policy.

The new policy reaffirms a long-standing policy that ordination is not required for appointment as a missionary by the board. The policy permits ordained women to serve as missionaries, chaplains, church staff members or in any role other than pastor of a church.

In another action during their March meeting, Home Mission Board directors tabled a proposed new policy which would have prohibited the appointment of any missionary who "speaks in tongues" either in private or public prayer.

The policy was proposed by a personnel subcommittee appointed in August of 1986 to study the board's guidelines on appointment of people who are divorced, or who participate in "glossalalia" or "speaking in tongues." The study committee did not present any recommendations regarding appointment of divorced people.

Objections to the new policy prohibiting glossalalia were voiced by Orris Bullock, pastor of Fort Foote Church in Fort Washington, Md. Bullock said he felt the policy was too broad, and might "step on someone's private rights."

The recommendation would have prohibited appointment of "any person who is actively participating in, promoting or condoning the modern charismatic movement, including its 'private prayer language.'" It

also said "continued participation in the modern charismatic movement" by missions personnel already serving could "result in termination."

After discussion, directors adopted a motion expressing reservations about fund-raising efforts among churches and individuals by other SBC agencies. The board warned of damage such fund raising does to the SBC Cooperative Program unified budget and to authorized mission offerings.

Rudy Hernandez, an evangelist from San Antonio, Texas, and co-host on several television programs on the ACTS TV network sponsored by the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission, opposed the motion. Hernandez said he felt it would be interpreted by some as being critical of fund-raising efforts by the Radio and Television Commission, which have been authorized and approved by the SBC Executive Committee.

Several other board members, most of them pastors of local churches, supported the motion, saying it voices concern about other fund-raising efforts by seminaries, colleges, children's homes and others who are trying to compete for special gifts.

Directors also authorized a request to be submitted to the Securities and Exchange Commission which would enable the board to issue \$10 million in church bonds for sale starting sometime in May 1987.

Search for HMB president 'right on schedule,'

ATLANTA (BP)—The chairman of a committee to nominate a new president for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board reported the committee's search is "right on schedule," but the committee has "not yet reached a consensus" on a candidate.

Troy L. Morrison, chairman of the eight-member committee and director of church-minister relations for the Alabama Baptist Convention, reported to directors of the Home Mission Board during their March meeting that the committee has considered 64 candidates for the position. The committee is looking for a successor to William G. Tanner, who resigned last June.

Although Morrison did not say when the committee would be ready with a nomination, he added "we will not pressure ourselves, or be pressured, into moving too hastily. Neither shall we take more time than necessary. We feel we are right on schedule."

"In spite of anything you might have heard, our committee is not deadlocked," said Morrison. Although the committee has not yet reached a consensus, "we believe we can and will." He insisted "there is a sense of togetherness on our committee."

The search committee has met nine times in the last five months, and has read, studied and considered more than 100 letters recommending 64 persons for the position.

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Convention Uniform

Before the council

by Erwin L. McDonald, Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine editor emeritus

Basic passage: Luke 22:31-34, 54-71

Focal passage: Luke 22:54-71

Central truth: Jesus endured personal rejection to purchase our redemption.

(1) Peter fails as Christ's friend (Lu. 22:54-62)

Of all twelve apostles, none was closer to Jesus than Simon, whom the Lord had renamed Peter, or "Rock." But on the night before the crucifixion, as Jesus was led from one mock trial to another, Peter's heart failed him and he denied that he had ever known his Lord. But Christ had seen this coming and had assured Peter of his prayers. So, soon after Peter's denial came his heart-broken repentance: "And Peter went out and wept bitterly" (Lu. 22:62).

(2) Abuse at the hands of the temple guard (Lu. 22:63-65)

Jesus was not yet in the hands of the Romans, and the police who now abused him were the temple guard, Levites who possibly had been augmented by priests. Nobody can be any meaner than one's own people turned against one. We see in these guards from Jesus' fellow Jews the acme of police brutality. They were so prejudiced against him that they "mocked him, and smote him. . . blindfolded him, struck him on the face" and demanded of him in his sightless condition to tell them "who it is that smote thee" (Lu. 22:63-64). And as if that were not enough, they "blasphemously spake" many other things against him.

(3) Jesus before the Sanhedrin (Lu. 22:66-71)

As the Jewish Supreme Court, the Sanhedrin was as high as the Jewish authorities could go, and so the objective here was to pass Jesus into the hands of the Roman authorities on a charge the Romans would take seriously, such as sedition or open rebellion. Hence the lead question of the Sanhedrin, "Art thou the Christ?" which is the Greek equivalent of the "Messiah," and would be seen by the Romans as a threat to their government. So, when Jesus answered by declaring his power "on the right hand of God," the Jews quickly moved to turn him over to the Roman court.

Pray that as we study this Scripture pointing to the final accomplishment of Christ's atoning death on the cross that we may be led by the Holy Spirit to renew our commitment to be loyal to Jesus in all circumstances.

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Life and Work

Obeying the master

by Harry T. Kennedy, Calvary Church, Hope

Basic passage: Luke 17:1-10

Focal passage: Luke 17:1,3,6,10

Central truth: A Christian will always face temptation, offenses from others that require forgiveness, challenges that require faith, and the awareness that you are always indebted to God.

Our passage tells of Jesus instructing the disciples about many offenses that will come. He erases the ideas that those who follow Jesus will not be bothered.

He first warns the disciples that many traps will be set along the way to cause them to falter and fall. This truth is shared to make the disciples aware of deceitful, even careless ways that men are capable of using. The expression "forewarned is to be forearmed" is what our Lord does for the disciples.

Before he says anything else, he sets a stern warning against the one who would entrap another. A warning that causes us to realize our God takes seriously his judgment upon anyone who intentionally brings a damaging influence upon another. Many lives have been destroyed by someone who initially introduced a way of life, habit, or other ways that lowers the value of one's life and the Lord takes notice of it.

Then Jesus deals with the matter of person to person relationships where you are sinned against. There is the need to rebuke the sin for the purpose of redemption. If forgiveness is asked for, the disciple is to forgive. If the offenses continue and the offender still asks for your forgiveness, you are to do so in the same manner as Jesus does to us (Ep. 4:32).

He follows this matter of forgiveness by reminding the disciple that faith opens the door of possibility. He knew a disciple will face situations as well as people who will appear impossible. Yet, a disciple who lives in "faith" sees the impossible as possible with Christ. This element of the spirit that brings about salvation must be exercised continually in our obedience to the Lord.

Finally, who who obeys the Lord never gets into the problem "If I do this—God will do thus?" We simply are the Lord's servants who will not think we deserve any special attention just because we have done what is expected of us.

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Bible Book

Jesus' appearance in Galilee

by Berdell Ward, Park Hill Church, North Little Rock

Basic passage: John 21:1-19

Focal passage: John 21:3-6,12-19

Central truth: Christ continually works in our lives as Christians, teaching us and challenging us to greater commitment and service.

Imagine Peter as he sat with the other disciples and waited for a shoe to drop. Always a man of action, he had been quick to the defense of his Lord on the night of his arrest and just as quick to defend himself against the charge of being a disciple (18:10,17-18).

The knowledge of those midnight denials was in Peter's heart. Now after two confrontations with the risen Jesus, his problem must have been looming larger than ever.

So Jesus was alive again. What were they supposed to do? What of Peter himself? He knew that Jesus was aware of his failure because the Lord himself had predicted it. Perhaps he felt that there was no longer a place for him among Christ's followers.

Never a man to yield passively to depression, Peter attacked the internal turmoil he was feeling the only way he knew—he went to work. For him, this meant going fishing. He was joined by six of his fellow disciples. Christ honored them not only by granting them a phenomenal catch (v. 6) but by preparing for them a royal breakfast. They were fed by the king's own hand!

We are not told whether or not Peter ate with his usual appetite, but we can imagine his agitation as he sat in Christ's presence. How he must have wanted to confess everything and clear away the barriers that kept him from full fellowship with his Lord.

Christ took the initiative, as he does in our lives, to bring Peter back into the fellowship and restore him to his former relationship. Without mentioning his failure, Christ led him through a reverse re-enactment of the events of his denial (vv. 15-18).

In the act of restoring Peter to the fellowship, Jesus teaches those present and, through John's writings, his followers through the ages what he wants from them.

"Do you love me? . . . Feed my sheep!"

Serving him is not a sedentary condition. There is work to be done in the kingdom. Christ leads us to unload ourselves of any burdens which stand between us and a clear relationship with him and then roll up our sleeves and get busy.

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Stop cringing, missions strategist challenges

by Susan Shaw

Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)—Too many Christians "cower" in their churches rather than witness boldly to persons of other religious backgrounds, a veteran Southern Baptist missions strategist claimed.

Wendell Belew, associate vice-president for missions strategy interpretation at the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, told Southern Baptist Theological Seminary students Christians must overcome fears spawned by religious, cultural, and language differences if they are to communicate their faith effectively.

"We cower in our churches, hiding behind our pews and cringing in our pulpits because we are afraid," Belew said. "We have not remembered that we are chosen to proclaim the good news."

Southeastern elects first woman theology prof

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)—By a one-vote margin, in a closed door session, trustees of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary elected their first woman theology professor.

Elizabeth B. Barnes of Cary, N.C., who has been teaching on an administrative appointment for three years, was elected assistant professor of systematic theology 14-13 during the March 9-10 trustee meeting.

The vote was announced by Chairman Jesse Chapman, a retired surgeon from Asheville, N.C., following the hour-and-forty-five-minute executive session. He did not reveal the content of the discussion, but other trustees told reporters the discussion was "respectful and dignified."

Prior to the executive session, some "fundamental-conservative" trustees said they opposed Barnes because she is a woman and not an inerrantist. W. Dade Sherman, a pastor from Monroe, N.C., told reporters: "She is not an inerrantist. And I do object to a woman teaching theology. I don't think it is biblical."

Other trustees told reporters Barnes' gender did not come up in the closed meeting.

Mercer urged to expel students

ATLANTA (BP)—Mercer University has been asked by the Georgia Baptist Convention Executive Committee to expel any student who poses for Playboy magazine.

The appeal came in a resolution passed by the executive committee, March 10, despite a statement by Mercer's president that such an expulsion might be illegal.

Mercer, a 5,200-student school affiliated with the Georgia Baptist Convention, has been front-page news in Georgia since Playboy listed it as one of the "top 10 party schools" in the nation. Early in March, a Playboy photographer went to Macon, where Mercer is located, hoping to

Not every witnessing effort will be successful, Belew added, but the challenge is to be faithful to the biblical mandate to share one's faith. "The Spirit has anointed me to proclaim the gospel; he didn't ask me to count the scalps," he explained.

Belew and Norman Langston, regional director of the Home Mission Board's interfaith witness department, addressed issues related to interfaith witnessing during home missions emphasis week at Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

Both missions leaders stressed the growing challenge facing Christianity within the context of other world religions. Belew noted that Islam, not Christianity, is the fastest-growing religion in the United States today. Christianity, he added, is growing faster in Africa and Indonesia than in the United States.

Barnes, the mother of three grown children, is a 1960 graduate of Meredith College. She earned a master of divinity degree from Southeastern Seminary in 1981 and a doctor of philosophy degree from Duke University in 1984. She is married to Lalton L. Barnes, pastor of Faith Baptist Church in Apex, N.C.

In another disputed action during the two-day trustee meeting, board members voted 18-4 to adopt "A Plan of Action," presented by Lolley. The plan pledges to encourage balance and fairness in seminary teaching and to refrain from "caricaturing or intimidating anyone because of their beliefs."

Lolley's Plan of Action contains seven affirmations including the seminary's articles of faith; the process for selecting faculty which involves trustees, administration, faculty and students; fostering a climate of fairness and openness in classrooms and on campus; a rejection of caricature, intimidation or attack of persons for their theological beliefs; a commitment to missions and evangelism on the campus and beyond; and an emphasis on the distinctive doctrines of Baptist heritage.

photograph Mercer coeds for an October issue on students from those 10 schools. Secular news reports indicated 25 Mercer girls volunteered to pose, five of them nude.

Several members of the Georgia Baptist Executive Committee demanded to know why Mercer President R. Kirby Godsey had not "taken a strong stand" and threatened expulsion for any student who would pose.

Godsey responded: "We deeply regret the Playboy issue. It was not initiated by Mercer. We have objected to this inclusion as a 'top 10 party school.' We have talked with students. We have encouraged them not to pose."

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