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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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Baptist Building
declared debt free
page 8



September 1, 1983
Arkansas Baptist
NEWSMAGAZINE

On the cover



Savoring the good news that was announced to the state convention's Executive Board Aug. 25, leaders view the final check paying off debt on the Baptist Building. L. L. Collins, Associate Executive Secretary (second from right) made the announcement and symbolically handed the check to Executive Secretary Don Moore. Other convention officers are (left) President Dillard Miller and Executive Board President Ken Lilly.

In this issue

8 Baptists' business

A budget recommendation was one of the items of business for Arkansas Baptists' Executive Board when they met Aug. 25 in Little Rock. Another was recent action by Southern Baptist College trustees.

13 literature price

Southern Baptist churches will get some help fighting inflation as the Baptist Sunday School Board delays a planned price increase for literature by three months.

Five conventions send aid units to Texas

HOUSTON (BP)—Disaster relief units from five Baptist state conventions moved into four coastal areas of Texas Aug. 19 to respond to victims of Hurricane Alicia.

Units from Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana and Oklahoma set up the morning of Aug 19 to serve meals to persons in areas where there was no available electrical power. That afternoon Mississippi's Disaster Relief Unit was on its way to set up in Baytown.

Alicia came ashore Galveston Island early Aug. 18, packing winds of more than 115 miles an hour, then moved inland, causing flooding and widespread electrical and telephone outages. Much of the city of Houston and most areas south of the city were left without power.

Galveston Island was completely without electrical power and telephone service, and only residents of the island and disaster relief units were being permitted to enter the city.

The disaster relief units from Texas and Louisiana were stationed on the island to begin feeding those persons who remained and those who were returning to begin the

cleanup process.

Texas Baptist's Temporary Emergency Child Care Unit was requested by Austin's Department of Human Resources to base its operation in Galveston. Headed by Jerry Vogel, director of child care for Champion Forest Church in Houston, the unit is equipped and staffed with personnel prepared to care for children of victims from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Trained volunteers use carefully developed instructional modules to help children cope with the traumatic ordeal of disaster.

The Arkansas unit initially set up at LaPorte, where a crew of five began emergency feeding operations. They later moved to Wooster Baptist Church, near Baytown, and were expected to move a third location Aug. 25.

A relief crew left Little Rock for the disaster area Aug. 26, planning to stay four or five days. In 10 days the first crew fed between eight and 10 thousand people at the two locations.

Former pastor to manage black church relations

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—Willie Simmons, who led an inner-city California church through its rocky but victorious transition from white to mostly black membership, will manage a new black church relations section for the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, beginning Aug. '31.

Simmons will seek to strengthen the foreign board's relationship with more than 300,000 black Southern Baptists, including members of predominately white churches. Simmons will work closely with more than 700 black churches to increase their awareness of world missions.

Blacks and black churches have been joining Southern Baptists in growing numbers during recent years. In 1951 only two black churches were affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention. By 1981, the number had grown to about 600.

To help blacks make missions a priority, the Foreign Mission Board in 1981 named its special ministries director, Elmer West, as a liaison to work with them. Simmons' position was created in West's department last spring.

Simmons, 50, was asked to become pastor at First Southern Baptist Church of Compton, Calif., 11 years ago, when the city and the church found themselves in a white-to-black transition. It was Simmons' first pastorate, and he was the church's first black pastor.

Simmons saw the church through a saga of struggle and victory. Many members had left, and at one time it looked as though the church would be forced to disband. But under Simmons' leadership, First Southern hung together and became a 350-member, missions-giving church involved also in community ministries.

Hee Haw to pay tribute to Nutt

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—A September broadcast of "Hee Haw," the country entertainment show, will feature a tribute to Grady Nutt, the show's "Prime Minister of Humor," who died in a plane crash Nov. 23, 1982.

Darrell Adams, a Southern Baptist singer and songwriter from Louisville, Ky., will perform "In the Sweet Bye and Bye" on the Sept. 17 broadcast in memory of two "Hee Haw" cast members who died during the past year: Nutt and Jimmy Riddle.

Adams sang the same song at a memorial

service for Nutt in Louisville following the performer's death and was invited to sing on the show's season opener by a "Hee Haw" producer.

Nutt was returning to his Louisville home from Cullman, Ala., where he had spoken to youth at First Baptist Church, when the private plane in which he was riding crashed. Two pilots also died in the mishap.

"Grady made everyone feel like they were special," said Adams, a friend of Nutt's. "He was a giver. His was not a standard ministry but an effective one. Southern Baptists have an empty spot."

An unscriptural division

The editor's page

J. Everett Sneed



Great harm has been done to the spread of Christianity by dividing Christians into clergy and laity. Though these divisions are not found in the New Testament, the idea has been planted in the minds of some that all the work of carrying the gospel is to be done by vocational religious workers. The false concept has, also, been conveyed that those who are not pastors, church staff members, missionaries or religion teachers are second class Christians.

In the Old Testament era a distinction was made between priests and others. The priests were the descendants of Aaron who had charge of the sacrifices. The rest of the Levites were to assist the priests.

After the coming of Jesus, there was no further need for priests to act as mediators, or to offer sacrifices. Christ, our High Priest, has himself become the sacrifice for all who will accept him as Saviour.

The New Testament declares the equality of all people. It could be difficult to determine whether a person was a pastor, a deacon or a non-vocational Christian worker. Everyone felt that his main job was to carry the gospel.

These truths are beautifully set forth by Paul as he said, "For he (Christ) is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us" (Eph. 2:14). The apostle is using a vivid picture of the Temple.

The Temple consisted of a series of courts, each a little higher than the one before. The first was the Court of the Gentiles to which anyone could come. A warning stone at the end of this area states that any Gentile who went beyond this point would be "guilty of his own death."

The second area was the Court of the Women. Beyond was the Court of the Israelites for adult men only. This was followed by the Court of the Priests (the Holy Place). The final area was the Holy of Holies, to which only the High Priest could go on the day of atonement.

Paul said that, "the middle wall of partition" has been broken down. This, of course, is an allusion to the fact that, when Jesus died on the cross, the veil of the Temple was rent in the middle from top to bottom (Mark 15:38; Luke 23:45). Thus, Paul vividly portrays the destruction of all artificial barriers between Christians. There are no superior or inferior Christians. There is no need for a priest to function as mediator. All the redeemed have access to Christ, our High Priest.

The terms "laity" (from the Greek "laos," meaning "people"), and "clergy" (from the Latin "clericus," meaning "clerk") developed as a result of special privileges and immunities granted to the professional ministry by Constantine I. Under certain circumstances, for example, the clergy were exempt from the jurisdiction of civil courts. The clergy developed a system of superior and inferior orders.

The "laity-clergy" system, as developed in the post-biblical era, also, carried with it tremendous theological significance. The idea was developed that only clergy could forgive sin, understand the scripture and carry on the most important affairs of the church.

The scripture, also, states clearly that God bestowed gifts on individuals to meet the various needs of the churches. Paul said, "And he (Christ) gave some apostles; and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:11-12).

God's setting apart of individuals to meet the needs of churches starts with the bestowal of grace gifts. Different types of gifts are given to meet a variety of needs. These gifts are given by God, not on the basis of individual merit, but upon God's sovereignty, wisdom and purpose. It is, also, clear that God gives at least one gift to every Christian.

The bestowal of grace gifts is not to elevate one individual over another. No one has a right to boast about a gift. The purpose is that God's people may be equipped to discharge Christian service in this world.

All Christians have the responsibility of telling others about Christ. Everyone has the duty to do the "work of ministry" to "the edifying of the body of Christ." Those whom God has especially gifted for places of church leadership have the additional responsibility of preparing others to be effective in the task that God has given to all Christians.

Diversity of gifts is necessary in the carrying out of the Lord's work. A pastor, for example, is gifted to exegese and explain the scripture. A businessman in the same congregation is gifted in money management. A church needs the gifts of both men.

We need to eliminate the arbitrary, unscriptural divisions that have been made in designating some as "laity" and others as "clergy." All are in the work of spreading the gospel. All are equally important in the eyes of God. Everyone has some gift that is needed in the carrying out of God's purpose.

Arkansas Baptist

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

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

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Send no money

The solicitation of money via television "ministries" has reached a flagrant state of abuse.

A few days ago I turned on a well known religious show and in one 28 minute segment was asked for money 31 times. I can remember when a televised religious meeting ended with the discreet reminder that "your faithfulness in standing with us makes this broadcast possible." What a contrast to the media hype ministries of today.

My stand is a simple one. It is an abuse when programming claims to be religious in content, but is actually a fund-raising telethon whose main goal is raising enough money so that an even wider audience can be subjected to yet more appeals.

I am tired of video preachers begging for money on television from dawn to midnight, and calling it the Gospel.

I am tired of God's name being used to validate all sorts of ridiculous promises "if you will only send money." Recently I heard this one: "If you send us \$100 today, God will give you \$1,000 by the end of the week — or a Cadillac, or pay the rent, etc." This is pure and simple hogwash designed to bilk the hopeless and helpless who grasp for straws.

I am disturbed that when this "religious" programming does have content it is heavy

ly entertainment. While entertainment has its place, healthy Christianity puts worship and service well before entertainment.

As a minister I am disturbed that the public image of modern Christianity has been taken from the responsibly trained clergy. Using slick media techniques "ministries" with little or no real training — responsible to no one but themselves — can propagate the most ludicrous notions and leave the human wreckage of their handiwork to be salvaged by the quiet pastors and counselors of our land.

What's the solution to this abuse? Simple. Keep your money at home. Find a local congregation you can relate to and support it financially. Christians existing in communities of supportive believers have done right well in our history — even before television. — James W. Watkins, Cordova, Tenn.

Human depreciation

One of our Southern Baptist colleges provided a retreat for its faculty recently in which the program was designed to hear from the professors themselves, rather than from outside experts.

According to the school's director of public relations, the chairman of the accounting department presented a paper entitled "Human Assets Accounting." A portion of the paper applied depreciation

formulas to employees in much the same manner that one would consider depreciation to equipment, buildings, cars etc. Someone commented in a discussion that followed that this type of thing originated in evaluating professional football players.

Human depreciation! "The old grey mare ain't what she used to be" philosophy. How long can a teacher, a pastor, a coach, a salesman be productive? What is the cut-off point and who will do the cutting? More importantly, who will make the judgment on matters-in-balance?

Example: Here is a pastor who does not have the physical stamina to make as many meetings as he once did or hike as far with the young as he did 20 years before. But what about his increasing experience and knowledge of his role? Must it be brains or brawn? Perhaps his wisdom, in balance, atones for lack of stamina. Similar applications could be made to any number of professions or services.

A former corporation executive recently walked into the office of a college president. "I am here to ask for an assignment," he said, with a plea in his voice. Was there anything he could do, free of charge, to help the school? Indeed there was. The president gave him the task of coordinating a list of other retirees whose wisdom might benefit the institution. Silent "depreciation" changed dramatically to creditable appreciation.

Depreciation need not set in until death. Even then one may possibly bequeath ongoing projects that can be completed by others. The old grey mare must not be a write-off before her time. — Andrew M. Hall, Delray Beach, Fla.



One layman's opinion

Daniel R. Grant/President, OBU

Did Brigham Young finish last or first?

Brigham Young University "finished last" recently, but a university spokesman said he was "delighted to hear it." American society is so competitive, and so oriented toward winning at all costs, that finishing last in anything is bad almost by definition. Yet Brigham Young was glad they finished "at the bottom of the heap," and, in reading about this in the newspaper, I found myself glad that they were glad.

As the newspapers seem inclined to do, they went to *Playboy* magazine for a news story. *Playboy* purported to be rating the "sexual temperature" at 20 colleges not long ago and polled 2,000 students in a survey of such things as campus style, administration, male-female ratio, and "the opportunity for sexual interaction." Their survey concluded that the University of Texas is at the top of the chart, and described that campus style as a "frontier free-for-all."

The president of the student body at

Brigham Young University told the Associated Press reporter, "I'm glad we flunked," but expressed resentment at the sarcasm and sharp satire the magazine aimed at Brigham Young. The newspaper account of all of this concluded that "the Mormon Church, unlike *Playboy*, strongly admonishes its followers to shun premarital sex." The news reporter might just as well have added that the Bible also admonishes men and women to shun premarital sex.

I would like to think Ouachita Baptist University also would have flunked this test, even though we still have not yet arrived at the state of perfection in Christian morality. Baptists, no less than Mormons, support the Christian teachings on human sexuality. All the magazine surveys in the world can declare those who follow Christian teachings to be losers, but they are clearly winners. It is just another confirmation of the amazing Biblical paradox that the last shall be first.

Threats won't sidetrack church construction

GODLEY, Texas (BP) — Despite tension in the community, hostile petitions and vandalism, a new Hispanic mission in Godley will be built as planned, according to Pastor Gordon R. Bergstrom of First Church, Godley.

Land for the mission was donated by dairyman Roy Carrell. On July 30, about 30 Hispanic and Anglo men sank steel posts and strung barbed wire around the land. The next day they discovered the fence had been cut and the posts bent over. Carrell's pasture fence also had been cut, and some of his cattle had escaped.

"It gives you a sick feeling to think that people feel this way," Bergstrom said. "But we are committed to see this project through."

Opponents reportedly see the mission as a "flop-house" or rescue mission and think transient illegal aliens will be attracted by prospects of free lodging and food. Some neighbors have denied the mission access to nearby water.

You'll be glad to know...

by Don Moore

... Hot dog! or, hallo! Which being translated means, I'm glad to be where I am. My friends of a more informal life-style will understand the first; my friends of a more reverent disposition will understand the second.

When your secretary brings in a report of employee activity and you learn that in the hot and "slow" month of July your employees have been in 97 churches and did 53 conferences in which 624 churches were represented, you can see why I'm excited! During July many of our people have had to attend their own orientation and training conference at Ridgcrest or Glorieta, so they've all had a good month.

When your bookkeeper tells you that you have had receipts that surpass the budget for July, you can see why I'm excited!

When your Siloam director reports a record 6,274 attended Siloam Springs Assembly with 315 people receiving Christ, how can I keep from being excited?

What a team effort is involved in all of these accomplishments! What a great and gracious God we have who entrusts to all of us such opportunities! What a joy to have His favor as we keep our hands to the plow of assisting churches to reach and disciple people. The future is as bright as our collective obedience.

... As you would know, all that comes to me is not "glad to know" information. "I am wounded again. I sometimes despair," began one letter. "I've lived all my life in a parsonage. My wife and I are just two or three years from retirement. What are we going to do for a place to live?" This was the question asked by one faithful pastor who has always pastored fairly small churches. "You'll never know what it has done to my wife and children for me to be fired from my church at the very time the ministry was flourishing." After corresponding with a pastor who had lost his wife from cancer, he replied, "Yes, Brother Don, I have a load on me. I have five children all at home and I have 4 or 5 thousand dollars in doctor and medical bills to pay, and I am not able to work."

These are a few of the "sad to know" burden bearing matters we try to share. It's still great to be His in His appointed place! Amen!

Don Moore is Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.



Moore

OBU employs new faculty, staff members

Fourteen new full-time and part-time faculty members, 13 new staff members, and eight graduate assistants have been employed by Ouachita Baptist University for the 1983-84 academic year, according to Daniel R. Grant, president of OBU.

New full-time faculty members include: Alton R. Crawley, associate professor of mathematics and computer science; Sue E. Crumpler, instructor in music; Steven R. Phillips, instructor of speech and drama; Juniorous A. Lee, missionary-in-residence; Ronald McPherson, assistant professor of military science; R. Eugene Ellis, instructor of speech, drama, and speech pathology; and Bill Vining Jr., instructor of physical education, assistant men's basketball coach, and head golf coach.

New part-time faculty members are: James L. Crawford, instructor of modern languages; Mark Baber, instructor of religion; Virline Nutt, instructor of mathematics; Craig Hamilton, instructor of music;

Anne L. Hammond, instructor of English; and Mary C. Worthen, instructor of music.

New staff members at OBU include: Cheryl Bass, admissions counselor; Don Blackmore, admissions counselor; Barry Burnett, assistant director of Evans Student Center; Kenny Burt, landscape gardener; Linda Childs, secretary in Business Office; Randy Childs, electrician; Joanne Crawley, secretary in Student Financial Aids Office; Ruth McDowell, head resident in Ernest Bailey men's dormitory; Kay O'Brien, Foster Grandparents Program Director; Maggie Payne, University nurse; Donna Reynolds, secretary in Athletics Office; Carol Smith, secretary in Data Processing Office; and Richard Wentz, part-time admissions counselor.

Employed as graduate assistants this year are: Kay Compton, education; Janet Wentz, education; Karen Craig, education; Peggy Stanley, science; Sim Flora, music; Barry Bates, music; Buddy Barnett, music; and Dennis Griffin, music.

BMS director retires

J. A. Gilbreath, will retire Dec. 31 after 15 years as executive director of Arkansas' Baptist Medical System. He will be succeeded by associate executive director Russell D. Harrington Jr.

Gilbreath became administrator of the Baptist Medical Center in 1946, when it was owned by the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. After retirement he will continue

as an administrative consultant to BMS

Harrington joined BMS in 1978 as Medical Center administrator. He has served as associate executive director since 1980.

Baptist Medical System consists of four hospitals — in Little Rock, North Little Rock and Arkadelphia — and the planned Parkway Village Retirement Community in Little Rock.

New writer for 'Lessons for Living'

D.C. McAtee, a member of First Church, Forrest City, is the new writer for the International series Sunday School Lessons for September and October in "Lessons for Living."

Rev. McAtee works with senior adults in his congregation and ministers through the Baptist Student Union at East Arkansas Community College. He also serves as the interim pastor of Colt Church. He recently retired as BSU coordinator for the community colleges of Arkansas.

A graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, he has served churches in Arkansas, Oklahoma, Alabama and Mississippi.



McAtee



Missions at Magic Springs Arkansas Baptist Youth Day

September 10

See Missions Pavilion

Missionaries, Journeymen, Video from mission fields, displays — Write Church Training Department, Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203 for tickets for Baptist Youth Day.

by Millie Gill/ABN staff writer

Gene D. Naramore

is serving as minister of music at Runyan First Church in North Little Rock, after four years of service at Little Rock Woodlawn Church.

Randy Eller

has resigned as youth director at Natural Steps Church in Roland. A native of Jacksonville, he will continue his studies at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Johnny Arthur Palmer Jr.

began his service as pastor of Altheimer First Church Aug. 23. A native of Grand Rapids, Mich., he is a graduate of Dallas Bible College, Dallas, Texas. He has served on the staff of churches in both Arkansas and Texas. Palmer and his wife, Ann, have two children, Jeremiah, age four, and Melissa, age two.

Tom M. Deere

is serving as pastor of the Walnut Valley Church near Hot Springs. He is a graduate of the University of Arkansas and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Clay T. Terry

was recently ordained to the ministry by Siloam Springs First Church.

Paul LeCrone

has joined the staff of Rogers Immanuel Church as educational/outreach minister, coming there from Tulsa, Okla.

Alvin Reynolds

was recently honored by Hope First Church in recognition of his retirement as maintenance supervisor. Pastor Richard Stinner presented him with an engraved gold pin.

Bobby B. Page

is serving as pastor of the West Fork First Church. A former U. S. Air Force officer, he has served as administrator and coordinator for two evangelistic associations. He is a graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Page and his wife, Ruth, have two children.

Paul D. Parker

is serving as pastor of Nall's Memorial Church at Little Rock. A native of Shirley, he is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He has served churches in Tennessee, Mississippi, New Mexico and Arkansas. Parker and his wife, Betty, are parents of two married children.

Jonathan Brobston

has resigned as pastor of the Cass Church to become pastor of a Missouri congregation.

Ed Given

has been called to serve as youth minister by the Harlan Park Church in Conway.

William M. Burnett

has resigned as pastor of the Valley Church in Searcy. He recently accepted a call to serve as interim director of missions for Calvary Association, having served the association as DOM from 1963 to 1980. A graduate of Ouachita Baptist University, he also attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and East Texas Baptist College in Marshall, Texas. While serving the Valley Church he led in the construction of a 4,400 square foot educational facility, built to accommodate the growing congregation.

Friendship Church

at Springdale will ordain Dave Anglin to the ministry Sept. 11.

Marshall First Church

presented pastor Sid Byler and Mrs. Byler with a 10-day trip to the Holy Lane, recognizing his seven years as pastor of the church. Byler's anniversary date with the church was Aug. 15.

Northside Church

at Eudora was in revival July 32-Aug. 4. Rex Easterling of Rogers was evangelist. Perry Anderson of Oak Grove, La., directed music. Pastor John H. Hall reported four professions of faith and three rededications.

Hot Springs Second Church

will be host church for Labor Day weekend services sponsored by evangelist Sam Cathey. Speakers for the Saturday evening, all-day Sunday and Monday morning services will include Don Moore, executive secretary of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, Jimmy Draper, president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Greenbrier First Church

will observe homecoming Sept. 11 with W. O. Vaught of Little Rock as morning worship speaker. The afternoon service will be a music program. Former pastors and members will be special guests.

Grand Avenue Church

at Hot Springs honored pastor Clyde Harness and his family Aug. 21 in recognition of his five years of service as church pastor.

Camden First Church

observed its 30th anniversary Aug. 28 with a renovation dedication service.

Russell J. Clearman

of Mineral Springs died Aug. 21 at age 60 in Baptist Medical Center in Little Rock following a lengthy illness. Dr. Clearman, pastor of Central Church of Mineral Springs, served for 14 years as pastor of the Olivet Church in Little Rock, over two separate tenures. He resigned in June 1976 and became pastor of Woodland Acres Church in Tulsa, Okla. Survivors are his wife, Earlene Arnold Clearman; two sons, David Clearman of North Little Rock and Truett Clearman of Jackson, Wyo.; his mother, Minta Quickle of Mineral Springs and two grandchildren. Funeral services were conducted Aug. 23 at the Olivet Church. Graveside services were Aug. 24 in Lone Wolfe, Okla.

briefly

Central Church

at Magnolia held a dedication service Aug. 21 for the Steve Ford family who has been appointed by the Foreign Mission Board for service in Upper Volta.

River Road Church

in Redfield observed its sixth anniversary Aug. 14 with homecoming services from 9:45 a. m. to 3:30 p. m. Pastor J. W. Whitley reported activities that included a special message, a church history, testimonies, music and a covered dish meal.

focus on youth

Cabot Mount Carmel Church

youth have returned from Manteo, N. C., where they assisted the Roanoke Island Church with a four-day crusade that resulted in 37 professions of faith. Youth choir members also sang at the Capitol and White House in Washington, D. C.

Fort Smith Windsor Park Church

youth and sponsors participated in a mission trip to Omaha, Neb., July 23-30, assisting two churches there with survey work, Vacation Bible Schools and music programs. Steve Bell, minister of youth, reported 35 professions of faith, including 11 door-to-door witnessing decisions.

Roland Natural Steps Church

youth were in Blytheville Aug. 12 to conduct services at the Cross Roads Church. Problems confronted by today's youth and biblical answers were presented in a musical and skit performances, directed by Randy Eller, minister to youth.

River Road Church

in Redfield hosted youth and adults from Pensacola, Fla., July 31-Aug. 5. Mission efforts resulted in 24 professions of faith.

Southern Baptists must deal with diversity, Shurden urges

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP) — The Baptist association, traditionally cherished as a "fellowship of kindred minds," must now face "multiple levels of diversity and pluralism," church history professor Walter B. Shurden told associational directors of missions during the annual home missions conference.

Shurden, who recently resigned as dean of the School of Theology and professor of church history at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., to become chairman of the Department of Christianity at Mercer University in Macon, Ga., noted Southern Baptists are "not as regional . . . not as white . . . not as poor" as we are past decades. "And if anyone thinks we are not today theologically, ethnically and politically diverse, they have not been to the last several sessions of the Southern Baptist Convention."

"Recognizing the diversity in our denominational past will help save us from becoming white-knuckled, holding firmly to half-truths," he explained.

"One of Southern Baptists' greatest needs today is to re-saturate our pastors, church staff and churches with historic Baptist distinctives," Shurden insisted. The

SCB's members must continue to undergird Bold Mission Thrust, "but unless we do something to 'Southern Baptists' converts and churches, we will know losses in the midst of gains.

"In addition to Bold Going, Bold Growing, and Bold Giving, we must have some Bold Knowing of the Southern Baptist heritage," Shurden said.

He also urged directors to "reaffirm the association's pastoral role" by providing advice, counsel and discipline to their churches. "In a false effort at honoring local church autonomy, associations have often fallen into a passive, rather than active, posture toward church difficulties," he said. Shurden suggested associations "should not wait for pluralism to become polarization before they act."

Directors of missions were advised to "reemphasize Bible study" to discover a theology of Christian tolerance. The "essence of the gospel is the welcome Christ shows his enemies," Shurden said. Southern Baptists must also "welcome one another" in the same spirit.

The week also featured nightly sermons by Robert Naylor, president-emeritus of Southwestern Baptist Theological Semi-

nary, Fort Worth, Texas. Naylor declared, "Churches are to be confrontational, not accommodational, in this world," as well as "local, visible and relevant to human needs. Before the world ever conquers Christianity, it must defeat its churches," he said.

Crucial Questions for Christians

by Glen D. McGriff

Dr. McGriff, our pastor often preaches on "denying oneself", but recently preached on "self-acceptance". Could you help me understand this contradiction?

It is understandable that confusion arises over such a paradox. Communication is a complex art. Truth is also infinite and expansive. Both these factors contribute to the problem experienced.

A pastor cannot explore or explain all truth relative to a given subject in one 20 to 30 minute message. It is also difficult for one to harmonize what has been said in the past with what is being said in the present.

The Bible reveals that Jesus valued persons, the authentic self or human personality. The Bible also admonishes us to die to self — or self interest. Self-ism or self-centeredness seems to be what Jesus admonishes us to overcome.

Being able to accept oneself provides a basis for the acceptance of others. This implies a recognition of essential worth of persons. It is a respect for God's creative work. It is an agreement with God as creation was considered and declared to be "very good."

Self acceptance enlarges and extends human life. Self-ism or self-centeredness restricts and diminishes. Self-acceptance recognizes that one "fits" in the created order. Self-ism tries to "fit" creation in the singular self. Self-acceptance celebrates the wisdom of God in both creation and redemption. Self-ism rejects the very presence of God by making self the only recognized pre-eminence.

Glen D. McGriff is Director of the Ministry of Crisis Support, Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

Inquiries, comments or questions to be used anonymously in this column should be sent to Questions, Ministry of Crisis Support, Medical Towers Building, Suite 660, 9601 Lile Dr., Little Rock, AR 72205.



McGriff

missionary notes

Mr. and Mrs. J. N. Burnett, missionaries to Brazil, have completed furlough and returned to the field. Their address is: Caixa Postal 941, 66000 Belem PA, Brazil. A Texan, he was born near Willis Point and grew up in the Terrell area. The former Barbara Evans, she was born in Hazelvalley, Ark., and lived in Wichita and near Haysville, Kan., while growing up. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1966.

Mr. and Mrs. D. Edwin Pinkston, missionaries to the Ivory Coast, have arrived in the States for furlough. Their address is: 601 S. Hughes, Little Rock, Ark. 72205. They are natives of Arkansas. He was born in Camden and grew up in Crossett. The former Greta McFerrin, she was born in Hill Top, and lived there and in Harrison while growing up. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1966.

Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert A. Nichols, missionaries to Paraguay, have arrived in the States on furlough. Their address is: Rt. 3, Box 102, Arkadelphia, Ark. 71923. They are natives of Arkansas. He is from Mountain View, and she is the former Deane Marshall of Cabot. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1958.

Dr. and Mrs. Jack E. Tolar Jr., missionaries to Nigeria, may be addressed at P.O. Box 211, Jos, Nigeria. He is a native of San Antonio, Texas. She is the former Barbara Corington of Hot Springs, Ark. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1962.

Mr. and Mrs. Graydon B. Hardister, Baptist representatives to Jordan, have completed furlough and returned to the field. Their address is: P.O. Box 17147, Amman, Jordan. They are natives of Arkansas. He was born near Reyndell and also lived in Pine Bluff. She is the former Betty Williams of Bauxite.

Mrs. Virginia W. Oliver, missionary to Brazil, has completed furlough and returned to the field. Her address is: Caixa Postal 1404, 66000 Belem, PA, Brazil. The former Virginia Winters, she was born in Leslie, Ark., and also lived in Alabama and Mississippi while growing up. She and her late husband were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1950.

Brigitte Atnip, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Logan C. Atnip, married Jeffrey Paul Ritchey on August 6 in Houston, Texas. Her parents are in the States and may be addressed at 8102 Amelia, 411J, Houston, Texas 77055. He is a native of Marmaduke, Ark., and she is the former Virginia Hill of Elberton, Ga. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1956.

Mr. Grover Blount, father of Mrs. C. Thurman Braughton, missionary to the Philippines, passed away August 8 in North Little Rock, Ark. Mrs. Braughton, the former Kathleen Blount of Little Rock, may be addressed at Box 7480, A'mail Exchange, Manila Int. Airport, Philippines 3120. Her husband was born in Altus, Okla., and also lived in Hot Springs, Ark., while growing up.

Executive Board calls for explanation on Southern College

Arkansas Baptist State Convention leaders are hopeful that a compromise can be worked out to avoid direct conflict over a vote by the 1982 state convention and recent action by the Board of Trustees of Southern Baptist College at Walnut Ridge to begin offering at least one baccalaureate degree.

According to Executive Secretary Don Moore, plans were made in a meeting of the Executive Board's executive committee following the Aug. 25 session in Little Rock in which the full Executive Board heard a report from the college. The state body voted 36-23 to hear the explanation of the action by SBC trustees. That came after the defeat of a substitute motion calling for the convention-owned and operated institution to comply with the convention's vote or plan to revert to a private institution.

The college's president, D. Jack Nicholas, and three trustees explained the events leading to the vote July 12 to proceed with a four-year program. All said they felt the trustees had shown willingness to follow procedures set up by the convention. Nicholas reported that he and trustee president John Wright of Little Rock had met with Ken Lilly, president of the Executive Board, and with the executive secretary.

Nicholas said that he had been told that a request for reconsideration of the four-year program would be referred to the Executive Board if it were brought to the convention directly, but, on the other hand he had been told that there is not time for a request to be brought again through the channels of the Executive Board's Program Committee and the Executive Board before the November annual meeting.

The college president also said the school had taken steps to overcome objections to the original plan for four-year status by dropping federal funds and additional money from the state convention as sources of funds. He promised that the school would proceed only as money was available so the convention would not be stuck with a debt if problems developed.

The Executive Board heard the information but took no action at that meeting. Now, according to Moore, the college leaders will meet with the Program Committee Sept. 1 to discuss a compromise on the plans for baccalaureate programs. The Executive Committee also decided to call a special meeting of the Executive Board for Thursday, Sept. 8, at 10:30 a.m., to consider any recommendations of the Program Committee. Any recommendation of the Executive Board on the proposal would go to the state convention's annual meeting Nov. 15-17 in Pine Bluff.

Since procedure was much of the issue on the college's action, the Executive Board president had invited the chairman of the state convention's Constitution and Bylaws



Committee to speak to constitutional issues.

Johnny Jackson, pastor of Forest Highlands Church in Little Rock, said he was speaking as an individual, but would be dealing with the issue on an official basis if a request came to the annual meeting.

Jackson expressed the opinion that the issue is no longer approval of four-year programs. "The issue is whether the trustees of Southern Baptist College have acted in accordance with the will of the convention," Jackson said.

Both the Executive Board and the messengers to last November's Arkansas Baptist State Convention already had taken action on Southern Baptist College's request.

After the college's board of trustees voted

in May 1981 to initiate four-year programs of study, the matter was referred to a study committee out of the convention's Executive Board. This group consulted a professional research firm, whose report recommended against expanding academic programs at that time. The study committee voted unanimously to deny the request, based on the consultants' findings.

When it was learned that Title III funds of up to \$1 million over the next five years were available, a special meeting of the study committee was called, and they rescinded their previous action.

After a lengthy discussion in the meeting of Aug. 26, 1982, the Executive Board voted 40-23 to recommend to the messengers to the 1982 annual meeting that Southern "be

stee vote on four-year plan

Renovation was completed and the "new" Baptist Building at 525 West Capitol was occupied in 1969. Now the state convention is free of debt on the property.



permitted to offer the baccalaureate degree in accordance with their request made on July 16, 1981."

Supporters of the recommendation cited what they felt was "the Lord's will and direction," which college president D. Jack Nicholas said they had sought every step of the way. Earl McWhorter, a Hot Springs orthodontist, urged the Board to accept the decision of their own Program Committee, who agreed with the study committee's findings.

Those opposing the recommendation for four-year programs cited the forecasts for the number of students who will attend college in the next two decades. Murray Smart, Dean of the School of Architecture at the University of Fayetteville and a deacon in

Fayetteville First Church, said that colleges and universities are "absolutely panicked" at the prediction of a drop of one-third in enrollment by 1992.

Smart also cited a documented trend away from private college education to public schools.

When the proposal came to the state convention's annual meeting on Nov. 17, messengers discussed it at length before voting 459-417 against the recommendation.

J. W. L. Adams, pastor at Beech Street Church in Texarkana, and a member of the Executive Board, said the long-range costs of maintaining the larger program for Southern would likely involve "millions of Cooperative Program dollars."

Don Hook, a retired pastor and past presi-

dent of the state convention, offered a substitute motion, calling for a committee to be appointed to study the proposal further and report to the 1983 annual meeting. Hook said he was amazed that the Executive Board would recommend such a large project without any estimate of costs and no suggested source of revenues. Hook's motion was defeated approximately 2-1 by a show of hands.

Several proponents of the four-year proposal said they were willing to step out in faith and that their commitment to expansion was the result of much prayer and conviction that the action was God's will.

John Wright reported that he and other board members had prayed intensely about the matter. "We are here to determine not what the will of the people is, but what the mind of Christ is."

Other maneuvering to prevent a vote on the recommendation was rejected by the messengers. This included a motion by Earl Verser, a Eudora layman who was chairman of the board of trustees of Ouachita Baptist University, to amend the proposal to assure that funds to expand Southern's program not be taken from Ouachita. A motion to table the recommendation was made by Daniel Grant, Ouachita's president.

The discussion required two extensions of time beyond the scheduled slot for Executive Board recommendations. Convention President Dillard Miller decided that the final vote would be by secret ballot, and a count revealed that the proposal was defeated by 42 votes.

The business of the college's report occupied about one half of the session of the Executive Board. The other business of the meeting consisted of the adoption of a 1984 budget of \$10,833,333, election of members to fill unexpired terms in the body, and other reports.

During the morning session Executive Board members elected seven persons to fill unexpired terms on the board. These had been first nominated by the convention's nominating committee. Named to serve remainders of terms were Ted Houston, representing Arkansas Valley Association (1983-84); Randy Cross, Carey Association (1983-85); Ferrell Morgan, Concord (1983-84); Sards Beyer, Delta (1983-84); Gary Fulton, Greene County (1983); Robert McDaniel, Liberty Association (1983) and Atherton Hiett, Mississippi County, (1983).

The board also voted to place each of the new members on subcommittees. McDaniel was elected to the Program Committee and the other six were named to the Finance Committee.

The 1984 convention budget, an increase of 8.33 percent, was adopted after a brief explanation by Thomas A. Hinson of West Memphis, chairman of the finance subcommittee.

Your state convention at work

Cooperative Ministries Race Relations Day

February 12, 1984 is the suggested date for *Race Relations Day* in our church calendars. Now is the time to plan a successful program.



Ferguson

Each year we have a growing number of churches in Arkansas that participate in a joint worship service (usually on Sunday night) with a National Baptist Church. The reports I receive are all positive, and some are sensational.

"The whole town

came", or "you would not believe the joy we experienced", are typical comments. I honestly believe the Lord gives a special blessing to us when we seek to mend the broken fabric of our Baptist life, through a *Race Relations Day* program.

Of course you can have such a program at anytime of the year. February is just a suggested date. However, or whenever you plan for your date, seek out the National Baptist pastor and talk everything over with him first. I think you will find him cooperative and I know you and your congregation will be blessed. If I can assist you in any way, please write or call. — Robert Ferguson, director

Evangelism Area Evangelism Conference

It is a special joy for your State Evangelism Department to bring conferences to different areas in the state. The theme of this year's area conferences will be "Evangelism and Missions Our Priority". We will share in a conference at the following places:



Grober

Southern Baptist College, Walnut Ridge, Sept. 12; First Baptist Church, Brinkley, Sept. 13; Ouachita Baptist

University, Arkadelphia, Sept. 15; First Baptist Church, Waldron, Sept. 16.

Our featured speaker this year will be Dr. Glendon Grober, Director of Evangelism in Brazil. Glendon will speak each night on "Evangelism Our Priority". He is a strong Bible-believing preacher. He loves lost souls with great compassion. He is a dynamic preacher of the Word.

I will be privileged to speak on "The

Evangelistic Church" at Southern Baptist College. Wes Kent, associate in the Evangelism Department will speak at First, Brinkley and First, Waldron. Dr. Don Moore will be the speaker at Ouachita Baptist University.

The music will be directed by Ervin Keathley, director of the state Music Department. The host will be providing special music each night. We look forward to seeing you in the conference in your area. — Clarence Shell, director

Sunday School Sunday School Convention

The 1983 State Sunday School Convention will be held on September 19-20 in Park Hill Church, North Little Rock. The



Ratton

Speakers during the general sessions will be Neil Jackson, Jr., growth consultant with the Baptist Sunday School Board; Clarence Shell, director of the Evangelism Department, Arkansas Baptist State Convention; and Freddie Pike, interim director of the Sunday School Department, Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

Age-group conferences are scheduled during the five sessions. Teachers and officers can receive study course credit by attending the morning and afternoon conferences and reading specified books.

Encourage your teachers and officers to attend every session of the convention. — Pat Ratton, preschool consultant.

Family and Child Care Stay in touch

It is important to us for you to know what we are doing. We want to stay in touch. You let us know, in a variety of ways, that you are interested and want to know.

After reading the recent issue of our quarterly newsletter, Mrs. Mildred Merryman of Texarkana writes, "Thank you so much for sending me Volume 1, Number 1. It was a pleasant surprise indeed. I have thoroughly enjoyed reading it from 'kiver to kiver' and back again. The pictures and stories mean so much to me. I shall pass this on to a friend who likes to read material such as this. Every day I praise God for the wonderful work you do. Thanks again."

"Volume 1, Number 1" does not mean

this is our first issue. It does refer to a new "front cover format" which will feature one child each issue and share about his or her special accomplishments.

Our next issue will include pictures and stories of a fun-filled summer which you made possible for our children. Summers are special times in the lives of the children who live in our Children's Home, Group Home for Boys and Emergency Receiving Homes. It is a time of recreation, reflection, and fun — a needed break from the demands and pressures of the regular school year.

Do you receive our newsletter? If not, would you like to receive it? If so, please send us your name and address and we will place your name on our mailing list to receive our next issue in September.

We want to stay in touch. — Johnny G. Biggs, executive director.

Family Ministry Single Adult Day

Single Adult Day is Sept. 11, for Southern Baptists. This is a day to celebrate single adults as members of the church family.

increase church awareness of singles' needs and concerns, recognize their gifts and talents, acknowledge their service and encourage outreach.

Many churches will observe this suggested date while others will select an alternate time. "We

Really Do Need Each Other," theme for the 1983 Labor Day conferences at Ridgcrest and Glorieta, is suggested as theme for the day. A planning kit, *Single Adult Day Emphasis Kit*, is available from Material Services Department, Baptist Sunday School Board, to assist church leaders in planning an effective Single Adult Day.

Single adults comprise a significant segment of the adult population of our state. These are persons who have never married, are widowed, deserted, separated, divorced, and single parents. Single adults have significant talents and spiritual gifts to use for church development and outreach. They also have distinctive needs which can be met best by loving, caring churches.

Thirty-nine and one-half percent of all households in the United States consist of single persons. In 1980, 23 percent of all households consisted of one person living alone. An estimated 44 percent of all children born in the 1980's will spend some time in their lives in a single parent household.

Single Adult Day is a singular opportunity.

ty for Arkansas Baptist churches to minister in 1983. Plan well for a good day Sept. 11.—Gerald Jackson, associate

Church Training Convention highlights

"Developing Believers" will be the emphasis of the annual Church Training Convention when it meets on Oct. 25 at



Immanuel Church in Little Rock. Nolan Howington will be the speaker for the morning and evening sessions of the convention. For the past nine years Dr. Howington has been curriculum coordinator for the Church Training Department at the Sunday School Board. He is a former pastor of First Church in Little Rock and professor of preaching and Christian ethics at Southern Seminary.

A special feature of this year's convention will be an overview of the nine Equiping Center Modules that are recommended for use during the Pastor's Seminar next year. Pastors will have an opportunity to attend three one-hour conferences for an overview of three of the nine modules. These will be led by pastors and other persons with special training or experience in the subject areas dealt with in these modules.

Age-group conferences will be offered for Church Training leaders at each of the three sessions. The Church Training Fair, an annual feature of the convention, will be open before each of the sessions with exhibits on all aspects of the Church Training Program. Music for the convention will be coordinated by Ervin Kestley, state music director. — Robert Holley, director

Stewardship Department The budgeting process: budget promotion

Money is a sensitive issue and this causes some Baptists to evade money matters in church life. A committee may want to present the budget, get it approved and then forget it.

Should a church use a budget promotion to elicit support from the largest possible percentage of its members? Churches that use some form of budget promotion will receive more resources for the church's ministries.

Churches aren't without a cafeteria choice of budget promotion programs. Non-denominational agents and indepen-

dent firms offer their materials and promise success. The novel, the colorful and the brief, however, may not accomplish what a church needs to do in developing Christian stewards and supporting local and world ministries.

Southern Baptists have developed good budget programs. Many of them started in local churches and were field tested before being made available to the churches. They are based on biblical principles. They are attractive. Each program involves church members. These budget promotion programs are reasonable in cost.

You may request a sample packet of one of the budget programs from the Stewardship Department. Packets may also be ordered from the Stewardship Commission. Stewardship will improve when a church uses Basic Budgeting, Tithes Commitment, Stewardship Revival, Growth in Christian Stewardship, Committed to Ministries or Forward Program materials. — James A. Walker, director

Christian Life Council Arkansas dime's worth

Occasionally, an older adult is heard to say, "I can remember when a coke or candy bar could be bought for 10 cents. A



Parker

dime is now worthless." There's one way a dime is still worth something. In Arkansas a dime is required to make a local phone call. In some parts of the country it takes a quarter. Realizing that some young men are gentlemen and some are not when dating, the following is a good suggestion regardless of the cost. A wise father should give his daughter the appropriate coin to give to her date if perchance he pushes her into a corner. She is instructed to say, "Call my dad, if he says what you are suggesting is okay with him, then it's okay with me." Doing that may eliminate those not gentlemen, thereby reducing dating possibilities, but in the long run many heartaches will also be eliminated.

It's extremely important that lines of communication be kept open between parents and children. If they are, then this and other wise counsel can be given, accepted and acted upon.

"My son (daughter), hear the instruction of your father, and do not forsake the law of your mother; for they will be graceful ornaments on your head, and chains about your neck. My son (daughter), if sinners entice you, do not consent." (Prov. 1:8-10 NKJV) — Bob Parker, director

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God of Creation

by D. C. McAtee, member, First Church, Forrest City

Basic passage: Genesis 1:1; Psalm 19:1-6; 136:3-9; Acts 17:24-28; Romans 1:20

Focal passage: Genesis 1:1; Psalm 19:1-6; Acts 17:24-28; Romans 1:20

Central truth: God made all things and they are witnesses unto him.

In Psalm 14:1 God says "The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God." Our faith in or lack of faith in God makes a big difference in the kind of person we are to become.

1. God's creation (Genesis 1:1)
"In the beginning God": this refutes the ideas of no God or many gods.

"In the beginning God created": this refutes fatalism with its belief in chance, and that of evolution with its idea of becoming.

"In the beginning God created heaven and earth": this refutes pantheism, which teaches that God and the universe are identical and materialism which asserts the eternity of matter.

2. God's creation proclaims (Psalm 19:1-6)
The heavens declare the glory of God (v1); this proclamation goes on night and day (v2); this proclamation knows no language barrier (v3); this proclamation knows no geographical boundary (v4).

3. Paul's preaching confirms creation's proclamation (Acts 17:24-28)

In this passage Paul confirms what the psalmist has already stated. God uses him to reassert it to a different generation. He calls on us as present day witnesses to further proclaim it for him.

4. Paul's preaching further proclaims that there is no excuse for people not to believe (Romans 1:20)

Evidences of God are all about us and have been from the creation of the world. They are clearly seen. They are understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse. Paul says in Acts 17:30, "And the times of this ignorance, God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent." The evidence is clear when you look for it.

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Life and Work

Through tragedy to fulfillment

by Mason W. Craig, First Church, McGehee
Basic passage: Ruth 1-4

Focal passages: Ruth 1:1,8,16-17,22; 2:5-7; 3:1; 4:13-17b

Central truth: The manner in which one faces life's difficulties will determine the ultimate effect they will have.

A sour disposition, a defeatist attitude, or a cynical spirit are often blamed on life's circumstances. Whether or not life's difficult moments are a test which is handled triumphantly, or a trial which spells defeat depends upon the manner in which they are confronted.

Naomi did not allow her circumstances to defeat her. Because of that, she was able to move through tragedy to fulfillment. She did this by:

1. Managing a disposition that honored God.

She could very honestly say, "...the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me." Yet she gave no evidence of resentment or bitterness. She had the disposition to accept that which God allowed, without letting it destroy her faith or break her spirit.

2. Maintaining a flexibility that allowed for adjustment.

"Then she arose with her daughter-in-law, that she might return from the country of Moab: for she had heard in the country Moab how that the Lord had visited his people in giving them bread" (Ruth 1:6b). Naomi not only had to change her location, but she had to change her lifestyle also. The failure to be flexible can, and often does, add to difficulties of life. This is a changing world in which flexibility is necessary, if there is to be triumph rather than defeat.

3. Manifesting a wisdom that was capable of giving good counsel.

Naomi's counsel in Ruth 3:1-5, while peculiar to us, was very acceptable. It proved to be wise counsel. It led to marriage in which Ruth bore a son who was to be the grandfather of David. Ruth's blessings were also blessings to Naomi.

There is no circumstance of life over which one may not triumph, if one maintains a God-honoring disposition, flexibility and wisdom.

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Bible Book Series

Making a frustrating life better

by Doug Dickens, First Church, Hot Springs
Background passage: Eccl. 7:1 to 8:15

Focal passage: Eccl. 7:2-3,8-10,13-14,21-23,29; 8:2,14-15

Central truth: The frustrations of life can be faced as we live realistically and faithfully in the will of God.

There are times in our lives when most of us can identify with this mother's letter to a radio Bible teacher: "Who said time heals all wounds? Who said God comforts? Does he walk with me to the cemetery to visit the grave of my six-year-old son who died of leukemia 12 years ago, or the grave of my 18-year-old daughter who died of lymphoma two years ago...I work in a hospital. Does he walk through the corridors to visit the sick, the dying? Is he there to ease the pain, to wipe the tears..."

Such is the frustration of the Seeker-Preacher in Ecclesiastes. Chapter six closes with the question, "For who knoweth what is good for man in this life?"

While frustration remained a reality for him, and us, he did share some timeless truths that can make life better: (1) Each of us will eventually die. Laughter and grief are both parts of life (7:2-3). (2) The world does not turn around me. My self-centeredness often results in unhealthy pride and anger which compound my frustration (7:8-10). Life can be less troublesome if I can identify with others from my sin, instead of judging them (7:21-22). (3) God is in the middle of life, whether I sense him or not (7:13-13). (4) Life is paradoxical, and infinite knowledge and wisdom are beyond my finite understanding. The most effective approach to life is not resignation but responsibility (7:23,29; 8:14-15). (5) Genuine freedom comes in living responsibly within the authority of God's will (8:2).

There is wise counsel in the words of John Jay, one-time Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court: "God is great, and therefore he will be sought; he is good, and therefore he will be found. In prosperity, he tries our gratitude; in mediocrity, our contentment; in misfortune, our submission; in darkness, our faith; under temptation, our steadfastness, and at all times our obedience and trust in him. God governs the world, and we have only to do our duty wisely, and leave the issue to him."

In your frustration, do you believe these truths? Do you live by them?

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Sunday School Board adopts budget, delays price increase

by Linda Lawson

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP) — Trustees of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board adopted a record budget of \$149.2 million for 1983-84 and delayed until July of 1984 a six percent church literature price increase originally approved for April 1984 during their semi-annual meeting.

In his final report to the trustees before his retirement in February 1984, board president Grady Cothen said a strong financial position made possible the postponement of the literature price hike, which he estimated would save churches \$800,000.

He noted the 1983-84 budget represents a 10.8 percent increase over the projected 1982-83 total of \$134.7 million.

Cohen said Baptist TelNet, the board's satellite telecommunications network which will begin broadcasting to churches in June 1984, is "going to work but flexibility is a requirement." He said recent action by the Federal Communications Commission reducing the spacing of satellites from four to two degrees could double the potential number of satellites that could be launched and reduce the monthly transponder leasing charge.

Other FCC changes in uplink specifications have slowed construction on the Nashville Baptist TelNet uplink, but completion is still scheduled for early 1984.

In other action, trustees approved an increase in 1984 conference center rates, authorized the publication of a Sunday school periodical in Korean to begin in October 1984 and adopted official guidelines for news coverage of trustee meetings.

Warren Hultgren, pastor of First Baptist Church, Tulsa, Okla., and chairman of the committee which recommended the guidelines said, "Trustee meetings are open meetings to which the news media are welcome. These guidelines vary only a few words from the administrative guidelines we've had for many years."

The guidelines specify that plenary sessions are open and on the record with trustees having the "right and responsibility to conduct executive sessions in unusual circumstances such as the consideration of certain delicate personnel matters."

Guidelines also note committee meetings and matters requiring future board action are designated "for background only."

The introduction to the guidelines states, "Baptists have always engaged in business with the considerations that the people have not only the right to know but the need to know about the plans and operations of their agencies. The formula 'tell the people and trust the Lord' is still valid."

President-elect Lloyd Elder told trustees that in the first four months of his orientation he has learned "Baptists are not bashful and there is a belief within the board that Baptists deserve to be heard and will be heard."

Cohen praised Elder's efforts to learn about every facet of the board and said Elder "will be perhaps the best-oriented president the board has ever had."

Cohen said the trustees have brought professional expertise to their roles and worked with "an absolute minimum of pettiness and nitpicking."

"You have functioned as a board and allowed us to function as an administration," said Cothen. "I feel the long-term welfare of the board and the Southern Baptist Convention have been your concern."

In further action, the trustees approved, effective October 1984: deleting the Sunday School Growth Journal; changing titles of Simplified Bible Study and Sunday

School Lessons Simplified to Bible Study-Special Ministries and Sunday School Lessons-Special Ministries, and beginning publication of Preschool Bible Teacher A Resource Kit.

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Monday, Sept. 12 First, Pine Bluff
Tuesday, Sept. 13 First, Hamburg
Thursday, Sept. 22 First, Paragould
Monday, Sept. 26 East Side, Fort Smith
Tuesday, Sept. 27 First, Rogers
Thursday, Sept. 29 Northvale, Harrison
Monday, Oct. 3 First, West Memphis
Tuesday, Oct. 4 Central, Magnolia

Brotherhood Area Conferences will be held from 7-9 p.m.

WMU Conferences will be from 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m.; 7-9 p.m.

A special conference has been scheduled near you to help you get involved in missions. Conferences will be conducted for:

<i>RA Workers</i>	<i>WMU officers</i>
<i>Baptist Men officers</i>	<i>BW/BYW officers</i>
<i>Brotherhood Roles in</i>	<i>Acteans, GA, & Mission Friends</i>
<i>Mission Action</i>	<i>Leaders</i>

Piland, McCormick elected at Sunday School Board

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)—Trustees of the Baptist Sunday School Board Aug. 16 elected Harry Piland to return to the board as director of the Sunday school department and Gwenn E. McCormick to become secretary of the church architecture department.

Piland, associate pastor for administration and education at First Baptist Church, Houston, was head of the Sunday school department for five years prior to his resignation in February of this year. McCormick has been director of church building planning for the North Carolina Baptist Convention, Raleigh, since 1977.

Both will assume their positions by Oct. 1.

Piland, 55, said, "It was at my initiative that I left the Sunday School Board. It was also at my initiative that I began discussions with Ralph McIntyre (director of the Bible teaching division) about returning to the board because I began to see with clarity that I had left a task unfinished, a job incomplete."

As Sunday school department director, Piland initiated plans for 8.5 by '85, the goal to increase the denomination's Sunday school enrollment to 8.5 million by Sept. 30, 1985. After leaving, Piland said, "I began to sense the first time in my life following a major decision that I had, in fact, missed God's perfect will."

"I love First Baptist Church, Houston, her great people and the beloved pastor, John Bisagno," said Piland. "I have simply come to a strong and abiding conviction that it is God's will for me to work with all our churches and not just one."

South Carolina church ordains, calls woman

COLUMBIA, S.C. (BP)—The first woman to serve as pastor of a Baptist church in South Carolina was ordained Aug. 14.

Esther Tye Perkins was ordained by Pine Bluff Baptist Church, Columbia, S.C., and called as interim pastor. She immediately disavowed "any interest in Woman's Lib or the ERA," but strongly defended her ordination by saying, "When God calls, we must respond."

Approximately 25 women have been ordained and are serving as associate pastors or in other staff ministry positions in South Carolina, but none serve as senior minister according to the Baptist Courier, newsjournal of the South Carolina Baptist Convention.

Perkins is the widow of Charles G. Perkins. He was pastor of Pine Bluff from 1978 until his death May 23. She was minister of music and education, a paying staff position at the 383-member "basically rural church."

"I am not interested in making history or in calling attention to myself by this ordination," Perkins said. "I do not see this ordination as involving manhood or womanhood,



Lloyd Elder, president-elect of the Sunday School Board; Harry Piland, Sunday School department director; Grady Cothen, president; and Gwenn McCormick, secretary of the church architecture department, gathered on the grounds of Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center after the elections of Piland and McCormick by the trustees.

McCormick, 54, succeeds Rowland Crowder who retired earlier this year. He was pastor of First Baptist Church, Whiteville, N.C., from 1969-1977 and First Baptist Church, Aberdeen, N.C., 1963-69. He holds a bachelor's degree from Mercer University, Macon, Ga., and a masters and a doctorate from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C.

In recommending McCormick to the

trustees, Gary Cook, director of church and staff support division, cited McCormick's innovative leadership in building planning, which included directing the first seminar on energy conservation in churches.

Grady Cothen, president of the board, said he "wholeheartedly favors Piland's return to the board. I personally think this will keep us from losing two, three or four years of impetus in Sunday school work."

Fant resigns presidency of Ruschlikon Seminary

RUSCHLIKON, Switzerland (BP)—Clyde Fant Jr. resigned Aug. 16 as president of Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland. He said his decision was based on family and personal reasons.

Fant's resignation came less than a year after his inauguration as the sixth president of the seminary, a ministry of European and Southern Baptists which had students from 22 countries last year.

The Foreign Mission Board is expected to act on the missionary resignations of Fant and his wife, Jean, at its next board meeting, Sept. 13.

Isam Ballenger, director for Europe and the Middle East, said Fant's future plans are uncertain. The couple planned to return to the United States within a week of his resignation and reside at least temporarily in Dallas.

The seminary executive board, comprised of European and Foreign Mission Board representatives, hopes to name an interim administration within a few days.

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Famed Japanese artist gets "ticket to heaven"

AOMORI, Japan (BP) — The elderly Japanese gentleman calmly requested an appointment to buy "a ticket to heaven."

Southern Baptist missionaries Don and Joyce Heiss from Ohio, pressed him for more information, since Christian conversions come slowly in conservative northern Japan.

Shunzo Nishizawa, 84, said he had been told years before by another missionary "that there was a place called heaven and Jesus Christ had tickets." He wanted Heiss to introduce him to this Jesus Christ.

The missionary visited Nishizawa, explained the plan of salvation and led him to become a Christian. "I want to be baptized in the river just like Jesus," the old man said. But it was the middle of winter, snow was deep on the ground, and he had a weak heart.

Only later did the Heisses discover Nishizawa is a living "national treasure" — designated as such by the Japanese government for his national renown as a painter, calligrapher and teacher of artists.

Nishizawa, due to failing health, still has

not been baptized. But just before the Heisses returned recently to the United States for furlough, the artist sent his daughter with a gift painting and a message. "He said," related Mrs. Heiss, "if he didn't see us again he would see us in heaven."

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It's a long way from the Mekong River to Campbellsville College

by Joan C. McKinney

CAMPBELLVILLE, Ky. (BP)—On a Sunday night in December 1975, two young men who had prayed for an escape from the Communists walked five miles to the Mekong River. A 45-minute swim in the icy water freed them from their Communist captives home country, Laos.

Each carried a suit of clothes and a Bible in plastic bags. They had \$300 between them.

Khamsing Norady, who was 19 years old then, and Bounchan Vongsurith, then 21, have come a long way since arriving in America speaking very little English. Last May, Norady graduated from Campbellsville College and was ordained into the ministry.

Vongsurith graduated in 1982 and was ordained the first week of June.

The two second cousins have faced a lot in their struggles as Christians.

"I have felt since becoming a Christian that the Lord has called me to be his servant," Norady said. "Since I received Jesus Christ, I have felt joy and peace in my heart. I want to help people know about Jesus Christ."

Norady began pastoring Grand Avenue Church, a Laotian church in Fort Smith, Ark., in July. He was ordained at Red Hill Church in Radcliff, Ky., where he and Vongsurith shared the duties of pastoring and leading songs while both were in college.

Vongsurith has been pastoring Trinity Baptist Church in Oklahoma City with a congregation of about 200. His ordination was on his first anniversary there.

Both say they only came to Campbellsville College to "improve our English," never dreaming of graduation. Norady said, "I felt terrible when I came here. The first time I was in class I didn't know what the professor was talking about."

But Norady followed Vongsurith through school and both received degrees in psychology. Norady's wife, Bousay, has also graduated from Campbellsville College with a degree in business administration and Vongsurith's wife, Souan, has taken classes.

Vongsurith was the "leader" of the two because of respect Norady felt for elders in his home country. But Norady remembers a time when his friend was not as strong.

In 1975, the two had been studying in a Bible Training School in Laos and were captured by Communists. Armed guards were at the school forcing them not to spread the gospel. "Christ belongs to Americans" they told Norady.

They were held captive a week and sent home on a Sunday. "We had been praying hard," Norady remembers. An English ambassador had given them \$300 for their escape and they just walked to the Mekong River. "We just had hope in God," Norady said.

Vongsurith had a fever and was "so skinny," Norady said. "He (Vongsurith) kept saying 'I'm going to drown' as we swam." Norady, who was the stronger physically, said, "You believe in God, don't you?"

A rope held the two men together, and they made it. But 27 others trying to escape that night were killed.

It was a hard decision to leave their families in Laos.

"But the first thing we thought was between our families and God. God loved us so much that we felt we needed to spread his word to our people," Vongsurith said. "We were lucky that the Lord opened the door for us when the ambassador gave us

the money."

They made it to Thailand, where the Thai people walked on the left side of the road and the Laotians on the right. They were spotted immediately. "A gang of Thailand authority" stopped them and took them to a Buddhist temple.

"I'll never forget how they picked up our Bibles and asked if we were Christians. 'You think God will help you?' they asked. Then they laughed," Vongsurith said.

Fortunately the leader of the gang knew them from Laos. They spent the night in the temple but were released. They went to a refugee camp in Thailand occupied by about 200 people. When they left nine months later, there were 10,000 there. There are now 100,000.

Vongsurith and Norady were sponsored by Mr. and Mrs. Thurman Witten of Vine Grove, Ky., who sponsor Laotians now living all over the country. "Papa and Mama Witten are a joy to us," Norady said.

Living in a foreign land caused many hardships. There was little money, and at one time Norady was the head of the household for 15 people. His wife's family came to the country and lived with them for awhile, and Norady said he was frequently "worried to death."

In one of his classes, the object was to share with the other members. "I have too many problems to tell you," he said. People began helping with money and groceries and "I felt rich during that time," he recalled. "People lifted me up all the time."

Norady's pastor's wife, Mrs. Sharon Gowin, kept their young child, Ruthie, for free while Norady and his wife went to school for a semester. As head of the 15-member household, Norady insisted on Bible study. All of Mrs. Norady's family, including her 84-year-old grandmother, became Christians. All were Buddhist before.

Vongsurith and Norady believe they've accomplished much in their lives here. But there is always room for improvement.

"Yes, I'd do it all over, but I could do better. People try to be better all the time, don't they? Trying to 'get on top,'" Vongsurith said.

He admits, "I am proud of myself—finally!" He is living a different life in Oklahoma, facing prejudice from others toward his people, and helping them with simple things like passing a driver's test and finding a job. But he wouldn't have it any other way.

Norady is looking forward to his challenge in Arkansas. "I know I will be able to help my people," he said. "God has opened his way for my life."

And both are still carrying those two Bibles—the ones that made the long journey from Laos to America.

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Energy savings recognized

An innovative system to reduce heating and cooling costs has brought Southern Baptist College at Walnut Ridge national recognition, announced President D. Jack Nicholas this week.

During the 1982-83 academic year, SBC saved more than \$5,400 in heating and cooling costs by installing a unit that uses underground well water as a heat exchange medium. The water used maintains a temperature of approximately 60 degrees and requires less energy to provide a comfortable environment in the college library, where the unit was installed.