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Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine, 1985-1989

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March 5, 1987

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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“Gather the people together,
men and women, and
children, and thy stranger
that is within thy gates,
that they may hear . . .
learn . . . do”
(Deut. 31:12)

‘Gather the People’

SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
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Historical Commission, SBC
Nashville, Tennessee

March 5, 1987

Arkansas Baptist
Newsmagazine

ABSC Sunday School
enrollment/attendance campaign
March 15 - April 19, 1987



"Gather the People" is the Scripture theme for the 1987 Sunday School enrollment/attendance campaign produced by the ABSC Sunday School Department (see article this page).

In this issue

6-7 Arkansas all over

Brief notes about events in the lives of your brothers and sisters in churches across the state.

8-9 'a zeal for cooperation'

Arkansas Baptists are facing a crisis in support for their cooperative missions program. A task force of state leaders met in Little Rock recently for training on how to rebuild zeal for cooperative missions.

Correction

Irby W. Bryan Sr. has not resigned as pastor of Altus First Church, as reported in the Feb. 12 ABN. Bryan simply reported he has felt a call "to be an evangelist, believing that revival is needed in our day." The ABN regrets the error.

Sunday School campaign

Gather the people: to hear, to learn, to do

The lost and unchurched may be found in virtually every community and neighborhood in Arkansas. "Gather the People," a new, six-week Sunday School enrollment/attendance campaign produced by the Sunday School Department of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, is designed to stretch the vision of a congregation toward its potential for reaching its community for Christ.

The campaign is based on Moses' words recorded in Deuteronomy 31:12: "Gather the people together, men and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law."

Although the material is undated, many Arkansas Baptist churches will begin their "Gather the People" campaigns on March 15, concluding with a high attendance day

on Easter Sunday, April 19. As with previous campaigns, "Gather the People" features class attendance charts, personal commitment cards, attendance stickers, promotion posters, and easy-to-follow instructions. Each packet of materials, enough to serve an enrollment of 100, costs only \$7, plus \$1.50 postage if mailed. No other material of this quality can be purchased as inexpensively.

"Gather the People" is modeled after other successful campaigns, such as "The Way of the Cross" and "White Unto Harvest." More than 600 Arkansas Baptist churches have used these campaigns in the past four years. Results have been remarkable, with many churches reporting record attendances.

Order your material today! There are lost and unchurched people in your community who can't afford to wait.

Cooperative Program tops \$13 million for first time

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Southern Baptists launched 1987 with record-breaking contributions to their convention-wide Cooperative Program budget.

Cooperative Program contributions totalled \$13,078,303 in January, reported Harold C. Bennett, president and treasurer of the Southern Baptist Executive Committee.

The previous single-month record was set in January 1986, when the program took in almost \$12.8 million. Only three monthly totals have surpassed \$11 million.

This year's strong January showing brought annual Cooperative Program receipts to almost \$44.1 million, four months into the fiscal year, Bennett reported. That total is 5.26 percent ahead of receipts for the same period during the 1985-86 fiscal year.

Despite economic hardships in petroleum-producing and agricultural states,

Southern Baptists are taking strides to increase their support for the unified budget. This year, 25 state conventions increased the percentage of their overall budgets dedicated to the convention-wide Cooperative Program, said James Powell, executive vice-president for Cooperative Program promotion at the Southern Baptist Stewardship Commission.

In light of that commitment, Bennett predicted Southern Baptists will increase Cooperative Program receipts from 5 percent to 6 percent over the previous budget. An increase on that level would push total receipts to between \$130.4 million and \$131.7 million. Such a total would surpass the Cooperative Program's first-phase basic operating budget of \$126.6 million but would not completely meet the program's \$5.9 million capital needs budget.

Cooperative Program aims at \$140 million target

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—The Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee has proposed a record \$140 million budget for the 1987-88 SBC Cooperative Program.

Messengers to the convention's annual meeting will vote on the budget when they meet in St. Louis, June 16-18. If approved, the budget—a 2.9 percent increase over the current \$136 million budget—will go into effect Oct. 1.

The Cooperative Program is a convention-wide budget used to support evangelistic, missionary and educational enterprises around the world. Money is channeled from church members to their congregations, to state conventions and to national and international causes. The \$140 million budget represents the goal for financing causes beyond the state level.

Allocation of the budget is divided into

three sections: a first-phase basic operating budget of \$132 million, a capital needs budget of \$6.45 million and a second-phase operating budget of \$1.55 million. Funds will not be allocated to the capital needs budget until the first-phase operating budget is met, and funds will not be allocated to the second-phase budget until all current and previous capital needs budgets are met.

The first-phase basic operating budget targets funds to 19 convention entities. It represents a 4.24 percent increase over the current \$126.63 million first-phase budget.

The lion's share of this phase is designated for the convention's Foreign Mission Board, which is to receive \$66 million, or 50 percent of the total. The next-largest recipient is theological education, with the six SBC seminaries set to receive more than \$26.8 million, or 20.32 percent of the goal.



One of the most difficult times for any Christian is when he becomes a victim of an unprovoked attack. Obviously, there are times when some defense is in order. The general principle, however, is "love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (Matt. 5:44). This exhortation applies to our dealing not only with those who are opponents of Christianity but also with our fellow Christians.

Clearly, the application is impossible except for the grace of God. The two resources that Jesus commended his followers to use are "love" and "prayer." Both are positive actions which have potential of changing the circumstances. First, we are to love those who persecute us.

The Greek, a language very rich in synonyms, had four words for love. Briefly summarized they are: (1) love of family, (2) sexual love, (3) love of a close friend, and (4) benevolent, invincible good will. It is this invincible love that God has for everyone, and it is this kind of love that we are to have for our enemies.

God does not ask us to love those who oppose us in the same way we love those who are the nearest and dearest to us. In the case of those who are near and dear, we cannot help loving them. We say, "I have fallen in love." This is the love which comes automatically and without effort. But the love which God requires of his followers is not an attitude of the heart. It is a determination of the mind. Someone has suggested that it is the ability to love those who we do not like and who do not like us.

There are times when love requires the opponent not to be allowed to do exactly as he desires. In some instances, to allow an attack to go unchecked could be harmful for everyone: the attacker, the victim, and the cause of Christ. For example, a number of years ago a pastor in a church in another state was slandered. The pastor sued and won damages. His action probably saved his ministry, as well as the church, and taught a painful but necessary lesson to the slanderer.

A second action prescribed by Christ is "prayer." This is probably the most important element, since it involves our doing something positive for our enemies. Prayer will most assuredly take any hate out of our hearts. No man can truly pray for another and still hate him. Our prayer also opens the avenue for God to change the attitude of the offender.

There are two wrong responses for Christians. Either we can find some accusation to hurl back at our persecutors, or we can maintain silence and non-commitment to any issue so as to avoid confrontation. Christ neither commended his followers for return-

ing slander for slander or for remaining silent. We are to "love" and to "pray" for our attackers.

Positive results may accompany prayerful and loving involvement in life's activities. Such an approach will make our conduct exemplary. Pseudo-Christians can attack in the harshest, most unloving ways, but true Christians will lead men to Christ.

Disagreement is not always bad. If individuals can disagree on issues and yet love each other, positive results may come from it. One of this editor's earliest memories is a disagreement by two leading pastors in the association in which he was reared. Each of the pastors pursued his point of view vigorously in the associational meeting. The vote was taken. One of the pastors prevailed, and the other lost. The session of the associational meeting ended with the vote. The two pastors walked out with their arms around each other, each complimenting the other on the excellence of his presentation. The issue which was debated has long been lost from the mind of this editor, who was seven or eight years of age at the time of the incident. The attitude of the two men has remained in this editor's mind as a model for those who disagree.

It also is helpful to realize that certain personality types are prone to become involved in conflict. There is a negative person who opposes change in progress because of his desire to preserve his own standing. This is not to say that all negative attitudes are bad. Sometimes one must oppose an issue because its passage would not constitute progress. Seldom, however, does one who seeks to guarantee his personal security do the right thing.

A second negative which frequently produces conflict is the individual who finds excitement in turmoil. This attitude is well-illustrated by a business meeting in which there was a serious dispute over the pastor. Tempers erupted, and it was apparent that some were about to become involved in physical violence. A guest pleaded for orderly conduct. One man, who, by his own admission, had not been church in seven years, arose to declare, "This is the most exciting thing I've been involved in a long while. Let's get on with firing the pastor."

Finally, "love" and "prayer" will enable us to live in peace with all people, as far as it depends on us (Rom. 12:18). Even "love" and "prayer" will not necessarily transform some enemies, but they will enable a follower of Christ to know joy, peace, and victory in his daily life. By following the example and admonition of Jesus, we are victorious, even in the face of our enemies. Even more important, we are guaranteed our lives will be transformed.

Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

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

VOLUME 86 NUMBER 10
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Right on target

Never have I read two letters to the editor in the same issue of our ABN (2-12-87) with which I am in such total agreement as those by C.A. Johnson of Jonesboro and M. Steven Munson of Fort Smith. Both were right on target, and if some missed these letters, I can only hope they will read them before discarding the paper. These men have written what many, many of us believe.—**Charles Rosson, Rogers**

New Testament ordination

Concerning the local church ordination of both ministers and deacons, I do believe that Southern Baptists are getting farther away from the Catholic position of ordination and closer to the New Testament position of ordination.

When the local church does the ordination—on its own—there are many valid reasons for this.

Now, for cosmetic reasons, and to strengthen our denomination, I suggest the idea of asking our sister churches to send representatives—ordained or otherwise—to sit in on the ordination, assisting, if called upon.

I believe that this trend of moving the ordination services into the regular worship hour of the local church will do a lot toward the edifying of the church.

Please let me say this: it took a lot of praying and thinking about the way we have been doing our ordination services, but I'm feeling better about it now. Yes, I do believe that Baptists can be trusted with the Word!—**Ottis Denney, Norton, Ohio**

A little puzzled

I have been reading some of the letters to the editor in recent weeks, and I must say I am more than a little puzzled. Our denomination has been teaching missions and evangelization for all the years I can remember, now some of our number seem to be terribly upset because of some brothers in Texas, who for some reason wish to do some work on their own. It would seem that they would be deserving of the prayers and encouragement of all Christians, more especially of those of their own faith.

Another thing that that is puzzling is how the words "conservative" and "fundamental" seem to have gotten to be ugly words in some minds. Are we no longer expected to adhere to and protect the basic Bible truths on which our denomination was founded?

It would seem that the main concern would be that these people were intending to preach and teach the gospel message as laid out in God's Word, not whether or not someone in the SBC had given their blessing or handled the money.—**B.H. McDougald, McGehee**

Lone Ranger philosophy

... As a career missionary and staff member for 32 years under the Foreign Mission Board, I am keenly disappointed that there are those who apparently cannot work within the framework of the Foreign Mission Board's missionary effort, an effort which has church planting as its heart.

I am retired from active service now, but was invited by the Baptist Convention of Mexico to come back to Mexico City as a volunteer... to help plant churches.

The Baptist Convention of Mexico has a goal to organize 2,000 new churches by the year 2000... We arrived in Mexico Sept. 1, 1986, and learned that in one of the local associations here in Mexico City four new churches already had been organized that year. In the same association, three other new churches were organized during October-November last year... Five local churches have indicated to me they will organize nine new churches this year... We will open 12 new works in one sector of the city during August... And we have set Nov. 1, 1987, as a day when Baptist congregations in all four sectors of this huge city will be organizing new Baptist churches simultaneously...

Bill Darnell was quoted as saying, "In no way will there be competition between the (Genesis) Commission and the (Foreign Mission) Board."... However... we do not have enough pastors for our churches, much less for all the new churches we are organizing... Now an independent or parachurch group of Baptists comes in and tells us it is going to hire away from our churches our best graduates. Please, brethren, be both realistic and honest and do not ever say again that you will not be in competition with us here in Mexico City.

Our convention and associations are working hard to teach stewardship and self-support to our churches and to get them to start new churches that are self-supporting from the beginning... Yes, brethren, I am disappointed in you. Let me request you to abandon this Lone Ranger philosophy and work through our tried-and-proven Foreign Mission Board to witness to this our world in this our generation.—**Ervin E. Hasty, Mexico City**

(Editor's note: the letter above was edited to fit the ABN's 350-word limit for letters to the editor.)

Wandered from the truth

In the Feb. 19 issue of the Newsmagazine, I read a letter by Bob Martin in which he stated and implied some very hurtful things regarding Foy Valentine and the Christian Life Commission. James 5:19 begins with, "My brother, if one of you should wander from the truth..." Well, in

my opinion, brother Martin has "wandered from the truth," and his letter could cause others to wander.

I suspect that he has erred out of ignorance, but his kind of ignorance must not be allowed to go unanswered.

For three years, I had the privilege of working under the supervision of Foy Valentine. I know personally of Dr. Valentine's profound commitment to biblical ethics. To imply that his departure might finally make way for a biblically ethical man is grossly misguided. To characterize the stance of the CLC as "pro-abortion, pro-ordination of women, against capital punishment" is to totally misrepresent the biblically-based, informative issue materials produced by the Commission.

Be assured that situation ethics and humanistic thought have never been given any credence, let alone priority at the CLC.

Larry Baker will continue the high level of commitment to the Bible and applied Christianity which Foy Valentine has so well established. Both of these men of God deserve our prayer support and our gratitude, not our uninformed derision. Brother Martin suggests that Southern Baptists must be saddened regarding CLC developments. That someone could think such a thing about an organization that has done so much to proclaim God's prophetic message is the only cause for sadness in this matter. Southern Baptists have every cause to rejoice in what God has done for us through Foy Valentine and what he will do now through Larry Baker.—**William H. Elder, Little Rock**

Ward begins writing lesson commentaries

Berdell Ward begins this week writing commentaries on the Bible Book series lessons in "Lessons for Living."

Mrs. Ward, a member of Park Hill Church in North Little Rock, is an English and creative writing teacher at Northeast High School in North Little Rock. She is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and the University of Central Arkansas.

Her husband, John, is an attorney and state representative. They have three children.



a smile or two

Even though you are on the right track, you'll get run over just sitting there.

You'll be glad to know...

Ernie Perkins had been a director of missions just long enough to know the need for pastors to spend time with their families.

Having two boys made it natural that he would plan a float trip on the Buffalo River. This hardly came within the scope of "convention expense" in our budget. I didn't really have the money. Our son kept asking in those years why I was gone so much at night while his friends' dads were at home. We needed the time together.

A very quiet, inconspicuous woman who had no one to help her make a living came to me after the worship service on Sunday and said, "I want to help you and Jeff go on the float trip together." She handed me \$20, I believe. It was enough for us to go. We still do not know how she knew about the trip or the need. She surely blessed our lives.

There are many pastors who need a little time away. Perhaps they are not in a preaching, counseling, or visitation situation all of the time. Perhaps they are not in the hospitals or nursing homes all of the time. Some members assume they aren't doing anything if they are not involved in some direct ministry to individuals all of the time.

Let me tell you something you may not know. The easiest part of the work is the time a pastor is with his people. The hardest part of his labor is enduring the stress created by knowing all of the people and program needs he can't get to. Balancing his life so that his family is not abandoned while taking care of the Lord's family is another great stressor. Add to that the time needed to prepare Bible studies and sermons and you have a man-killing, home-wrecking, nerve-racking task. Now, add one more ingredient. Even Jesus was dogged by the devil. It is likely the pastor endures more warfare than anyone in the church because of his position of leadership. In the battle Jesus had to "draw apart for a little season." Do you suppose a pastor needs to, too?

It isn't likely budgeted, so some sensitive person or committee may need to encourage and assist the pastor in getting to the Pastors' Retreat, March 19-20, at Camp Paron. The cost is \$30, plus whatever travel he may have. Enough said? You will bless him!

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



One layman's opinion

Daniel R. Grant

When a landlubber gets in deep water

A funny thing happened recently on my way to bed. Although I know literally nothing about sailing yachts and have a mortal dread of seasickness, I found myself glued to the television screen for more than three hours after bedtime, to watch two sailboats. It was the live telecast of the America's Cup Races, some 12,000 miles away, in the Indian Ocean off the western coast of Australia. And, I must confess, during the next few nights that followed, my addiction led to many more hours of watching America's "Stars and Stripes" sail victoriously against Australia's "Kookaburra III."

What on earth (or on water) could cause this landlubber to get so involved in watching two boats sail in one of the seven seas? Many years ago, I lost all interest in ocean-going vessels following an ill-fated attempt to see the beauties of the underwater world with the help of a small glass-bottom boat off the coast of Jamaica. A better description of that experience would be "as the world turns in the bottom of my stomach." My wife and children still enjoy reminding me of my lack of chivalry in scrambling to be the first one to get off the boat when we finally did arrive at the shore.

To complicate matters, the television reporters were using a strange language totally unfamiliar to my ears trained so well in good southern American English. They talked of sewermen, grinders, port, starboard, pitman, helmsman, knots, tacking, jibing, spinnakers, and mainsails. I felt like the oft-ridiculed girl asking those dumb questions at her first football game.

What happened to me is hard to understand and even harder to explain. The menace of seasickness for the TV viewer was avoided by gyroscopes in the cameras, I am told. Even the on-board cameras gave the

impression that the viewer was still firmly situated in his Lazy-Boy recliner in landlocked Arkansas. The scenery was simply magnificent, alternating from the blue ocean with its whitecap waves to the 12-meter yachts with their beautiful sails against the blue sky, the Australian shoreline, and the thousands of spectators on all kinds of offshore boats and barges. Blimps and helicopters were used, I am told, to give breadth, perspective, and variety to the photography. My vulnerability to patriotic appeals was certainly part of it. For the United States to race against many other countries for the privilege of challenging Australia in the finals, all for the purpose of bringing that cup back to American soil "where it belongs," seemed to make my American blood flow faster.

More than anything else, this kind of competitive sailing is a remarkable mixture of the oldest and the newest. It combines old-world battling against the awesome elements of nature with new-world mobilization of the very latest research and technology to help humans conquer the waves and cope with the weather.

I still have not sorted out all of my thoughts about the millions of dollars and the massive amounts of time committed to the rescue of an odd-looking cup from Australia. I was deeply impressed, however, with the remarkable exhibition of teamwork for a common cause. A church, a college, or a convention could learn a great deal from this cooperative effort. Personally, though, I still think I will limit my sailing experiences to what I can see on television.

Daniel R. Grant is president of Ouachita Baptist University.

Cooperative Program report: January

		January gifts	
		Year	% increase over previous year
Summary for January 1987		1982	8.72
Received	\$1,290,042.25	1983	2.41
Budget	\$1,028,489.58	1984	-12.71
Over	\$264,108.12	1985	23.50
		1986	29.80
		1987	9.89

In 1986, 93.9 percent of our churches gave to missions through the Cooperative Program. Thanks for your faithfulness and commitment. 1987 had a great beginning. Our churches gave 125.7 percent of the monthly budget. To God be the glory!—Jimmie Sheffield, associate executive director

Arkansas all over

by Millie Gill / ABN staff writer

people



Cooper

John Allen Cooper has joined the staff of West Memphis First Church as minister of education. He came there from Whitesburg Church in Huntsville, Ala., where he was in charge of adult education. Cooper is a graduate of Mississippi College, Clinton, and

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans, La.

Robert W. Lewis recently completed 10 years of service as minister of music at El Dorado First Church. He is a native of Knoxville, Tenn., and a graduate of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Lewis served churches in Tennessee and Louisiana prior to coming to El Dorado.

Bill Ashburn began serving as pastor of Horatio First Church in January, coming there from Marlin, Texas. He is a graduate of Baylor University, Waco, Texas, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas. He is married to the former Julie Adair, also a graduate of Baylor University.

John G. Bailey has resigned as minister of music at West Memphis First Church to serve as minister of music at First Church, Moss Bluff, La.

Jonathan Payne has resigned as pastor of East Mount Zion Church, Clarksville.

Ira Taylor has resigned as pastor of Hagarville Church to become pastor of Knoxville Church.

Paul M. Wheelus Sr. is serving as pastor of Sale Street Church in Lake Charles, La. He is a former pastor of Elmdale Church, Springdale, and also has served as pastor of First Church, Brenham, Texas.

J.C. Nanney has resigned as pastor of Immanuel Church, Marion. He has accepted a call to serve as pastor of a Montana church.

Charles Williams is serving as interim pastor of Mount Bethel Church, Arkadelphia.

Bob Barnett is serving as interim minister of music at Levy Church, North Little Rock.



Lewis



Ashburn

Hoyt M. Abbott of North Little Rock died Feb. 11 in Memorial Hospital, North Little Rock, following a lengthy illness. His funeral services were held Feb. 14 at Pike Avenue Church in Little Rock, where he was a member. He was a retired hospital attendant. Survivors include two sons, Herbert Abbott of Albuquerque, N.M., and Hoyt Abbott of Russellville; four daughters, Lera Stokes and Pearlie Abbott, both of North Little Rock, Martha Lester of West Memphis, and Dorothy Jones of Hurst, Texas; a sister; 10 grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren.

James W. Atkins of Mountain Home died Feb. 10 at age 39. His funeral services were held Feb. 13 at Mountain Home First Church, where he was a member and sang in the adult choir. He was former assistant attorney general for Arkansas and former Baxter County deputy prosecutor. He was serving as president of Mountain Home Chamber of Commerce. Survivors include his wife, Susan Sturdivant Atkins; a son, James Matthew Atkins; two daughters, Jennifer Leigh Atkins and Melissa Ann Atkins; all of Mountain Home; and a sister.

Mike Welch began serving Feb. 8 as pastor of Nodena Church.

George Adams has resigned as youth and college minister at Fayetteville First Church, effective March 1 to serve as a chaplain in the Navy.

Mike Holcomb is serving as music director at Sulphur Springs Church.

Robert Donald Trulove of Rome, Ga., died Feb. 6 at age 91. He was the father of Harry D. Trulove of Little Rock, president of Arkansas Baptist Foundation. He was a retired employee of U.S. Postal Services and a member of North Broad Church in Rome where he served as treasurer for 13 years. Other survivors include his wife, Grace Ford Trulove of

Rome; a sister; three grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

Bryan Parks is serving as pastor of Cash First Church. He and his wife, Christy, are both students at Southern Baptist College.

Dennis Davis began serving Feb. 15 as pastor of Strawfloor Church in Jonesboro, coming there from Central Church, Pine Bluff.

Larry Owens is serving as interim pastor of Bowman Church, Lake City.

Glen Hurst is serving as interim pastor of Bowman Church, Lake City.

Jeff Randolph recently celebrated five years of service as minister of music at Central Church, Jonesboro.

James Talent recently retired as pastor of a Bruce, Miss., church. He has served as pastor of Arkansas churches, including Cherry Valley and Fitzgerald Churches. He is residing at 1782 Bradley Street in Wynne where he is a member of Union Avenue Church.

Mark Williams has joined the staff of Claud Road Church, Whitehall, as part-time minister of youth. He is a student at Ouachita Baptist University.

Randy Cox was ordained to the ministry of gospel through music in a 6 p.m. service Feb. 22 at Batesville First Church. He is serving as minister of music and youth at Central Church in Mineral Springs while attending Ouachita Baptist University. Cox has served the Batesville church as director for the older children's choir, the youth choir and the youth handbell choir.

Sid Byler is in Lima, Peru, March 1-12, leading revivals in a Spanish-speaking church and an English-speaking church. Byler, who is a former pastor of Marshall First Church, was sent on the preaching tour by First Church, Kearney, Mo., where he is now pastor.

Cliff Garner will join the staff of El Dorado First Church as minister of education in mid-March, coming there from Fort Worth, Texas, where he is a staff member of Rosen Heights Church. He is a graduate of Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Laura, are parents of a son, Christopher.

Tom McGehee has resigned as minister of youth at El Dorado Second Church to continue his education.

briefly

Forest Highlands Church in Little Rock women have organized a weekly prayer group to pray for the pastor search committee and church needs.

Arkadelphia Second Church honored Pastor and Mrs. Carl Kluck Feb. 8 in recognition of their 27 years of service to the church.

Hensley East End Church recently voted to sponsor Elwood Chapel in Indianapolis, Ind., according to Pastor David Masterton. This link-up will involve financial support, summer missions teams, and other assistance as needed. Charles Fields serves as pastor of Elwood Chapel.

Ozark First Church recently voted unanimously to build a education/activities building and proceed with a Together We Build fund-raising program. The building will house a dining and fellowship hall with a seating capacity of 400, a full-size kitchen, four youth or adult departments, an office, and a supply room. John Matthews is pastor.

Shibley Church recently licensed and ordained Pastor Mike George to the ministry. Those participating in the service included Don Bradford, A.W. Mitchell, Stanley W. Spicer, W. Fred Coleman, Gary Pendergraft, Jimmy Dime, W.O. Shelton, Joe Zirbal, and Gerri White.

Beck Spur Church in Forrest City recently purchased two acres of land and had one acre donated as a memorial to Eddie Anderson, a deacon who died of cancer at age 38.

Beech Street First Church in Texarkana conducted a Lay Renewal Weekend Feb. 20-22. A 50-member team, representing four states, led sessions.

Jonesboro First Church will launch its "Good News... Jesus Loves You" promotion with "People Reach" surveys both March 25 and March 29, and a film on Christian discipleship April 5.

Harlan Park Church in Conway hosted the Continental Singers and orchestra, an internationally recognized Christian musical group, in concert Feb. 24.

Springdale First Church has announced plans to enroll 1,000 new Sunday School members in 100 days. "Operation Andrew" March 1 will serve as kickoff day, according to Cliff Jenkins, minister of education. Carlos McLeod, director of evangelism for the Baptist General Convention of Texas, was in Springdale Feb. 15 to lead an "Operation Andrew" rally which was followed by a "Operation Andrew" blast-off banquet Feb. 20, featuring Pastor Ronnie Floyd as speaker. Outreach goals for attaining the 1,000 new members include 180 preschoolers; 220 children; 187 youth; 100 singles; and 313 married adults. Twelve new departments are on the drawing board with three of the 12 beginning Feb. 8. Off-site extensions are being formed and the use of the church's old downtown facilities are being investigated. "1,000 Members in 100 Days" will climax June 7 with a victory celebration.

Red River Association sponsored its first junior-senior banquet Feb. 5 at Beech Street Church, Gurdon. Parents of the students were special guests.

Crystal Hill Church in Little Rock presented Greg Buchanan, an evangelistic harpist, in concert Tuesday, March 3.

Sulphur Springs Church recently ordained David Taylor and John Henderson to the deacon ministry.

Lakeside Church in Hot Springs will host a "Humanism Expose" March 1-3, beginning at 7 p.m. each evening.

Parkway Place Church in Little Rock will hold a service from 3 to 4:30 p.m. March 29 to dedicate a new sanctuary. Lawson

Hatfield, pastor of Fordyce First Church and president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, will be speaker. James Wilson is pastor.

Arkadelphia Second Church will host a Senior Adult Bible Conference March 23-27. Marion (Bud) Fray, chairman of the department of religion at Ouachita Baptist University, will teach the book of Philippians. Don Blackmore is pastor.

Jonesboro Central Church recently voted to expand its educational building from 8,065 square feet to 9,063 square feet per floor.

Salem First Church will celebrate its 100th anniversary April 5 with activities that will include a 10 a.m. worship service, a noon luncheon, and a 1:30 p.m. service which will be followed by the cutting of an anniversary cake. Larry Bone of Geyer Springs First Church, Little Rock, will be speaker.

Ridgeway Church at Nashville held a netoburning and dedication service Feb. 22. A van, to be used in outreach ministries, was dedicated, according to Pastor Gerald Hill. The church has planned a "Good News" revival March 1-6 with Herbert Rowland as evangelist and Fayrene Elrod as music director.

Trinity Church in Fort Smith observed its 64th anniversary Feb. 18.

Caraway First Church has voted to increase its Cooperative Program support from 7.5 percent to 10 percent because of their concern of the shortage of overall giving to the Arkansas Baptist State Convention CP program.

OBU student aid deadline May 1

ARKADELPHIA—New and returning students interested in attending Ouachita Baptist University next fall and spring are reminded of the Ouachita financial priority date of May 1, which is the date that American College Testing (ACT) Family Financial Statements (FFS) should be received by ACT at their headquarters in Iowa City, Iowa, according to Harold Johnson, director of student financial aid at OBU.

"The ACT FFS is a packet that contains instructions and forms necessary to file for Pell Grants and Arkansas Student Assistance Grants and to determine the eligibility of students for other forms of financial aid, such as loans and college work study aid," said Johnson.

The ACT FFS is processed by using previous year income and current year asset data supplied by the student and parents, said Johnson. The results are then forwarded to the Pell Grant Program, the State Grant Program, and the school. Students whose packets are received at ACT by May 1 will receive all assistance to which they are entitled, providing enough funds are available to cover all applicants.

Students may obtain ACT FFS packets from high school guidance counselors or from Johnson's office in Mitchell Hall at OBU, room 301. For further information, contact Johnson at OBU, P.O. Box 3774, Arkadelphia, AR 71923; phone (501) 246-4531, ext. 570.

Conviction, confidence, commitment required for Baptist cooperation

by J. Everett Sneed

"Mission Advance 87-89 is the single most important act performed by Arkansas Baptists in many years," declared Lawson Hatfield during a training session for a task force of 100 individuals to enter Arkansas churches during 1987 - 1989. Dr. Hatfield, president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention and pastor of First Church, Fordyce, compared the importance of the effort with the \$75 Million Campaign and the paying off of Arkansas's honor debt. "People in the past paid their dues," he said, "and it is now time for us to pay ours."

Alan D. Thrasher, pastor of First Church, Booneville, and chairman of the committee of 10 which chose the 100-member "Mission Advance 87-89," said, "Our mission is to rekindle zeal for the Cooperative Program through personal visitation in the churches of our state." It is the hope of the "Mission Advance" force to visit every church in Arkansas to encourage renewed interest in support of the Cooperative Program.

The stated purpose guiding "Mission Advance 87-89" is to "challenge Arkansas churches through preaching, speaking, and personal contact, to adopt a plan of advance in Cooperative Program support." The speakers are to show the biblical basis on which the Cooperative Program works, the effectiveness of the Cooperative Program, and the need for Cooperative Program growth. This growth is necessary to avert a crisis in Cooperative Program support in Arkansas.

Is the Cooperative Program scriptural?

Executive Director Don Moore dealt with the question, "Is the Cooperative Program scriptural?" Moore said that, prior to the implementation of the Cooperative Program in 1925, churches tried a variety of ways to support the numerous causes which developed in Baptist life. Support varied from year to year, depending on which agent from which institution arrived in the churches first. Great competition developed between the agencies and institutions of Baptist life. Churches became tired of the parade of speakers and the oft-repeated appeals. In 1925 the Cooperative Program was developed, which assists in caring for all of the needs supported by Southern Baptists.

A scriptural plan for support of mission endeavors was not outlined by Jesus during

his earthly ministry. Christ dealt mostly with the matter of individual responsibility, motivation and blessings in giving.

Moore said that in the absence of a clear command from Jesus as to how the work of the kingdom should be supported, we turned to the New Testament examples to discover how they did it. The pattern becomes clear. Some have been a part of Southern Baptist life for years without knowing that the Cooperative Program is a scripturally-based program.

Moore cited several New Testament churches to show how they cooperated in their plan of giving. First, the Jerusalem church reacted naturally to God's goodness and to others' needs by giving. It was spiritual, spontaneous, voluntary, public, and extensive. They even sold their homes and lands and turned the funds over to the elders so that the needs of the kingdom could be met. At this point, there was no possibility for churches to work together, for there was only one church.

Next, Moore cited the Antioch church. This church was started by lay people who were being persecuted. It became a model for other churches that would be started in Asia and Europe. Agabus, a member of the Jerusalem church, told the people at Antioch of the world needs. Every member of the Antioch church wanted to respond. They gave according to their abilities. The offering was turned over to Paul and Barnabas, who took it to the church leaders in Jerusalem. The Jerusalem church leaders were responsible for seeing that the funds were distributed to meet the needs.

The Jerusalem church was already working to meet the needs. The second church's funds were united with the Jerusalem church's funds to make it possible for the two churches to do more than either could have done separately.

The first missionaries sent out by a church were Paul and Barnabas by the Antioch church. Paul apparently picked up on what his sponsoring church had done in cooperative support and began to teach it to all the churches he started. According to I Corinthians 16:1-3, he had already instructed the churches of Galatia on this matter. He asked the churches of Achaia to follow what he had instructed the churches of Galatia.

By the end of Paul's first missionary journey, there were at least five churches sharing in a cooperative effort to carry out

the Lord's command.

On Paul's second missionary journey, three churches were established as a result of his special call to come to Macedonia. Based on Paul's use of the Macedonian churches as an example for the churches at Corinth to follow, these churches were led to do as Antioch and the churches of Galatia, that is, Paul instructed them to receive offerings and to send them on for "ministering to the saints" at Jerusalem. By the end of Paul's second missionary journey there were at least eight churches involved in sending their money to Jerusalem in a cooperative effort to carry on missions.

Moore emphasized that, as one traces the activity of Paul, at least 10 churches can be documented as sending money to Jerusalem to be used for missions. Moore asked, "Can you think of a good name for this type of program?"

Moore said, "The Lord not only gave a command for evangelizing the world, he also gave the strategy to be followed. Strategy and methodology were not left to guesswork. We have not been in doubt about the message that is to be carried to the world. There has been some reluctance about the method for supporting the work."

Moore concluded by saying that he was hopeful that a study of the methods used by first century churches would reveal that our cooperative efforts today are patterned after the New Testament. He said, "No other method has emerged that has proven to be more effective or efficient than this one."

The Cooperative Program: past, present, and future

Trueman Moore, pastor of East Side Church, Fort Smith, spoke on the Cooperative Program. He said, "Cooperation is a trademark of Southern Baptists. Our denomination has grown into one of the largest in the nation and the world because of our missionary motivation and cooperation. However, it has not always been easy to work together. Even though we love missions, we love freedom too."

Moore said that cooperation should be voluntary, motivated by biblical purpose, based on mutual trust, and organized as team work.

The common good caused Baptists to try many different methods of financing their mission and education programs. Early Bab-



John McClanahan was among the members of the Mission Advance 87-89 team that gathered in Little Rock for training on Feb. 23.

tists attempted to support their program through the society system. However, since the societies were composed of individuals without ties or responsibility to a church or particular denomination, that method failed to bring the denomination together in unity.

It was 79 years from the founding of the Convention until the creation of the first budget for its work. During all these years, Southern Baptists' method of financing their work was for every agency and cause to appeal directly to each church, which gave to each cause separately, if they could and would.

The boards that could afford to do it employed agents to travel among the churches to solicit funds for their work. After expenses were paid frequently there was little money left. Pledges were paid irregularly and only 40 percent of the pledges were ever paid.

Finally, the denomination began its first denomination-wide, cooperative effort to raise funds for Baptist ministries in 1919. This was called the \$75 Million Campaign.

Fund raising in the 1920's proved to be more difficult than Baptists had ever dreamed. During the campaign, more than \$92 million was pledged. But less than \$59

million was paid to the 75 Million Campaign.

With the year-round operation of the Executive Board, which had been set up in 1917, the stage was set for the final unifying decision about the method of support for Southern Baptist work. The decision came after the report of the Future Program Commission. On May 13, 1925, the convention voted to begin a program of support with a unified budget for the denomination. With the adoption of this report, the Cooperative Program was born.

Moore said in discussing the present, "The Cooperative Program should be supported by every Baptist church, because it is the best method of supporting ministries and mission programs that any denomination has ever found."

Moore listed 10 reasons why churches should give support through the Cooperative Program. Among these are: (1) all the work of the denomination is included in the unified budget; (2) all of the funds are controlled by local churches who are working together, at the same time maintaining their autonomy; (3) the Cooperative Program is effective; (4) God calls people who are supported through the Cooperative Program to get the job done; (5) with the Cooperative Program there is accountability; (6) it gives the church and the convention a unified purpose; (7) the Cooperative Program establishes priorities; (8) the Cooperative Program is basic to the state of Arkansas; (9) God is blessing the Cooperative Program; and (10) the Cooperative Program is scriptural.

In discussing the future of the Cooperative Program Moore said, "Each generation must choose to cooperate. To make that choice for this generation will require that Southern Baptists have a conviction about missions, a confidence in fellow Baptists, and a spiritual dimension of commitment to the Holy Spirit's guidance."

The missions crisis and challenge confronting us

Jere Mitchell, pastor of First Church, Fayetteville, said, "In 1976 Southern Baptists had a great mission vision and voted to undertake the gigantic task of telling the good news of Jesus Christ to every person in the world by A.D. 2000. We call this the Bold Mission Thrust."

Mitchell reviewed the goals that had been set for Bold Mission Thrust. He also pointed out that it had been suggested that every state convention work toward a 50/50 division of the Cooperative Program receipts between the state convention and the Southern Baptist Convention by the year 2000. Arkansas has been working toward this goal.

Mitchell then asked the question, "Why

all the talk about percentage? Why not just talk about dollar amounts?" The answer is that the Bible, both the Old and New Testament, lays down percentage standards in giving. Paul talked about proportionate giving. Percentage giving is an indication of growth in sacrifice and growth in stewardship.

Mitchell illustrated by saying that, if an individual was earning \$1,000 per month and was tithing, he would be giving \$100 per month. But, if he received a \$100 per month increase and gave \$105 he would actually be giving less to the Lord's work for his percentage would have decreased below the title or 10 percent level.

Mitchell also emphasized that Arkansas is increasing its percentage to the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program. In 1972 Arkansas Baptists gave 24.87 percent to the SBC Cooperative Program. Since 1972 the state has increased its percentage to the SBC Cooperative Program. In 1987 we are giving 41.41 percent of our income to the Southern Baptist mission program. This represents a growth of 16.5 percent. Our goal is to move to 50/50. The new formula calls for as much as one percent increase per year and not less than .25 of one percent increase depending on the amount of increase given by our churches.

The percentage of undesignated receipts of Arkansas churches given through the Cooperative Program has grown from 11.7 percent in 1982 to 12 percent in 1986, for an increase of less than one-third of one percent. During this same period of time the state has increased from 37.66 percent in 1982 to 40.66 percent in 1986 for an increase of 3 percent. It is clear that the Arkansas State Convention is making greater increases and sacrifices to reach the world for Christ. The more rapid increase by the state convention than has been given by the churches has created the crisis.

Follow-up emphasis and long-range plans

Jimmie Sheffield, associate executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention spoke on follow-up emphasis and plans. Sheffield said that "Mission Advance 87-89" was essential for Arkansas Baptists in the short run but that Planned Growth in Giving held the key for financial success in the future. It, however, is not necessary for a church to agree to have Planned Growth in Giving in order to participate in Mission Advance.

Others participating in the program included Randel Everette, pastor of First Church, Benton, and Ferrell Morgan, director of mission for Concord Association, Fort Smith.

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



Woman's viewpoint

Marjorie Grober

Being a true encourager

Discovering our spiritual gifts has been a concern in our churches in the last few years. As I studied about gifts, exhorting or encouraging seemed my most likely gift. I remembered times I'd said such things as: sure you can do it, you have just the right quality, everyone loves you, etc. I thought it was a nice gift and tried to develop it by being more aware of people in need of encouragement.

An incident in our family made me take a more serious look at this gift. Our son's visit from Brazil coincided with the stewardship emphasis in our church. Our youngest daughter and her husband, though giving to

the church, were not actually tithing. A deacon in their Sunday School department gave a powerful testimony of tithing. They felt uncomfortable.

She brought up the subject by asking if it would be right to tithe with no assurance of enough left to pay school loans and other debts. I, knowing there was so little left already, said that I thought they could pay the school loans first. The schooling was the reason our son-in-law had his job. They could tithe the rest. I suggested increasing the amount each month until they reached the tithe. Our son said, "I think you should tithe the money you receive first and then

pay your bills as you can." Subject dropped. The next month, December, our daughter came in and said, "Guess what? We've decided to tithe. We thought about figuring to see if we could, but decided to make our decision and then do the figuring. We did. We have \$75 left." January's tithe has gone in, and a commitment is established.

Later, I talked with our son back in Brazil. I told him that he had been a true encourager. I said this because God had shown me through Hebrews 10:24-25 that being an encourager is more than telling someone they are great, or you know they can do the job, or being a one-woman pep squad. It may require that you use a spur (NIV) to encourage them to be all God wants then to be.

Marjorie Grober served as a Southern Baptist missionary to Brazil from 1955-1986. She is the mother of four grown children and a member of Immanuel Church in Little Rock.

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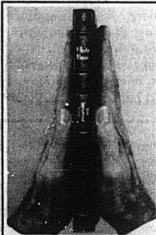
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President Reagan receives appeal for Lebanon missionaries

by Art Toalston

SBC Foreign Mission Board

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board has appealed to President Reagan to allow 13 missionaries to remain in Lebanon.

R. Keith Parks, the mission board's president, is seeking Reagan's intervention following the U.S. Department of State's refusal Feb. 11 to exempt Southern Baptist personnel from an order that all Americans leave Lebanon by March 4 or face revocation of passport privileges.

Meanwhile, Sen. Strom Thurmond, R-S.C., has urged Secretary of State George Shultz to give additional consideration to the matter.

In his letter to Reagan, Parks wrote: "We understand and appreciate our government's refusal to bargain with terrorists. We understand the desire to remove Americans from this threat. On the other hand, we ask that

we not capitulate to (terrorist) actions and threat by removing people who contribute to good will, reconciliation, education, peace and to a better future for law-abiding Lebanese folk."

The ongoing presence of missionaries would reassure the Lebanese that they "have not been deserted by the entire world," Parks added. It would "enhance future relationships between Lebanon and our country."

Parks asked for special consideration for six missionaries who have taught at Arab Baptist Theological Seminary, two related to the Beirut Baptist School, two heading up the Arab Baptist Publication Center, a couple related to the Baptist Center for Mass Communications and one missionary retiree.

The missionaries have worked in Lebanon for terms ranging from 19 to 39 years.

In appealing the State Department's decision, Parks said: "We believe there are some perspectives that we as Christians have that

would not be a concern for the State Department. From a Christian perspective, there is a call to willingness to sacrifice and face risks for the sake of the gospel. Missionaries through the centuries, from Paul until now, have been willing under the leadership of the Lord to face those risks."

From a biblical standpoint, Parks said, decisions on staying or leaving a country should rest with missionaries and their families, "because the Lord leads sometimes to face danger, sometimes to avoid danger."

"I think it comes down to an individual weighing all of the factors that he or she is aware of. Certainly knowing the language (in the country) and being able to communicate with the people helps to do that. The missionaries then prayerfully seek the Lord's guidance for their family and their individual lives as to what the Lord is leading them to do in light of the circumstances."

Church Building Conferences

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FBC, Mount Ida
Tuesday, March 24
Sang Ave., Fayetteville
Thursday, March 26, FBC, Gassville
Friday, March 27, Calvary, Little Rock

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First Baptist Church, Bettendorf, Iowa, is praying and searching for a full-time Minister of Music and Youth. Please send resume to: Staff Search Committee, FBC, 17th and Brown St., Bettendorf, IA 52722.

Peace Committee begins work on draft of final report

by Dan Martin

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—The Southern Baptist Convention's Peace Committee spent much of its 13th meeting working on instructions to a drafting subcommittee about the content of the group's final report, according to Chairman Charles Fuller.

The 22-member committee met Feb. 18-19, immediately following the February meeting of the SBC Executive Committee.

In addition to working on the "concept and precept" of the final report, and giving "information and input" to the drafting subcommittee, Fuller told Baptist Press the group spent "a large portion of time focusing on . . . some of the political problems in the 14.6 million-member denomination."

The group, which was created during the 1985 annual meeting of the SBC in Dallas, must make a final report to the 1987 annual meeting, scheduled June 16-18 in St. Louis.

Fuller said the drafting subcommittee, chaired by Bill Poe, an attorney from Charlotte, N.C., will meet twice in March and will submit a first draft of the report to a meeting April 2-3, in Nashville, Tenn. Other members of the drafting subcommittee are Albert McClellan, of Nashville; Jerry Vines

of Jacksonville, Fla.; Ed Young of Houston; Daniel Vestal of Midland, Texas; and Bill Hull of Shreveport, La.

"By and large this meeting was invested in determining some general content, but we did give special emphasis to the political matters," Fuller said.

"I do not know of any informed and thinking Southern Baptist today who is saying our differences or not real or that they are minor, or, as we heard several years ago, that they are basically semantic, a matter of verbiage. It is quite obvious to every informed and thinking Southern Baptist that we do have marked differences.

"Those differences must be addressed, both the theological and the political, if we are to continue to minister and work together," he added.

Prior to the committee meeting, Fuller presented a progress report to the Executive Committee. In the report, Fuller noted the committee had "hoped to be ready to present a preliminary draft of the report. We are not prepared to do that."

Originally, the Executive Committee had scheduled an hour during which it would receive the preliminary report and allow members to react to the content. When the committee was not ready, the Executive Committee only heard Fuller's report.

In his report, Fuller said there are "several assumptions upon which the Peace Committee must work:"

"First, the face value of statements and intentions made by those who have offered contributions to the peace process.

"Second, the conviction that we are committed to keep our convention together and not to entertain a split of the convention as a solution to our problems.

"Third, the willingness of Southern Baptists to consider changes of approach, within the bounds of our polity and our diversity, believing it is better to alter the garment, rather than to rend it.

"Fourth, the tenacity of prayer and faith on the part of the denomination of people who still believe God wants to use us and not pass us by."

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Peace Committee needs 'viable plan' for SBC healing, Rogers says

by Karen Benson

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—If the Southern Baptist Peace Committee does not come up with a "good, strong statement and a viable plan" for healing the strife-torn 14.6 million-member denomination, there will be "serious trouble in St. Louis," SBC President Adrian Rogers told the SBC Executive Committee.

The Peace Committee will bring a final report to the SBC when the convention meets in annual session June 16-18 in St. Louis. The committee has met during the past two years to seek solutions to the SBC controversy.

"The problem in the Southern Baptist Convention is basically a theological problem," Rogers told the SBC Executive Committee during its February meeting. While it has "political overtones," the problem nonetheless is "theological at the core," he explained.

Likewise, the denomination's unity is doctrinal in nature, he said. It is not the way the convention works together that brings unity, he said. Rather, "we work together because of that unity."

Many Baptists have claimed the SBC was organized to "do missions," Rogers said. "That's true, but why? It's because we have something we believe that we want to share. Because we believe, therefore we speak."

Consequently, cooperation is not "the basis of our unity," he insisted. "It is the outgrowth of our unity."

The controversy that has plagued the convention in recent years calls Southern Baptists to ask the question, "How diverse can we be and still stay together?" Rogers said.

He reminded the group Southern Baptists continually have reaffirmed the Baptist Faith and Message statement first adopted in 1963. "The Baptist Faith and Message statement is basically an inerrancy statement," he said. As recently as the SBC in Dallas in 1985,

messengers from Southern Baptist churches affirmed the statement again.

In fact, "I believe the greatest vote (in terms of numbers) taken in the history of the Christian church was that vote in Dallas," Rogers said. "More Baptists voted on that (with unanimity) than they've ever voted on anything at any other time," he said.

It was at that Dallas convention that the Peace Committee was formed and was given the Baptist Faith and Message statement as a "standard" for its work, Rogers said.

Rogers added the recent statement by the six Southern Baptist seminary presidents which affirmed that the Bible is "not errant in any area of reality" is additional affirmation that Southern Baptists believe in the inerrancy of the Bible. That statement, commonly called the "Glorieta Statement" because it was presented when the Peace Committee met in Glorieta, N.M., is "stronger than the Baptist Faith and Message statement," he said.

While Rogers said he does not believe in "forcing the Baptist Faith and Message statement or the Glorieta Statement on anybody," Southern Baptists have the "right to set parameters for those who work for us."

Setting those parameters is not to be interpreted as trying to "force our beliefs on anyone," he said. Rather, Southern Baptists ought to be able to expect those who work for them to stay within those parameters, he explained.

Southern Baptists also need to realize that the convention is not unified around missions, Rogers said, noting, "We are unified around Jesus and the Word."

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Mosley, Shackleford elected Executive Committee VPs

by Jim Newton

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—By a 32-26 margin, Alvin C. Shackleford of Nashville, Tenn., was elected director of Baptist Press by the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention during its February meeting.

During the same session, Ernest E. Mosley, executive director of the Illinois Baptist State Association, unanimously was elected executive vice-president of the Executive Committee, effective April 15.

Shackleford, editor of the *Baptist and Reflector*, newsjournal of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, announced the morning following his election he would accept the position as vice-president for public relations, effective March 15.

He succeeds Wilmer C. Fields, who retires March 31 after almost 28 years in the dual role as public relations director for the Executive Committee and director of the Baptist Press, news service of the SBC.

In a personal testimony and statement of philosophy, Shackleford said he had for 22 years as a Baptist editor in Tennessee and Indiana sought to "tell the truth and trust the people."

Shackleford said he believes a Christian journalist should present a "true, accurate and unbiased picture of what is going on in our denomination."

During an earlier meeting of the Executive Committee's administration and convention arrangements subcommittee, several committee members questioned Shackleford's record, charging he had not always been fair and unbiased in his coverage. That subcommittee voted 13-6 to recommend Shackleford for election by the full Executive Committee.

In accepting the position, Shackleford said he had "received what I interpreted as a definite indication from God that I should allow my name to be nominated," and to serve if elected.

He pledged "my life and my efforts" to provide a public relations program and press service "that is fair, objective, and balanced—open to all Southern Baptists." He also pleaded for "a year of grace to see if I can fulfill your expectations of this office."

SBC President Adrian Rogers of Memphis, Tenn., also had opposed Shackleford's nomination, telling reporters "little is known" about Shackleford. But Rogers said the request for "a year of grace" is fair and said Baptists need to honor the request.

Both Shackleford and Mosley said they believe the Bible is infallible and inerrant. "I was an inerrantist before I even learned the word," Shackleford said.

There was no debate concerning Mosley's election. The secret-ballot vote was 58-0.

Mosley is a former staff member of churches in Pine Bluff and Arkadelphia, Ark.



R. H. Dorris

"The nicest thing about retirement is not worrying about where my next dollar is coming from."

Six dollars doesn't sound like much, but for retired pastor R. H. Dorris it has gone a long way.

"I had just returned home from World War II and settled into my first pastorate when I started putting money in my retirement plan at the Annuity Board. I paid \$6 a month and the church paid \$6 a month. That's all we could afford, but it was a start."

From then on Rev. Dorris and the churches he served kept increasing their monthly contributions. Their labor was fruitful. Now he and Mrs. Dorris are enjoying their retirement years in financial security.

"I am free to do ceramics, spend time with friends and get involved in church organizations that I never really was a part of while I was a pastor."

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Convention Uniform

Teaching in the Temple

by Erwin L. McDonald, Arkansas Baptist
Newsmagazine editor emeritus

Basic passage: Luke 19:47 to 20:26

Focal passage: Luke 19:47-48; 20:9-19

Central truth: Rejection of Christ brings
ultimate disaster.

As the central truth of this week's study indicates, rejection of Jesus as one's Lord and Savior leads eventually and inevitably to rejection and destruction of the offender. For the setting of our study, read Luke 19:45-46.

(1) Dilemma of Christ's enemies (Luke 19:47-48)

The Lord's cleansing of the Temple had enraged the Jewish religious leaders. His taking over of the Temple and restoring it as a center for the teaching of the Scriptures interrupted their lucrative and corrupt lives. They were now fully committed to Christ's murder, the only question being when and how.

(2) Questions about authority (Luke 20:1-8)

Knowing the hearts of the Jewish leaders, Jesus sidestepped their effort to discredit him before the crowd that had assembled. He chose, rather, to give them their answer in the powerful parable of the vineyard.

(3) Accusations in a story (Luke 20:9-19)

The parable of the vineyard is found, with little variation, in all of the synoptic gospels. In Mark's account, the son who finally was sent and who was subsequently slain was "an only son, greatly loved."

Barnes, in his commentary on the New Testament, points out that in the accounts of Mark and Luke, the sending of the servants and their rejection by the keepers of the vineyard points to the dealings of the people of Israel with the prophets God had sent to them (He. 11:37 to Je. 4:4-6; 2 Ch. 36:16; Ne. 9:26; 2 Ch. 24:20-21).

The violence of the stewards in slaying the son of the vineyard's owner, Barnes continues, "refers to the conduct of the Jews in putting the Savior to death." God is often represented in the Bible as giving his son, his only-begotten and well-beloved Son, for a lost world (Jn. 3:16,17; 1 Jn. 4:9; Ro. 8:3,32; Ga. 4:4).

In the closing verses, 17, 18, and 19, Christ uses a different figure of speech, a building, to repeat his warning: "What is this then that is written, 'the stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner'?" And he continues, "Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken... it will grind him to powder."

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Life and Work

God's provision

by Harry T. Kennedy, Calvary Church, Hope

Basic passage: Luke 12:22-34

Focal passage: Luke 12:22-23

Central truth: Believing in God's power to provide frees us from the anxieties of life and causes us to give our energy to that which lasts.

Our passage addresses one of life's most testing questions: "Who do I depend on to meet my needs?" Nobody lives very long before this issue confronts us. Every child soon discovers their dependence for food, clothing, shelter and acquiring some desire is on the parents. It is this early beginning that sets the pace for seeing our Lord as the one who takes care of us as they observe attitudes and expressions of their parents on the subject.

Jesus begins by saying, "Do not worry or be anxious!" That's hard to comprehend in a society that lives on credit to the extent that we no longer are content with what we have, so we go deeper and deeper in debt. Wouldn't it be wonderful to be freed of such misery? We can, if we'll simply observe the carefree world of nature through which our Lord points out eternal truths.

The worries and anxieties plague us when we turn to our own energy to meet the needs of life. We must note that birds do not sit around, but are busy receiving from God as he honors their search. Neither do the flowers of the field struggle, they just receive from God their life. In some mysterious way; all of nature seems to say "I'm content to be what I am, where I am, and for however much time I am to be." Such natural contentment and natural response waits for those who learn to trust God for every need. There's no "keeping up with the Jones'" in this kind of lifestyle. There is the realization that our Lord enjoys supplying every need we have from cradle to grave (v. 32).

Being freed from such worry and anxiety enables us to turn our energy towards heaven and that which lasts eternally. There is no greater gift we could give to those in our families or around us beyond the opportunity of being "saved" than the gift of complete dependence upon the Lord and service to him.

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Bible Book

Jesus betrayed and denied

by Berdell Ward, Park Hill Church,
North Little Rock

Basic passage: John 18:1-27

Focal passage: John 18:3-5,10-11,17,19-27

Central truth: The challenge to walk with Christ is one that we face daily.

It was a volatile situation; feelings ran high and violence was in the air. Judas knew this. Before he went after Jesus, he gathered armed men to accompany him (v. 3). Peter knew it, too. Obviously, he had not gone out that night empty-handed.

Nor was it only these two who reflected the dangerous potential of the night. One of the officers of the high priest slapped Jesus during interrogation for what the officer considered an impertinent answer (vv. 19-22).

Only Jesus remained calm. Although he knew what was to befall him (v. 4), he walked through this scene of horror, where anger was barely masked behind every face, with quiet authority.

In fact, it is Jesus's quiet walk that night that is the remarkable truth of this lesson. In every event, he moved toward his destiny with confidence and authority (vv. 4,11,19-23).

On the other hand, an important contrast can be drawn between Jesus and those who were his enemies. Judas is pictured as "standing with those who came to arrest Jesus (v. 5). The officer who struck Jesus was "standing by" (v. 22). Even Peter is seen, after first resorting to the violent act of cutting off the ear of the high priest's slave, as "standing and warming himself" at the fire of the priest's servants and officers (v. 18).

It was in that setting that Peter was to fail his Lord most grievously. Seeking warmth, huddled around a charcoal brazier with the high priest's servants, Peter found himself "standing" with the enemy but unable to "make a stand" for Jesus.

According to tradition, a line was drawn in the sand at the Alamo when it became apparent that those who stayed to defend it would sacrifice their lives. Those who would volunteer to die for the fort and the cause it represented indicated their willingness to do so by stepping over the line.

Similarly, in our service for Christ a line is drawn before us, not once in a lifetime, not daily, but moment by moment as we meet the challenges of serving him. As volunteers, we can either step over the line and walk with him, or we can be found "standing" and warming ourselves with his enemies.

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Guenther predicts victory in Crowder-SBC lawsuit

by Stan Hastey

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—The attorney who has represented the Southern Baptist Convention in a lawsuit against the nation's largest Protestant denomination told the body's Executive Committee Feb. 16 he expects final victory in the case but expressed regret at what the dispute has cost.

James P. Guenther of the Nashville, Tenn., firm of Guenther and Jordan reported developments in the suit brought against the SBC by Robert S. and Julia Crowder of Birmingham, Ala., and other plaintiffs.

Alluding to the estimated \$200,000 which defense of the Crowder suit has cost the SBC thus far, Guenther reviewed earlier developments in the case, including a decision last year by U.S. District Judge Robert Hall of Atlanta that his court lacked jurisdiction because the dispute centered on church polity. Hall's decision cited the constitutional doctrine of separation of church and state

in rejecting the Crowder complaint.

That complaint centered on alleged parliamentary irregularities during the 1985 annual meeting of the convention in Dallas. Named as one of the defendants was former SBC President Charles F. Stanley of Atlanta, who according to the lawsuit violated denominational bylaws and standard parliamentary procedure by refusing to allow a challenge to a slate of his nominees.

Guenther told the Executive Committee that whether Southern Baptists agree with Stanley's parliamentary decisions in Dallas or not, "we would all abhor the idea of a federal judge serving as parliamentarian of the Southern Baptist Convention" or the notion that federal marshalls be present at annual meetings to enforce a judge's orders.

At stake in the case, he said, is the freedom of a church body to conduct its own business without interference from the state, a right rooted in the free exercise clause of the First Amendment.

Vestal denounces political actions

by Dan Martin

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Political coalitions in the 14.6 million-member Southern Baptist Convention are "inappropriate" and "immoral," and will "destroy" the convention, Peace Committee member Daniel Vestal told a meeting of Baptist journalists.

Vestal, pastor of First Church of Midland, Texas, told the journalists he was "speaking as an individual," and not as a member of the 22-member SBC Peace Committee.

The Texas pastor commented after Bob Terry, editor of *Word and Way*, the Missouri Baptist Convention newsjournal, said he had talked with two members of the SBC Executive Committee who told him of a caucus in which strategy was discussed about ways to block the election of Alvin C. Shackelford as vice president of public relations and director of Baptist Press.

Vestal, who said he was not aware of the Executive Committee caucus, said he has

listened to a tape-recorded interview with Paul Pressler in which he reportedly details formation of a coalition with Paige Patterson, president of the Criswell Center for Biblical Studies in Dallas, in the late 1970s with the intention of turning the SBC to a more conservative stance.

"There is a Pressler-Patterson coalition," Vestal said. "There are some of us who feel that this kind of coalition has no place in Southern Baptist polity. I think all of us recognize that there is politics in the convention. If you vote that is politics. There is the sharing of influence and that is politics."

"Many of us believe that the emergence of this (Pressler-Patterson) coalition, which spawned another coalition (Sherman-Chafin-Slatton-Cavender) is not only inappropriate politics but is immoral.

"It violates the essence of what congregational polity is. If that kind of politics existed in First Church of Midland, it would be only a short time before (we) split."

Interim president named at Ruschlikon

RUSCHLIKON, Switzerland (BP)—Guenter Wagner, professor of New Testament at Ruschlikon Baptist Theological Seminary, has been named interim president of the institution.

J. Altus Newell, president of the seminary the past two years, will leave the post March 10 to become pastor of the Dawson Memorial Baptist Church in Birmingham, Ala.

Wagner has been a Ruschlikon faculty member since 1958. On two prior occasions, in 1972 and in 1982, he was Ruschlikon's interim president. He was named to the post

by the seminary's executive board in late January.

Ruschlikon has "a record of seven presidents over the past 10 years," Wagner said, noting he hopes appropriate changes can be made during the interim period to make the seminary president's workload more manageable. Such changes might allow the president to tackle "the constructive day-to-day work" yet "still see tomorrow."

Knud Wuempelmann, general secretary of the European Baptist Federation, is heading a search committee for Newell's successor.

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