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Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine, 1985-1989

Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

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January 1, 1987

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

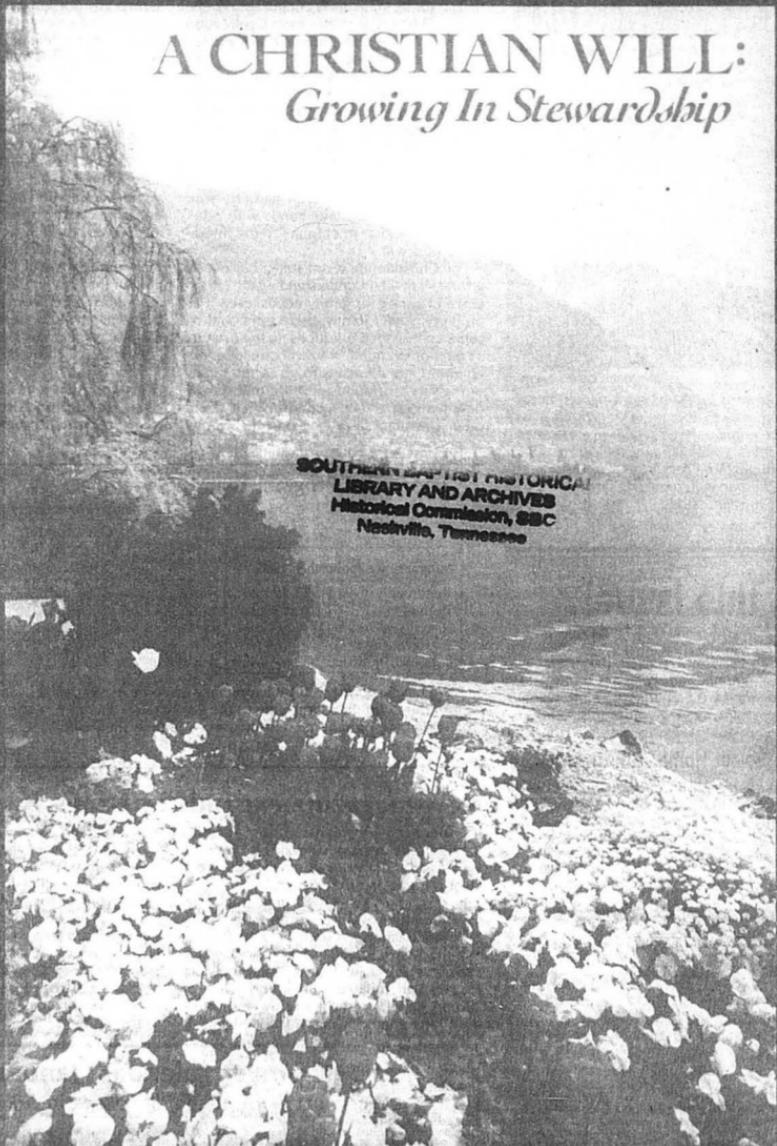
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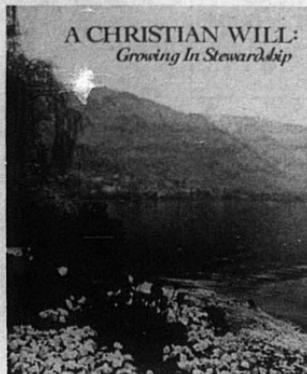


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A CHRISTIAN WILL: *Growing In Stewardship*

SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
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Historical Commission, SBC
Nashville, Tennessee





Stewardship Commission photo

The flower's bright blossom signals its continued growth to maturity. Writing a will marks a similar development in a Christian's stewardship. Each January, the Arkansas Baptist Foundation encourages Baptists to make out Christian wills providing for their families and Christian causes.

Does your will indicate Christian growth?

Each spring mankind is encouraged by the blaze of color that comes from God's good creation. The blooms tell us the plant has grown and matured.

Even more exciting is the growth revealed by a Christian as one discovers that everything is a gift from God and should be used properly in the care of family, in meeting the needs of others, and in providing continuing financial support for the other Christian causes that were loved and supported during life. Each January, your Baptist Foundation joins hands with other Southern Baptists to emphasize the importance of a will.

The Christian life is not static, but one of growth—growth in understanding the importance of caring for family needs. Even if all property is held jointly, there still could be some unanswered questions. In the event of a common accident, who will care for minor children? Are all assets to go to the family of the surviving spouse even if that spouse only lives for a few seconds? What about other Christian causes beyond the family?

Should any portion of the estate be used to endow a chair of instruction or provide a scholarship for one of our Christian educational institutions? What about our family and child care ministry, or the retired pastor whose annuity is well under the poverty line? Our mission causes, whether associational, state, home or foreign, always deserve consideration. The list could go on indefinitely and would be limited only by the imagination of the testator.

The staff of your Baptist Foundation will be glad to assist you in gathering the information your attorney will need to draft a will. This approach will give you the assurance that your goals will be met and it should reduce the cost of the instrument. For further information, contact: Arkansas Baptist Foundation, 402 Superior Federal Bank Building, P. O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203; tel. (501)376-0732 or 376-4791.

Harry Trulove is president of Arkansas Baptist Foundation and Larry Page is vice-president/attorney.

Cooperative Program report: November

January-November gifts

Summary for November 1986		Year	Over (under) budget to date	% increase over previous year
Received	\$ 975,575.88	1981	\$160,209.44	10.65
Budget	\$1,020,833.33	1982	\$179,172.54	8.70
(Under)	(\$ 45,257.45)	1983	(\$118,593.91)	10.62
		1984	(\$411,988.81)	5.20
		1985	(\$355,832.28)	6.78
		1986	(\$623,605.53)	4.35

We have a good opportunity to make up some of our deficit in December. Thanks for your faithfulness in giving to the Cooperative Program. Your gifts support over 7,000 foreign and home missionaries.— **Jimmie Sheffield, ABSC associate executive director**

In this issue

5 blitz readied

Eleven churches in Pulaski County's two associations are preparing for simultaneous blitzes of their communities this spring.

8-9 'Sweet Home,' South Africa

A Southern Baptist missionary couple in South Africa, touched by the plight of their country's street children, have started a ministry which shares the love of God with 33 homeless orphans.

Newsmagazine expands offerings

Beginning with this issue, the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine* expands its features for readers with three items, two of them old favorites and one brand new.

In this issue, the ABN brings back two much-requested former features: the weekly humor column, "A smile or two," and the monthly prayer calendars for missionary kids attending college in Arkansas. Later this year, readers can look for the introduction of "Good news!" a short weekly sermon or devotional starter, which will benefit pastor

and layperson alike.

The "MK prayer calendar" is provided by the Arkansas Woman's Missionary Union with the hope that it will promote intercessory prayer for MKs on their birthdays. Churches might also consider inviting the students listed for a weekend or holiday visit. The birthdate and address of each MK is listed to encourage WMU groups to send or deliver packages of baked goods or other necessities (toiletries, airmail stationery, etc.) to the students.

MK prayer calendar: January

Missionary kids attending college in Arkansas

27 Kiki Schleiff (Zimbabwe)

OBU Box 3574, Arkadelphia 71923



It is strange indeed that people are so much more willing to accept for truth bad news than good news. It is difficult to stop untruth whether it is connected with a person, a product, or an institution. There at least three rumors which have continued over a three-year period. In some instances those passing on these rumors could be prosecuted.

Some people can't stand to hear another complimented. When they hear a positive statement about someone, they will respond, "Yes, but..." What follows is a comment designed to discredit that individual or a rumor that places him in a bad light. The sad thing is that innuendos, rumors, and lies are often remembered much longer than the actual achievements and good which an individual usually accomplishes.

One of the persistent rumors is that Madalyn Murray O'Hair is about to get religious broadcasting off the airwaves. This rumor has persisted for more than five years. Good people have sent thousands of petitions to the Federal Communications Commission to protest this action.

We believe that O'Hair must be pleased with this rumor, although she has had nothing to do with it, because it makes Christian people look so uninformed and foolish. When such rumors surface, they should be checked out with informed individuals.

A second rumor which has been re-occurring for a number of years links the Proctor and Gamble Company's moon and stars trademark to satanism. Recently we communicated directly with the company and received a statement from Pamela Susman, company spokesperson for Proctor and Gamble.

Ms. Susman said, "The completely ridiculous and false story about Proctor and Gamble's moon and stars trademark has been resurfacing in some areas. This is the same lie that was spread in 1981-82 and again in 1984-85. And that is the false allegation that Proctor and Gamble's moon and stars trademark is a satanic or cult symbol which signifies some connection with satanism or devil worship. Some also have erroneously claimed that the president of Proctor and Gamble appeared on a talk show to discuss the company's connection with Satan.

"There is absolutely no truth in any of this.... The President of Proctor and Gamble has never appeared on a talk show to discuss satanism...."

We now have a packet of material from Proctor and Gamble giving a great deal of documentation as to the lengths to which the company has gone to try and stop the rumor. They are very clear in stating that they will prosecute individuals involved in the dissemination of the rumor.

A third rumor which has continued to appear for a number of years is that *Modern People News* of Franklin, Ill., is planning a film based on a book which depicts Christ as a swinging homosexual. In April of 1980 we fully investigated this rumor and discovered that in approximately 1978 a Swedish to make sex films on the life of Jesus was made in Sweden. But the Swedish authorities put a fast stop to the idea. The would-be producer made a similar effort in England but found such pornography unacceptable to the British as well. Finally, *Modern People Productions* were contacted and likewise rejected all involvement in the film.

There is a group of people who are worse than the "Yes, but..." people. These are the ones who try to manufacture rumors. They read the Bible, or any other book, and pull things out of context in an attempt to develop distorted or false ideas.

There are a number of reasons why it is important for Christians to not be involved in the propagation of such erroneous information. Among these are: (1) it destroys our effectiveness when dealing with important moral issues; (2) legal action can be taken against those who participate in the dissemination of such rumors; (3) it takes energy that could be used in the spread of the gospel or the combatting of real threats to the moral fabric of our society; and (4) it is important for Christians to always maintain complete accuracy and integrity.

When Christians are involved in the spread of rumors, no matter how well-intended we may be, we destroy our credibility. We become much like the little boy who cried, "Wolf, wolf," when there was no wolf in sight. But when a wolf actually did attack the sheep, no one responded to the boy's cries.

There are legal recourses against people who formulate or pass on false stories concerning companies or individuals. If a person can prove defamation of character, or if a business can show loss of sales, those involved in promoting or passing on such rumors could face a variety of legal actions.

As Christians, we have an obligation to have our facts straight when we speak out on a subject. It is always in order to go to a prime source to determine the accuracy or inaccuracy of any rumor we hear. One should remember that just because an item appears in a church bulletin or is being passed in the form of a petition, does not mean that it is true.

It is important that we be accurate in our communication. We need to be sure of our facts. If there is a real threat to the moral fiber of our community, we do need to speak out. God will bless the intelligent, accurate, and courageous use of correct information.

Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

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

VOLUME 86

NUMBER 1

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Erwin L. McDonald, Litt D. Editor Emeritus

Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine Board of Directors: Lydon Finney, Little Rock, president; Henry G. West Jr., Blytheville; JoAnne Caldwell, Texarkana; Charles Chesler, Carlisle; LeRoy French, Fort Smith; the Hon. Elaine Roy, Little Rock; Phelan Boone, El Dorado; Harold Gateley, Fayetteville; and Don Heuer, Batesville.

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

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

Copies by mail 50 cents each.

Deaths of members of Arkansas churches will be reported in brief form when information is received not later than 14 days after the date of death.

Advertising accepted in writing only. Rates on request.

Opinions expressed in signed articles are those of the writer.

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One layman's opinion

Daniel R. Grant

Buying a VCR: rationalism versus reason

In the aftermath of Christmas I have a confession to make. I finally gave in to the growing societal pressure to buy the latest technological gadget that seems to be sweeping the country. The Grants now have a video cassette recorder after many months of stubborn—even courageous—resistance to the national "VCR revolution." While confessing, I must admit that for many months I could never remember the correct order of those initials, and my children still snicker as they remind me of the time I referred to it as an "RCV."

What caused my capitulation to the latest technological revolution? Was it the peer pressure of increasing numbers of my colleagues, not to mention my own children, who constantly talked about those great television programs they were able to record while away from home, and later enjoy viewing at leisure? I well remember the social pressure our children applied during the early years of television, as the rooftop TV aerials began to appear on neighborhood houses, closer and closer to our own. We finally bought our first television set in fear

and trembling that our three little children were going to develop a persecution complex as the only TV-less kids on the block.

Or was it my colleagues' enticing description of the newfound opportunity to record the five o'clock news, or an exciting sports event, and view it later at less than half the required time, by using the remote control fast forward button to eliminate all the interruptions for commercials. That argument spoke to me with double strength in my frustration at arriving home all too often toward the end of the news report, or in fretting about an interruption for five successive commercials.

And then there are all those good educational and religious reasons for buying a VCR. Just think of the programs in the arts and educational field that can now be recorded and kept for repeated enjoyment in the months and years ahead—the outstanding concerts, dramas, lectures, and panel discussions, that can now be kept in a permanent video library for repeated viewing. To see and hear Pavarotti frequently, rather than rarely, is quite a privilege. The VCR of-

fers an unusual opportunity for church congregations to avoid those excruciatingly difficult decisions about what to do on "Super Bowl Sunday" and whether Sunday night church activities will be bumped by overtime games or very popular Sunday evening television programs. I hear of an increasing number of churches that announce in advance of Super Bowl Sunday that the game will be recorded and played via VCR at an after-church fellowship on Sunday evening. Is it possible that the VCR will help Christian people recapture the Sunday church services from the attractive distractions of television?

In all honesty, there is insufficient evidence to determine what the real reason was for my finally buying a VCR—whether it was strong Christian and educational motivation, or merely giving in to the growing peer pressure. Perhaps if I can get my wife or children (or grandchildren) to teach me how to use it, we can answer that question.

Daniel R. Grant is president of Ouachita Baptist University.



Woman's viewpoint

Hope Overton

A will: God's instrument to commitment

On Christmas Day 1985, my husband gave me a photostatic copy of a check, "For all your expenses to Brazil." Was I thrilled and excited? No. My first thought was, "Now what do I do?" I had not planned to go to Brazil. Neither had I planned to leave my children.

I really struggled. Where was my faith? Wouldn't God supply all my needs? Aren't my children really God's, entrusted into my care? Then again it was too dangerous to travel overseas. What if Ken and I (being on the same plane) were killed or kidnapped? Again, what would happen to our children?

I decided that a will was definitely in order. A will would provide for a guardian of our choice and see our children were well provided for. We used the Baptist Foundation. It is founded on godly principles. I Timothy 5:8 reads that, "If any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his household, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever" (NASB). Larry

Page, Baptist Foundation attorney, not only came to help us, but held a Wills Seminar at our church. What a blessing! God is in the business of taking care of us and commands us to take care of those entrusted to us (Prov. 13:22). I was now committed to going to Brazil. What peace!

The will provided me the peace to make my total commitment to God and Brazil. Through this experience I saw the need for everyone to have a will. Most wills take only a few minutes to prepare. No matter how long it takes though, the advantages of having a will to protect your family and property far outweigh any inconvenience of time. I encourage you to take this important step in your life—and in your family's.

Hope Overton is the wife of the pastor of Arkansas City Church, and is active in many leadership roles in the church. She is the mother of two young children.

Reddin begins writing lesson commentaries

Timothy Reddin, pastor of Barcelona Road Church, Hot Springs Village, begins this week writing commentaries on the Bible Book series lessons in "Lessons for Living."

Reddin, an Arkansas native, has served as pastor of several churches in Arkansas and Texas. He is a graduate of Central Baptist College and the University of Central Arkansas. He has done further studies at Hardin Simmons University, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, and the Little Rock Seminary Studies Program of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Reddin and his wife, Phyllis, have two sons, Nathan, 8, and Matthew, 5.



Reddin

Retiree still active in Beirut

BEIRUT, Lebanon—Mabel Summer, 70, retired as a Southern Baptist missionary last year but has stayed in west Beirut to help keep University Baptist going. Attendance has climbed from less than a dozen to 25 or 30 on Sundays.

You'll be glad to know...

... In a difficult city, in a not-too-well-known church, 14 people over 65 years of age have been saved in the last few months. Isn't that fantastic! You may be in one of those places without extraordinary promise. It just may be the promise for that field will be with the older people someone else cultivated but gave up on. You may be the last one to make the call of the Lord personal and urgent. I would go again to see if today might not be the day they would want to invite Jesus into their hearts. They can be won.



Moore

The present rate of winning the lost indicates that it would take 300 years to win the United States to Christ if no one else was born and no one died. It would take 4,000 years to win our world at our present rate, without additional births and no more deaths. We have 400 percent more pastors and staff than we had 40 years ago, and are baptizing 50 percent fewer people.

Thinking of souls, what are we going to do about "beefing up" our mission effort? A new awakening of concern and giving must be generated if our responsibility for world evangelization is to be expanded. We are appointing record numbers of missionaries. We also are seeing record numbers retire. It is projected that 50 percent of today's mission force will be retired by the end of the century. Thirteen years is not long to come up with 1,800 new missionaries. If we did, that would only hold us at our present strength. What about a larger mission force? Our goal is 5,000 on the foreign field by the year 2000. To do that, we would need to see 3,100 missionaries called, trained, and appointed in the next 13 years.

Giving to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering must increase rapidly! Mission education must take place! Praying and going must intensify! Most Christians believe their goal in life is to "stay and acquire" when Jesus' command is to "go and share."

May 1987 find us more committed and involved as we consider our gifts and our going to reach the lost at home and abroad.

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

Pulaski County churches prepare for blitz

Committees from 11 churches in the Pulaski and North Pulaski Associations were trained Dec. 8 and 9 at North Little Rock's Riverfront Hilton Hotel for springtime blitzes in their communities.

Motivated by a desire to better understand themselves and the communities they seek to reach, 137 people from the 11 churches took the first step toward simultaneous, in-depth analyses of their churches and communities. In the end, they hope to have a clearer vision for the future of their respective congregations.

They are planning for a "PACT Blitz," according to Jack Washington of the ABSC Missions Department. PACT — which stands for "Project: Assistance to Churches in Transition" — amounts to "a simplified long-range planning process," Washington said.

Through PACT, a church is paired with an expert consultant who assists with a careful analysis of who the church is and what its community is like, Washington explained. In the analysis, they hope to "redeem their reason for being, discover needs in their churches and communities, and find ways to be intentionally on mission," he said.

PACT is "a contract for growth, reaching men, women, boys; and girls with the gospel of Jesus Christ through the uniqueness of who we are in our communities," said Richard Faling, coordinator of the church ministries section of the Baptist General Convention of Texas. He told the committee members present for the training session that the PACT process would help them make good decisions about the future of their church based on facts, not assumptions

about themselves and their communities.

In addition to their consultant's training, each church would benefit from his perspective as an outsider, Washington noted. "The consultant is able to see things about a church that the members themselves take for granted. He can help the church see themselves as a visitor would see them." Ultimately, the congregation understands better how to reach its community.

As part of their simultaneous "blitzes," the PACT committees will be busy collecting data about their congregations and the surrounding communities. Then their consultants will conduct detailed interviews with the pastors and church leaders and members. Based on those interviews and the data collected, the consultants will deliver their observations and recommendations. The church committees will draw from those recommendations statements of purpose and objectives for the churches. From those statements and objectives, action plans will be hammered out to give the churches new direction.

Participating in the May 1-3 blitz will be (Pulaski Association) Woodlawn Church, Tyler Street Church, Chicot Road Church, Rosedale Church, Plainview Church, Forest Highlands Church, (North Pulaski) Jacksonville Second Church, Sherwood First Church, Indianhead Lake Church, Chapel Hill Church, and North Little Rock Calvary Church.

More information about PACT consultations may be obtained from Conway Sawyers, ABSC Missions Dept., P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203.

Ouachita students to travel to D.C.

ARKADELPHIA—Thirteen Ouachita Baptist University students will travel to the nation's capitol, Jan. 3-9, as part of the annual Washington Seminar, an OBU academic program designed to expose students to political activity on a national level and provide opportunity for classroom credit.

"Federalism after two centuries: An assessment of the relationship between the states and the federal government in Contemporary America" is the theme of this year's seminar, sponsored by Hal Bass, chairman of the OBU political science department.

Registration at OBU slated for Jan. 13

ARKADELPHIA—Registration for the 1987 spring semester at Ouachita Baptist University will be Tuesday, Jan. 13 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Evans Student Center and Life Hall at OBU, according to Mike Kolb, registrar at Ouachita.

For more information on enrolling at Ouachita for the spring semester, persons should contact Kolb, at OBU, P.O. Box 3757, or by calling (501) 246-4531, ext. 578.

Students registered for the Washington Seminar are: Joe Corbino, Rogers, senior; Kim Daly, Shreveport, La., junior; Tommy Johnson, Little Rock, junior; Martha Jo Leonard, Star City, sophomore; Richard Lowe, North Little Rock, senior; Missy Ramsey, Katy, Texas, junior; Shelieta Rhoades, Pine Bluff, junior; Scott Smith, Huntington, senior; John Threet, Magnolia, senior; Jennie Titsworth, West Monroe, La., junior; Todd Turner, DeQueen, junior; Mary Wells, Gurdon, sophomore; and Dean Worley, Shreveport, La., junior.

a smile or two

Nothing cures insomnia like the realization that it's time to get up.

It's easier to live happily ever after, if you're not after too much.

—Arnold H. Glasow

The easiest way to keep up with Joneses is just slow down. Soon you'll meet them coming back.

Arkansas all over

by Millie Gill / ABN staff writer

people



Coleman

Stan Coleman joined the staff of Springdale First Church Dec. 7 as minister of youth. He moved there from Moore, Okla., where he served as minister of youth at First Church. He is a graduate of Howard Payne University in Brownwood, Texas,

and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Teresa, have one daughter, Karis.

Alan Damron began serving as minister of evangelism at Springdale First Church Dec. 7. He came there from First Church, Nederland, Texas. He is a graduate of Howard Payne University in Brownwood, Texas, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Sarah, have two daughters, Alana, and Alisa.

Bob Barnett recently joined the staff of Sylvan Hills First Church in North Little Rock as music evangelist. He recently resigned from the staff of Gravel Ridge First Church. Barnett has attended Southern Baptist College, Moody Bible Institute, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Agnes Coppenger retired Dec. 31 following 16 years of service as administrative secretary of the Former Students Association and placement director at Ouachita Baptist University. She was honored with an informal reception Dec. 12 at Evans Student Center at OBU.

Stan Lee joined the staff of Jacksonville First Church Dec. 1 as minister of youth, coming there from Mount Ida First Church where he served as minister of music and youth. He is a recent graduate of Ouachita Baptist University.

James Hays recently resigned as pastor of South Highland Church in Little Rock following three years of service. He has accepted a call to serve as pastor of Downtown First Church in Texarkana, Texas. Hays is a graduate of Arkansas State University and Mid-America Seminary. He and his wife, Beverly, have two children, Philip and Rachel.

Maxwell Worthley retired as minister of music at Rolling Hills Church, Fayetteville, Dec. 31 after more than 10 years



Damron



Barnett

of service in that capacity.

Henrietta Holcomb recently joined the staff of Rolling Hills Church, Fayetteville, as minister of education. She joins the staff following her retirement as assistant superintendent for Fayetteville Public Schools.

Mark Evans is serving Fordyce First Church as interim youth director. A native of Little Rock, he is a junior at Ouachita Baptist University.

James Jones has joined the staff of Calvary Church, Harrisburg, as minister of outreach and evangelism.

Darwin Davis has joined the staff of Harrisburg First Church as minister of music and youth.

Tim Hight is serving as pastor of Lepanto First Church.

Terry Hogard is serving Maple Grove Church, Trumann, as youth director. He is a student at Arkansas State University.

Clif Springer is serving as pastor of Crestview Church in Memphis. A native of Little Rock, he is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University. He has served churches in Florida and Oklahoma.

Dorothy Jackson has been selected for inclusion in the national reference directory *Who's Who Among Human Services Professions, 1986-87*. She was chosen for her contributions of her profession through practice, scholarship, research, teaching, and administration. Jackson is vice-president for student development at Southern Baptist College of which she is a graduate. She also is a graduate of East Texas Baptist University and Arkansas State University.

Paul M. Holt is serving as pastor of Pine Bluff Second Church. A native of Hope, he is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University. He came to Pine Bluff from

West Union, Ill. Holt is married to the former Belinda Browning of Hope. They have two children, John Paul, 16, and Rebecca, 11.

Tommy Rogers is serving Whiteville Church, Gassville, as part-time youth director.

Don Corbitt is serving as pastor of Cotter Church.

Steve Muller has accepted the call to serve as pastor of Tomahawk Church, Saint Joe.

Jon Poteet has resigned as minister to youth and senior adults at Pulaski Heights Church, Little Rock.

S. Mikael Carrier has resigned as pastor of Nettleton Church, Jonesboro, to serve as minister of family life at Bellevue Church in Memphis.

Danny Staggs is serving as pastor of Cedar Creek Church, Heavener, Okla.

Jay Wells is serving as pastor of Haw Creek Church, Waldron, where he has been serving as interim pastor. He and his wife, Beverly, have two daughters, Michelle, and Melinda.

Joe Bagwell has resigned as pastor of Dayton Church, Mansfield, and William Blackburn of Fort Smith is serving the church as interim pastor.

David Moore resigned Dec. 23 as minister of education and outreach at Malvern First Church to serve as minister of education and administration at Ogletown Church in Newark, Del.

Steve Knight has resigned as minister of music at Otter Creek First Church.

briefly

Rock Creek Church at Mansfield recently recognized Pastor and Mrs. Charles Scantling for five years of service with a pounding and reception.

Fisher Street Church in Jonesboro held a dedication service Dec. 21 for John and Claudia Brown who have been appointed for service by the Foreign Mission Board. They were joined in a fellowship hour by members of Lunsford Church where Brown has been serving as pastor.

Haw Creek Church at Waldron recently observed its 75th anniversary with a morning worship service, noon meal and an

afternoon program which included special music, a reading of the church history and sharing of testimonies. Glen Wagner, a former pastor, closed the day's activities with a message.

Eagle Heights Church in Harrison ordained Mike Ragland, Mike Greenhaw, Keith Cornett and Rex Hesterlee to the deacon ministry Nov. 23. L.B. Atchison, director of missions for North Arkansas Association, conducted the service and preached the ordination sermon. Stanton Cram is pastor.

Van Buren First Church ordained Bill Gentry to the deacon ministry Dec. 7.

Cabot First Church ordained David Self and Jim Page to the deacon ministry Nov. 23.

Arkadelphia Second Church is finalizing plans to construct a two story educational building that will provide space for preschool children and youth and a media center. The educational space represents phase one of the building program, with phase two consisting of the future construction of a new sanctuary.

The building program comes at the close of a year when the church's average Sunday School attendance was the highest since 1961.

Little Rock Immanuel Church observed Demonstration Day Dec. 7. This annual observance is a time when Sunday School attendance is promoted and when members contribute to both the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and an end-of-the-year church offering. Sunday School attendance for the day was 1,446, and the total offering received was over \$257,607.

Fayetteville First Church music ministry presented the Christmas musical, "Everlasting Light," Dec. 14. The 53-voice choir was directed by Mark Short and accompanied by Jennie Riggs, organist; George Tharel, pianist; and a brass and percussion ensemble. Soloists were Mary Fox, Rita Savage, and Elaine Short.

Prairie Grove First Church observed a "Great Day of Thanksgiving" Nov. 30 by a special offering for a "Rise up and build" program. Gifts and pledges total over \$56,000.

Almyra First Church ordained Barry Cooper, Walter Hillman, Bobby Hollanger, and Dennis Relyea to the deacon ministry Dec. 7.

Beech Street First Church in Texarkana added an early morning worship program to its regular weekly activities Dec. 14, according to Pastor Mike Huckabee.

Higginson First Church ordained Sonny McDonald and Roger Boyles to the deacon ministry Dec. 7. Danny Jackson, pastor of McRae First Church, preached the ordination message. Dennis Smith is pastor.

Wynne Church ordained Bud Green to the deacon ministry Dec. 7.

Magnolia Central Church youth visited and distributed food to homebound Sunday School members as a Christmas outreach project.

Lake Village Church honored Pastor and Mrs. Harold Elmore Dec. 7 with a luncheon and monetary gift, recognizing 10 years of service.

Family and Child Care Services benefits from generosity of others

ABN photos / J. Everett Sneed



Arkansas Baptist Family and Child Care services dedicated Berry Cottage during its Dec. 11 board meeting at the Arkansas Baptist Home for Children in Monticello. Funds for the Berry Cottage were given in memory of J. E. Berry by his wife, Ruby Berry of El Dorado. Mrs. Berry has a strong interest in missions and the welfare of children. This cottage, by design, is a "family cottage," which enables brothers and sisters to be placed together. This is the first such cottage on the Baptist Home campus, and reinforces Family and Child Care Services' commitment to strengthen family relationships. The building was constructed by H. W. Roper of Little Rock. He donated his time and consultation on the construction, and was recognized by the board for his efforts.



Also at the board meeting, Melvyn Bell, chairman and chief executive officer of Environmental Systems Company of Little Rock, announced that he is establishing a charitable trust which will provide approximately \$160,000 a year to the agency, for a period of 10 years. George D. Combs, Bell's associate and vice-president of Ensko, will serve as trustee of the trust. Combs stated the reasons he encouraged Bell to make the gift were summed up in three words found in the agency's name: Baptist, family, and children. Bell hopes the gift will provide encouragement for Arkansas Baptists to generously support the work of the child care agency. Pictured are (left to right): Family and Child Care Services executive director Johnny Biggs, Melvyn Bell, and George Combs.

'Khayamnandi' miracle creates 'sweet home' in South Africa

by Robert O'Brien

SBC Foreign Mission Board

(BP) Photo by Warren Johnson

CAPE TOWN, South Africa (BP)—Keith and Terry Blakley felt a powerful attraction to the three little boys shivering in the late-night air on the city street on South Africa's cape.

The children, huddled against a wall eating scraps from a nearby hamburger stand, looked like so many other children the two missionaries had seen on the streets. "We started to pass, but we couldn't," Keith says. "We felt a strong leading of God to stop and talk to them."

The boys spoke poor English, but the Blakleys learned they had no home and nowhere to sleep but the street.

A few blocks away, Chelsea Blakley, then 2 years old, and Angela Blakley, then 4, were with their babysitter, tucked warmly and safely in their beds, with not a care in the world—or so their parents thought.

Keith and Terry, after an exhausting day of work, had gone out for the evening to relax and spend a little time together. They didn't need something else to worry about, especially three little African boys with lice-infested, matted hair and dirty, ragged clothing.

But the next thing they knew they had a bathtub full of boys at their home near the University of Cape Town, where the two Southern Baptist missionaries do Baptist student work. While he liberally applied hot water, soap and disinfectant, she took the babysitter home.

"I'm not surprised you brought those three home tonight," the babysitter said. "Angela and Chelsea prayed before they went to sleep that God would take care of the orphans and give them a place to live."

The Blakleys pondered "about what God was up to" as the three boys, wearing Keith's T-shirts, ate ravenously and then fell into a deep sleep. The next morning the house rang with the shrill cries of two little girls jumping up and down and squealing: "God answered our prayer! God answered our prayer!"

But God had only begun a series of answers which would lead to the miracle of "Khayamnandi" (Ky-ahm-nahn-dee).

After a frustrating day on the telephone, Terry realized no childcare facilities existed for these boys or thousands of other homeless black children who wander the streets as refugees from disrupted family units in South Africa's troubled black townships.

"It's a shame," one person explained. "There's a 'bottomless pit' of kids in the streets, and we have nothing for them. We wish we could help." A temporary home for "coloreds," South Africa's term for people of mixed race, agreed to shelter the trio for awhile but soon put them back on the street. "I really became so disturbed I cried out to God to find some way to help these kids



A Cape Town newspaper called these boys the "Hole in the Wall Gang" after they were found, hungry and ragged, living in a hole in a canal wall on South Africa's cape. The boys, now well-fed and clothed, recreated the scene for a photographer.

who suffer from violence, hunger and disease," Mrs. Blakley says. Then one day, she saw the three boys' photo in a local newspaper and an article on the "Hole in the Wall Gang."

Rose McKenna, a local white Christian woman, had found the boys and others living in a hole in a canal wall and learned what Mrs. Blakley had—no help existed. So she took the story to the newspaper, *The Argus*.

Terry Blakley traced down McKenna, and they talked about what could be done. Soon a committee formed, including students from the University of Cape Town's Baptist Student Union, who took the children as a mission project.

"We had no power and no money, only prayer, to find a home for these boys," Mrs. Blakley says. So they prayed.

Within days, a government agency donated an old barracks in the black township of Langa. It was one of a group of old buildings vandals had turned into a pile of rubble. But it was a beginning.

"We thanked the Father for giving that to us," Mrs. Blakley says. "All we could do was pray and ask him to make this heavily damaged building into a home for these boys."

Soon, a white government official talked to them about their plight and took a personal interest. A couple of days later, he said, "I've found a construction company which will renovate the building for free."

Excited by this answer to prayer, the committee thanked God for what he had done. Now, they asked, what about the furnishings, supplies, and funds?

By the time they moved into the humble but renovated building six weeks later, donations from the community had provided

enough food, clothing, supplies, furniture, and funds to get under way and hire some help.

"Ah, this is going to be a 'khayamnandi' ('sweet home' in the Xhosa language)," exclaimed a black Salvation Army captain, who teaches literacy at the home. So it became "Khayamnandi," the "sweet home" for 33 boys from the streets and the only facility for black children in South Africa's Western Province, which has a population of more than 800,000 blacks.

But the sweet home retained a bitter tinge. How would it survive?

The committee had assumed the Salvation Army, which sat on the committee, would take it over. That didn't develop.

"God, what can we do?" the committee prayed.

That's when South Africa's Western Province Baptist Association agreed to run it and Southern Baptists gave \$45,000 in start-up funds from world hunger contributions. The money, equal to more than 100,000 South African dollars, gave Khayamnandi a strong start and resulted in another story in *The Argus*.

Soon, workers at the home began to realize some of the boys in their care had great potential for leadership. As the word spread, it reached Karin Steven, one of five Anglican women from Good Shepherd Church in Kirstenbosch who meet regularly for prayer.

The five white women, grieved over the needs of black children and South Africa's future, had prayed for four months that God "would raise up leaders in the biblical tradition of Daniel from among black youth and inspire them to minister to their people."

"We can go to trouble spots to minister,

but its better for people to rise up among themselves and become the voice of God," she says. "I was beside myself when I learned about Khayamandi and what it's doing for the boys. It's a miracle of God, which shows what he can do when we are obedient and pray.

"You never think of yourself as part of something so global," she says of the Southern Baptist gift from America, which got media coverage and boosted the morale of many South Africans.

"God's plan is so fantastic. It seems to dovetail as people all over the world pray," she continues. "We have since zoomed in more than ever on our prayer for the young

Daniels."

The Blakleys and South African Baptists know the problems have only begun for Khayamandi. Southern Baptists granted the start-up funds if Western Province Association would take full financial responsibility by mid-1987. Now, the prayer centers around where the hard-pressed association will find the money in an economy made worse by the world's economic sanctions.

"The association gulped hard and said, 'Yes, in faith, we'll do this,'" Mrs. Blakley says.

They'll need a lot of faith—as much faith as two little girls named Angela and Chelsea, whose prayers started all this in the first place.



The Blakley family

'Throwaway' black youth despair in South Africa

by Robert O'Brien
SBC Foreign Mission Board

CAPE TOWN, South Africa (BP)—Terry Blakley cries over the "throwaway" generation of black children wandering the streets of Cape Town and other South African cities.

She's not the only one who cries over the grim scene the world knows so little about.

The children, mainly boys ranging from preschoolers to teens, cry too. They cry—even when you can't see the tears—in lonely alleys where they huddle in the cold of night—homeless, ragged; hungry, lice-infested and afraid.

If it's not raining, some sleep may come before they begin another day of struggling to survive by stealing, begging, helping motorists find parking places for tips and foraging in garbage cans.

Or they fall prey to rape or prostitution at the whim of "bunnies," homosexual men who stalk children because prospective adult partners fear AIDS.

As the "strollers," the street children, wander in search of survival, they usually do so in a chemical haze created by drugs and glue. When a 6-year-old has no hope, sniffing glue makes him forget, for a little while, the excruciating pain of rotting teeth and open sores. It makes him forget the hunger, the cold, the loneliness, the fear and the shame of the "bunnies."

It can also damage his brain or kill him, if something else doesn't get him first, such as gangs who threaten to stone him to death or murder him with a "necklace"—a gasoline-filled tire placed around the body and set afire.

A virtual bottomless pit of children lived daily in this apparently hopeless situation before Blakley began trying to do something about it. Their overwhelming numbers, ranging into the thousands, cause South Africans of all races to despair of a solution.

Children take to the streets to survive because of chaotic conditions in such black squatter camps and townships as Crossroads

or Soweto, adjacent to South African cities, which have disrupted black African family units. They include many who have been abandoned or orphaned in the midst of violence or fled from homes with alcoholic parents or too little money to feed too many mouths.

Facing all of that each day, Blakley, a former social worker with neglected and abused children in Texas, would have found it difficult to remain as a Southern Baptist missionary in South Africa if she couldn't do something about those children.

She still sheds tears of pain for the "strollers." But now she mingles them with

tears of joy because of Khayamandi (Kya-hm-nahn-dee), a home for black children begun on faith by missionaries and South African Baptists with help from \$45,000 in Southern Baptist world hunger funds.

Tears well up in her eyes and her voice trembles as Blakley recalls the first night when 21 boys were bathed, fed and bedded down at the home.

"It was only 5 o'clock in the afternoon, but they wanted to go to bed after they ate because they had a bed," she says. "One of the most beautiful experiences of my life was to tuck a boy into bed as the rain started pouring down on that tin roof, knowing he was clean, had a full stomach and, if not for the home God gave us, would be out on the streets that night."

Khayamandi, which means "sweet home" in the Xhosa language, has become a symbol of hope for many South Africans. One of them, Jack Klopper, a white Baptist physician who chairs Khayamandi's trustees, faces with determination the "formidable process of salvaging humanity."

"We have 33 of these kids now, and that's all we can handle until we get more resources and facilities," explains Klopper, professor of community health at the University of Cape Town. "But the task, even with this few, is formidable. They have no frame of reference on how to behave, learn or be responsible citizens."

But it's a slow, painful process for the boys to pick up the pieces and develop enough trust in Khayamandi not to stray back to the street. That's hard to do, because they've known nothing but a survival mentality, with no energy for anything else.

"Our job is to house, clothe and feed them; get them ready for school; teach them how to wash, dress, talk and behave; give them vocational training and teach them about Jesus Christ. If just one of these children comes to Christ, the whole enterprise will have been worth it," Klopper said.



Missionary Terry Blakley, right, seizes a chance to counsel with 15-year-old William Nyirenda, a new resident at Khayamandi, a facility for homeless black children in South Africa. He accepted Christ as Savior not long after talking to Mrs. Blakley.

Parks proposes major changes to carry out global strategy

by Bob Stanley
SBC Foreign Mission Board

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—President R. Keith Parks has recommended major administrative reorganization of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board staff to "lift Southern Baptists to a whole new level of involvement in global evangelization."

His proposals, presented to the board's trustees Dec. 9, call for a new top-level International Strategy Group with the expertise and authority to plan and carry out a more effective global strategy.

He also recommended the board's name be changed to International Board of the Southern Baptist Convention to allow greater freedom of operation. The new name, he said, avoids the "considerable disadvantage" which the words "foreign" and "mission" have in the modern world.

Parks said he hopes the change in the board's name, which would have to be done in consultation with the Southern Baptist Convention, could be made without changing titles on mission properties the board owns overseas.

If approved by the board in February, the reorganization would take effect March 1.

Parks would chair the new strategy group, with William R. O'Brien, the board's executive vice president, as vice chairman.

Four new vice presidents representing the major continents where Southern Baptists have work would be members of the group. Also on the group would be a vice president for Cooperative Services International, the

entity through which Southern Baptists with specific expertise can respond to requests from countries where missionaries cannot work.

Other members of the strategy group would include:

— A vice president for administration and human resources, who would be responsible for worldwide policies relating to missionaries as well as those responsibilities already carried in the office of human resources.

— A director of research related directly to the president who would pull together all research activities now being carried out in various parts of the board.

— The vice president for finance, who would be a resource member at meetings where his expertise is needed.

As part of the plan, the board would set up a well-equipped strategy room.

Area directors, now located in Richmond, Va., would live overseas in their geographic areas and have increased authority to make more decisions closer to the scene of the actual work. In addition to their field staff, the directors would maintain an associate area director in Richmond as both a channel and contact point for the home office but would return to Richmond for three of the board's six meetings each year.

"For the whole concept to work, the area director must be given full authority to act in those areas that have administrative definition," Parks explained, "and must take and exercise leadership in the application and implementation of global strategy concepts that will emerge from the strategy group."

Trustees approved a special transitional committee to work with a similar group from the staff in more specific and detailed planning for the reorganization.

Monthly prayer emphasis urged

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—Pray like never before, especially the first Sunday of every month, Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board trustees urged the denomination's churches during their December meeting.

The trustees' plea is that churches will join in a monthly "concert of prayer" for world evangelization beginning Feb. 1.

"Widespread spiritual awakening and world evangelization will never take place without a united, sustained concert of extraordinary prayer," said Barbara Cunningham, chairwoman of the committee that brought the recommendation.

"I cannot expect," she added, her voice breaking with emotion, "to see extraordinary prayer take place across my convention, if it's not happening in my own life."

A toll-free telephone number to inform churches of the latest prayer requests will be established at the Foreign Mission Board. For several years, the board has operated such a toll-free number during the Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions in December.

In addition to the toll-free number, the board's prayer office will continue its monthly prayer alerts. The current mailing list is comprised of 23,000 Southern Baptists.



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Christmas project benefits children of prison inmates

by Kathy Palen
Baptist Press

WASHINGTON (BP)—When a fellow church member asked Eloise Clarke if she thought their church might be interested in participating in a new Christmas project, Clarke agreed to give the project a try. But she did so "with a measure of concern."

A year later, Mt. Pleasant Church in Alexandria, Va., is again taking part in Project Angel Tree, a program sponsored by Prison Fellowship Ministries. Through the project, churches and other groups fill the Christmas gift wishes of children whose parents are in prison.

The program has gone over so well at Mt. Pleasant that next year the church plans to request twice as many children's names, said Clarke, coordinator of the church's participation. She added some of the church's newer or less active members have become involved through the project.

When a church agrees to participate in the program, it receives the name, age, sex and

three gift wishes of each child for whom it is to be responsible. It also receives the prisoner's name and prison facility.

Some churches set up a Christmas tree decorated with paper angels on which are written the children's names and gift wishes. Members then select gifts to purchase. The gifts are wrapped and delivered to the children on behalf of the incarcerated parent.

Within the Mt. Pleasant congregation, many of the members who purchase the gifts also make the actual deliveries. Others who are unable to buy gifts help with delivering the gifts.

"Our members enjoy it as much as the kids do," Clarke said. "There are some who don't have any children of their own and others whose children are grown up, so they enjoy shopping for children's gifts."

Many of the gift requests are for clothing, Clarke said, adding, "But knowing the people with those names, those children will get a toy also."

Clarke pinpointed a two-fold reward from participation in the program.

"First, you know there's an actual child receiving the gifts because of the follow-through of the delivery," Clarke said. "In some of the homes, the children wouldn't have gotten much and probably nothing that would have said 'Dad' or it."

"Second, we hope it will have some impact on the prisoners. We hope their knowing that there are people who gave will draw them a little closer."

Project Angel Tree is one of a variety of programs sponsored by Prison Fellowship, which was organized by Charles W. Colson, himself a Baptist. Colson, an aide to President Richard M. Nixon, was imprisoned for seven months for his role in the Watergate scandal.

"I remember vividly what Christmas in prison was like," Colson said. "It was painfully frustrating, my heart aching for my family. And my anguish was compounded by the realization that my wife and children were suffering more."

"I'm convinced that the ones who are hurt most are the little children. Christmas marks the birth of Christ—God come to earth in the person of Jesus. When we remember these little ones, we are, in the most eloquent way, remembering him."

Genevox music group is publishing name

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Genevox Music Group was unveiled as the new name for the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's music publishing department during a national church music planning meeting in Nashville, Tenn., in early December.

Genevox Director Fes Robertson told church music leaders from across the United States the name comes from the words "genesis," Greek for creation, and "vox," Latin for voice.

The group will encompass the existing Broadman, Van Ness and McKinney music imprints and labels, as well as other imprints and labels that may be developed in the future, Robertson said.

Announcement of the name came two months after the Oct. 1 official beginning of the component, authorized by the Sunday School Board's trustees in Feb. 1986.

Robertson said Genevox will produce music products primarily for church use at the present time but expects to provide items for school, home and personal use as the group develops.

Printed music items are expected to include collections, cantatas, octavos and keyboard, handbell and instrumental music.

Additional products expected to be produced include vocal and instrumental recordings, musical instruments and other related items.

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Senior adult pride major aging issue facing family ministry leaders

by Terri Lackey
Sunday School Board

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Older adults sometimes are viewed as obstinate or even odd by younger family members and friends when their actions really suggest a preservation of pride, an advocate on aging said.

"Pride is an enormous part of aging," Albert McClellan, who retired as associate executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, told state family ministry leaders attending annual planning meetings at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville, Tenn.

Older adults hold on to their pride because "it helps fight off despair and helps them maintain who they are or who they want to be," McClellan said.

McClellan was instrumental in helping senior adults establish a stronger foothold in the Southern Baptist Convention in the early 1970s when it was discovered seniors were largely ignored in the ministries of churches and the programming of state and convention agencies.

"Coming of Age: Senior Adults and the Churches" is the 1986-87 special emphasis

of the Sunday School Board's family ministry department, which plans to culminate its year in April with a national senior adult convention in Fort Worth, Texas.

"All people come to old age with a sense that they have one, two, five, 10, 15 years to live, and that's it," McClellan said. "When you love life, that can be despair, and you have to fight it. There's much more in this theme of coming of age than we are apt to see unless we look at it seriously."

Personal experiences with his father's struggle for independence after suffering a broken hip showed McClellan that aging is an extremely difficult part of life, he explained. After the injury, his mother had a ramp built onto the front of the house for easier accessibility. "One day he decided to bypass the ramp and use the steps, and he fell and broke his leg," McClellan said. "When I asked him why, he said, 'I did it because I

wanted my independence.' There was pride behind that independence. That ramp was a symbol of isolation."

Likewise, he said his father later insisted on cultivating anokra patch "because he felt in doing it, he was a person of substance."

"I saw in him a struggle of trying to be whole, complete and maintaining a life of dignity. I saw a struggle to fight off despair," McClellan recalled.

He said churches must build programs for senior adults that "do not so much just fill their time, but fill their lives."

Meanwhile, at the annual meeting, family ministry leaders discussed the launch of two new Lay Institute for Equipping courses, Parenting by Grace and Covenant Marriage.

"The first indicators of the use of Parenting by Grace have been outstanding," said Gary Hauk, supervisor of the family ministry department's family enrichment section.

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Expectations pressure ministers' wives

by Jim Lowry
Sunday School Board

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (BP)—A pastor who takes for granted his wife's role as first lady of the church might be overlooking problems that could jeopardize his ministry and marriage.

And a church which calls a pastor on the assumption that, with his wife, they are getting two for the price of one, is setting up a situation where there is great potential for misunderstanding.

Cathy Hickem, author, and wife of Neil Hickem, a Southern Baptist pastor for nine years, conducted research of pastor-husbands and their wives that is included in her new book, *The Minister's Mate—Two for the Price of One*, published by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

Self-imposed expectations, which include guilt, also play a large part in the problem, along with differing perceptions between the minister and mate and unrealistic expectations from church members, she explains.

"Research confirmed great concern over the role of the minister's wife," Hickem says.

"A lot depends on the congregation, but it's difficult because church members often are not aware of the sacrifices being made when they make judgments only on what they see.

"It is a staggering confession that 54.4 percent of the wives surveyed believe their husband's first priority is the church," she adds. "And 36 percent of the pastors agreed."

When asked if the pastor is a two-person job, 63 percent of the women said yes, compared with 44 percent of the men.

More than 78 percent of the men and 75 percent of the women agreed that active participation by the wife in church activities was necessary for a pastor to be considered, or perceived, successful. Similarly, 60 percent of the women and 73 percent of the men acknowledged that wives attend some activities just because it is expected.

"A minister cannot look at his wife as an employee," Hickem says. And the wife "has got to ask, 'What are my priorities? Or am I only doing this activity because it will look better if I do?'"

"I think there is a lot of resentment by wives because there is too little appreciation

expressed by their husbands and by church members," she notes. "It is not a shared ministry when the wife is doing all the giving to family and church and nobody is giving back in return.

"There is a variety of reasons for conflict, but the first may be the joint call, where a church is hiring a team. Even though the wife doesn't preach, she must be committed, faithful and say all the right things. No church member would consider demanding the same qualifications of the wife of their doctor or lawyer.

"Churches which hire ministers with the idea of two for the price of one are creating the false expectation that they can place equal demands on the wife and the pastor," she says.

"I believe wives must be supportive of their pastor-husbands, but in ways they choose and agree upon, not just because others expect it of them," she adds. "The roles of Christian, wife and mother must be balanced. It may be more important to attend an activity at school for one of the children than the association meeting."

Also, the lack of privacy and being available 24 hours a day causes problems, she says. "Church members should give the same respect they want themselves, such as calling before visiting the minister's home."

The telephone can be a constant source of interruption, according to Hickem, who suggests calls not be made to the pastor's home after 10 p.m. unless it is important. She adds it would be beneficial to the minister's family for as many calls as possible to be handled with the pastor during office hours.

Education and role modeling are two of the most important things a minister can provide for his church, Hickem says. He can place an emphasis on the family from the pulpit and provide regularly scheduled time for his family.

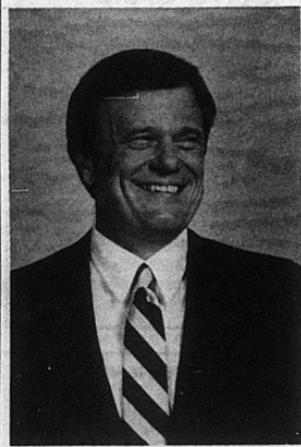
Also, a pastor shouldn't speak for his wife or commit her for responsibilities, Cathy Hickem says. When a pastor's wife sets her priorities, she has the right to decide what she will do, not because it is a leftover job from the nominating committee, but because it is something she will enjoy or a ministry to which she feels called.

She cites a recent survey which placed clergy divorces as the third-highest among professional people.

"This shows that husbands are out of touch with their wives when they assume she will always be there," Hickem warns. "That is not a safe assumption any more."

"We can't be all things to all people," Hickem explains. "When we accept that, we will be much healthier, happier people."

"If the minister can care for the emotional as well as physical and spiritual needs of his family, then his impact will be greater. As a leader in the church, I can think of no better way to lead a congregation than through example."



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Convention Uniform

Teacher of righteousness

by Kenneth W. Overton, Arkansas City Church

Basic passage: Matthew 5:17 to 6:18

Focal passage: Matthew 5:17-20; 6:1-6

Central truth: Our righteousness is not for show.

Christianity is not easy. If we are to fulfill the will of God in our lives we must do it wholeheartedly. The hordes of man-made rules and regulations were a burden to man and as a result did not lead men to righteousness. But Jesus came to lead man to a life of righteousness.

Jesus alone would carry out fully God's intention of righteousness. He led people to a righteousness higher than keeping the letter of the law. Not only did Jesus fulfill the law but he took it to its highest expression. Jesus did not destroy the law but the false concepts.

The glamor of the external expressions of the law had blinded the people to its real purpose. But the scribes and Pharisees took the law and made it a system of ritual observance. This observance became the criteria for righteousness in man. The instrument of God for redemptive purposes was changed for man's convenience.

The rewards of the Christian life are only to a spiritually minded person. Those rewards listed in this passage are satisfaction, still more work to do, and the vision of God.

But if our desire is for others to see our spiritual superiority then we receive no reward from God. Prayer is not designed for attention getting. It is to be a personal private time with God.

When we tithe we need to be careful that it is not done for men to admire. Those who faithfully tithe week by week receive their recognition from God. But those who make sizable gifts spasmodically do so to be seen by men. They have received their recognition and will receive more from God.

The hypocrite does receive rewards. He receives praise from men, the constant realization that he really deserves no praise, the ever-present fear that men will find him out, and the unpleasant knowledge of the future judgment which will reveal the truth. The hypocrite (praise-from-men seekers) will receive his full reward.

If we learn anything from the admonition of Jesus not to show our good deeds in front of men it should be that the motive of an act determines the moral quality of the act.

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Life and Work

Empowered by the Spirit

by Don Hook, Woodson Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: Luke 3:1 to 5:16

Focal passage: Luke 3:21-22; 4:1,16-22

Central truth: Those who serve God are empowered by the Spirit.

No matter how well trained one is, or how well one knows the will of God, he will never be able to effectively do God's will without the endowment of the Spirit.

(1) The Holy Spirit designates.

He designates that which pleases God (Lu. 3:22). God is always pleased with the obedience of a child. Jesus said that obedience in baptism is "becoming" of us (Matt. 3:15).

(2) The Holy Spirit directs.

He directs us to be obedient and submissive to divine leadership (Lu. 3:21 and 4:1). He will direct the child of God to be baptized. He may lead the child of God into the wilderness where he is sorely tempted by the Devil but he asks us to be submissive to his leadership. The Holy Spirit directs and leads us to be aware of our responsibilities and privileges (Lu. 4:18-19). Jesus "found" the Father's will for him, and for us, by praying and searching the Scriptures (Lu. 3:21 and 4:17).

(3) The Holy Spirit empowers.

He empowers the child of God to overcome temptation (Lu. 4:1-12). All of us are tempted. We overcome and win the victory over temptation through the Spirit's help (Rom. 7:22-25). He empowers us to establish God-honoring habits of worship and obedience (Lu. 4:16). We may not know all that Jesus did before entering upon his public ministry but we know that he had the habit of public worship. The Spirit anoints us to minister to the needs of all people and enables us to do this (Lu. 4:18-19).

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Bible Book

Jesus raises Lazarus

by Tim Reddin, Barcelona Road Church, Hot Springs Village

Basic passage: John 11:1-57

Focal passage: John 11:17-27,41-46,53

Central truth: We have a caring God who understands and ministers to us in time of need.

Does Jesus care when I hurt? That question haunted the hearts of two grieving sisters in Bethany. And it is a perplexity that often troubles us.

"Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." Can't you hear the hurt, the doubt, the anger in their words? Martha said it first (v. 21). Later (v. 32) Mary spoke the very same words. It was as if they were saying, "Lord, where were you? Why didn't you come? Why didn't you care?"

Our Lord's actions did seem cold and un-caring. Earlier he had sent word, "This sickness will not end in death." But it did—or so it seemed. Mary and Martha wanted an explanation, but none was given. And what about the words Jesus spoke after his friend had died? "Lazarus is dead," he had told his disciples (vv. 14-15), and "I am glad I was not there."

What? He was glad not to have been there? Didn't he want to comfort his friends? Did he not care?

The story speaks of God's intention in our hurts. It suggests that sometimes God intends for us to suffer and to experience grief. Why?

Sometimes God allows us to hurt in order to highlight our need. The first of our Lord's beatitudes promised blessing to those who are poor in spirit and those who mourn. We tend to forget God, and we must be reminded of our need of him.

Sometimes God allows us to hurt in order to heighten our faith. The psalmist said, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I obey your word. . . . It was good for me to be afflicted so that I might learn your decrees" (Ps. 119:67,71). This is the "trial" that Peter suggests not only proves but improves our faith (1 Pe. 1:6-7).

This story also speaks of God's involvement in our hurts. When we must pass through the "valley of the shadow of death," we fear no evil because he is with us.

Yes, Jesus cares when I hurt. He understands, for he too, was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." He weeps with me. His resurrection power brings healing. So (1 Pe. 5:7) I can cast all my cares on him, for he cares for me!

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Forrest Feezor dies in North Carolina at age 94

SHELBY, N.C. (BP)—Southern Baptist statesman and denominational leader, Forrest C. Feezor, died Dec. 2 at Cleveland Memorial Hospital in Shelby, N.C., following a brief illness. He was 94.

During his 72-year ministry, Feezor was a pastor, college professor, Texas state convention executive director, evangelist, and mission supporter.

Known for his giant, sweeping handshake, Feezor was a native of Lexington, N.C., and a graduate of Wake Forest University and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

He simultaneously preached in three churches of Liberty Association in North Carolina—Jersey, Stoners Grove and Holloways—while teaching public school and attending college. Following seminary graduation, Feezor became head of the Bible department at William Jewell College in Liberty, Mo.

He later was pastor of Second Church in Liberty before returning to his native state in 1931 to assume the pastorate of Raleigh's Tabernacle Church.

Less than three weeks before his death, Feezor was a messenger to the North Carolina Baptist State Convention in

Greensboro. He was president of the that convention in 1942. The following year he was called to the pastorate of Broadway Church in Fort Worth, Texas.

From there, Feezor went to Waco, Texas, in 1947, where he was pastor of First Church. Five years later, he was elected executive secretary of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, the largest Southern Baptist state convention. He served in that capacity until his retirement in 1960. During his retirement years, Feezor was interim pastor of 20 churches in Taiwan, Texas, Minnesota and North Carolina.

In 1973, after 30 years in Texas, Feezor returned to North Carolina, where he and his wife made their home in Shelby.

His wife, Jessica Fuller Feezor, died in 1982 after 54 years of marriage. Surviving their parents are Anne Joy Ballew of Shelby and Forrestine White of Austin, Texas. He also is survived by a sister, Arlene Spencer of Lexington, and five grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted Dec. 5 at First Church of Shelby, with burial in Cleveland Memorial Park.

Memorial contributions may be made through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions.

Home board personnel make career changes

ATLANTA (BP)—Three Southern Baptist Home Mission Board employees have resigned to pursue personal career opportunities.

Bob Duvall, who has been employed by the agency for the past six years as director of hospital chaplaincy, has become the director of chaplaincy with the Gwinnett Hospital System in Lawrenceville, Ga.

Loretta Hays, who has been director of

employment services for the Atlanta-based missions agency since 1982, resigned to accompany her husband to a new pastorate in Lexington, Ky.

Ron Loftis, who joined the board as assistant director of the church and community ministries department in 1985, has become director of missions for Roberson Association in Lumberton, N.C.

Seminary presidents approve extension staff

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Jack R. Cunningham of Fort Worth, Texas, and George W. Knight of Nashville, Tenn., have been named to fill staff positions in the Southern Baptist Seminary Extension Department.

Both men were elected unanimously by the six Southern Baptist seminary presidents, who comprise the governing board of the Seminary External Education Division. The action came in response to recommendations from division Executive Director Raymond M. Rigdon. The Seminary Extension Department is part of the division and has operated under the joint sponsorship of the seminaries since 1951.

Cunningham, 48, has been assistant to the director of continuing education at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and a doctoral student in education. He will become director of extension center education, coordinating the department's work with more than 350 seminary extension centers around the country.

Cunningham has been on church staffs in Texas and Arkansas and earlier spent 13 years as an intelligence officer with the U.S. Air Force. He and his wife, Jan, have two grown children.

Knight, 46, was named director of independent study education, working with almost 2,000 persons who take seminary extension courses by correspondence. A former editor at the Baptist Sunday School Board, he most recently has been managing editor of biblical reference books for Thomas Nelson Publishers in Nashville.

Knight and his wife, Dorothy, have two teenage daughters.

In his new position, Knight will succeed Royce A. Rose, who joined the faculty of Southwestern Seminary as assistant professor of administration. Cunningham will follow Paul E. Robertson, who became director of continuing education and doctoral ministries at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary in September.

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