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**March 3, 1988**

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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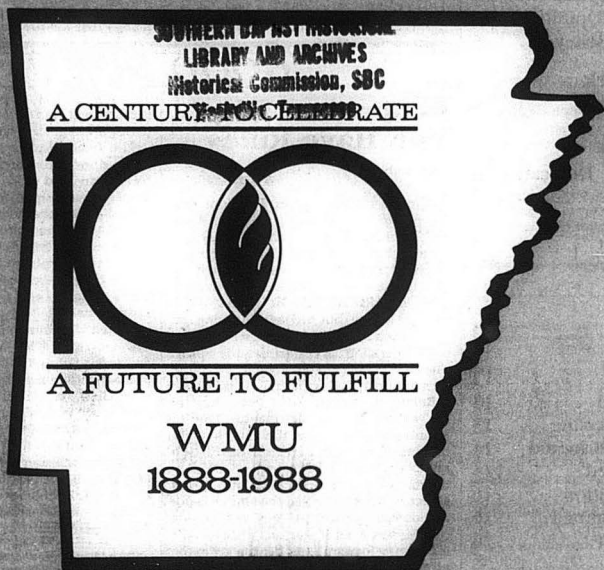
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John Hurt Dies

# Arkansas Baptist

March 3, 1988



## Cover Story



## 100 Years . . . . . 10-11

*As Arkansas WMU prepares to celebrate its 100th birthday, time is being taken not only to look back on a rich heritage, but also to look ahead to future challenges.*

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# IT'S UPLIFTING

## Church Shows Love 'InDeed'

COLUMBUS, Miss. (BP)—A church member called the Loving Pet Shop looking for it. Another person came into First Baptist Church of Columbus, Miss., looking for Mary Lovindeedy.

They both were a bit confused about the name of the organization but had no doubts about its nature.

The Love InDeed ministry at First Baptist Church of Columbus exists to help people. It came out of a prayer group of eight laypeople several years ago who prayed that the downtown church might become more aware and meet needs of the people in the community. What evolved was an organization that involves about 150 church members.

Ministries of Love InDeed include:

- An assistance referral team of 23 women who interview clients, offer counseling and help with crisis intervention.
- A literacy training team of 36 trained workers who teach adults to read at about the 6th grade level.
- A ministry at the city jail which involves Sunday visitation and Bible study.
- Follow-up workers who visit or

phone each person who goes to the ministry for any kind of assistance.

— A job discovery team that helps clients find work. The group also helps people prepare an application form and maintains a list of church members who can employ people, usually on a short-term basis.

— Emergency services team members who help the displaced, battered wives, and also help prisoners back into the community. Included is a crisis closet, help for pregnant teens who want to keep their babies and apartment furnishings.

— A handyman team of members who help other members do such odd jobs as minor auto and home repairs.

— A transportation team to take elderly members home from church and to check their houses for them. The team has ministered in other ways. One elderly couple lives in separate nursing homes because of different medical needs. Team members drive the woman to her husband's nursing home twice weekly for visits.

Pastor Bobby Douglas says the ministry "provides an outlet for us as a congregation to express our concern for people who are having difficulties." It also "puts us in a position of saying openly to the community that we care and we are interested."

# GOOD NEWS!

## Remember Why You Have Rules

2 Corinthians 3

After an interlude of explanation, Paul enters into a combination of self-defense and teaching. But the reader must not forget what he has been talking about—forgiving, confirming, loving, and helping the outcast—rather than remaining in a fixed judgmental attitude. He speaks of the letter as killing, but the Spirit's giving life (v. 6). Then he declared that liberty (unfettered liberation) accompanies the Spirit. The Law was like the schoolmaster to bring men to Christ, Paul wrote in Galatians 3:24.

Rules are a means, not an end. They are the vehicle, not the destination. One of Satan's designs is to get the church or individual to become a creature of reaction rather than action. The trap of the pendulum swing is a clever one. At a casual glance it may appear that the church is doing something, and it is—moving from side to side. But what if spiritual growth calls for moving forward? A golfer can get to the green by hooking and slicing down the fairway as long as the ball moves forward a bit. But the pace is slow, the required energy

is exhausting, and the score is humiliatingly disappointing. Zeal wanes rapidly.

The sinner (lost or saved) should want to head for the nearest church when he feels convicted and in need of love. Sometimes the opposite is true because of the rigidity of the rules keepers, the exactors. Ray Stedman quoted an article from an unidentified friend. It is entitled, "Don't Take Me to the Hospital, Please!" A man, struck by a hit-and-run driver, lay in the street begging not to be taken to the hospital where he worked. As people reasoned with him, he offered the following excuses: The instructor of the Pedestrian Safety Course would be disappointed with him and criticize. The admissions clerk would be upset because he did not have his insurance card. Fellow workers would never understand. The analogy to the church is obvious.

Paul's conclusion to this section reminds Christians of the ultimate purpose of their actions—to become more like Christ. (Compare the Living Bible for an enlightening paraphrase of this verse.)

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# Emotionalism

J. EVERETT SNEED

One of the most frightening events on the contemporary religious scene is the overemphasis on emotions. While emotion is basic to every personality, there is much more involved in the true religious experience.

Emotionalism has led to a number of problems and false teachings. The very heart of emotionalism is the idea of total expression of one's feelings. The idea is to reach an emotional "high." If an individual fails to have this "high," he feels that he has failed to worship. If he has this emotional experience, to such an individual nothing else matters. This concept has led to distortions of the Word of God and even to church splits.

There are several reasons for the development of an overemphasis on emotions. Baptists, like other major denominations, have sometimes provided a sterile, intellectual experience, without fully ministering to the whole man. Furthermore, existentialism, which maintains there is no truth apart from experience, has influenced many Christians. The existential movement maintains, "I know only what I feel." Everyone should remember that feelings are often deceiving and misleading.

A valid Christian experience should include both intellect and emotion. Both feelings and reasoning should always be measured by the Scripture. If any doctrine does not square with the Bible, no matter how it developed, it is wrong.

Emotionalism lacks an emphasis on the gospel of Christ as preached by the apostles. The book of Acts tells us that Christians went everywhere telling what had been done in Christ for the entire human family. Paul said, "God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself. . ." (2 Co. 5:19). Valid New Testament Christianity, then, must exalt Christ and not self.

Emotionalism by its very nature exalts the individual and tends to ignore Christ and others. Many who have been caught up in emotionalism will tell you how insignificant they are, but a careful analysis of their statements will reveal their true intent is self exaltation. The true Christian spirit is to follow Christ and love others as self.

Emotionalism, a kind of modern day Pharisaism, may deny that others have had a true experience with God. This Phari-



saism can even disrupt the fellowship of a church. These separatists (the word "pharisee" means "separatist") find it difficult to tolerate the opinions of others, since emotion alone determines how they think.

The New Testament teaches that faith in Christ produces a dynamic change in the life of the believer. Emotionalism produces only a momentary ecstatic experience. When the emotion is gone, the experience is ended. Individuals seeking to reclaim this emotional experience may claim repeated conversions and desire repetition of baptism.

It is possible, of course, that a person can be genuinely wrong about his experience with God. In such an instance, it is imperative that this individual truly accept Christ as Redeemer. But there is something

dreadfully amiss when several people in a single church are "converted" three, four, or five times.

When an individual doubts his salvation, as most people do at some time, he can determine his condition by examining the Bible. If a person has met the conditions of salvation as laid down in the Scripture, he will know that he is a Christian (Jn. 5:24).

Emotionalism lacks the New Testament emphasis on repentance, faith and obedience. Since the emphasis is on self exaltation, there is no place for the true gospel. Paul proclaimed, "Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ac. 20:21).

Emotions are untrustworthy. Sometimes an individual will feel good. Other times he will feel bad. Many things can affect an individual's feelings. If our eternal well being depends upon emotions, there would be no security. But salvation depends on God and not on a person's feelings.

Finally, emotionalism misinterprets love. Christian love is the essence of Christ. It is not a foolish or frivolous thing. The one who said, "I do it because love made me feel like doing it," should read the Scripture more carefully. Paul said, "The love of Christ constraineth me." God's love is not an emotional high, but a constant abiding strength which will be present regardless of emotional feelings.

We need not fear true intellectualism. The Bible says, "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many" (Is. 53:11). Again, God said, "Come. . . let us reason together" (Is. 1:8).

A whole person is both emotion and intellect. Let us never extract either from the Christian experience.

## Arkansas Baptist NEWSMAGAZINE

VOLUME 87

NUMBER 9

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## Letters to the Editor

DON MOORE

## You'll Be Glad To Know

"May God be praised!" These words out of a grand old hymn are appropriate as we look at what he has done and is doing. We spend so much time and space telling of meetings that we seldom share the encouraging results of the meetings.

Church Arkansas Rally recently saw 325 excited people gather for celebration and inspiration! From the first song to the last prayer, I sensed a glorious presence. The Lord manifests himself to those who are pleasing him. Jesus said he would. The testimonies of those who have started churches in their home, as they did in the New Testament, were thrilling. The messages were equally blessed of God. One of the most thrilling reports was of the older people being saved through our new churches. The Petit Jean Mountain Church has had an 84-year-old saved. The Riverside Mission has had two 78-year-old men and one 79-year-old woman saved. This has happened in just a few months. These conversions happened in communities where they have lived a long time. They have just not had exciting, gospel-preaching churches.

You should hear the testimonies of those in the Macedonian plan of church sponsorship. This is where there is a primary sponsoring church with two other churches committed to assisting the lead church in a new mission church. Most of our churches could be a Macedonian helper even if they could not sponsor a church by themselves.

Folk we are "onto something" or "into something" great! I'm sure Satan will try to distract, distort or otherwise discredit what we are doing, but if I know anything about the New Testament and God, we are on his track. He is blessing! He is to be praised!

God bless all of you who have dared to dream and take the biblical approach to reaching your community and others.

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



## New Translation

I read with regret Beverly Strain's recent letter, "Different Purpose." Why single out Las Vegas as the only sin city? Wherever the Southern Baptist Convention meets, the evils of gambling, drinking, immorality, etc., exist. If Southern Baptists should not go to Las Vegas, then Southern Baptists should not go to Dallas, Texas; Atlanta, Ga.; New Orleans, La.; or any other convention city.

It seems to me that a few Southern Baptists are interested in color coding sins. Dark sins—gambling, drinking, immorality; light sins—lies, deception, faithlessness, gossip, etc. I thought sin was sin. Why color code major sins or major cities?

The primary purpose of Southern Baptists is to fulfill the Great Commission, Matthew 28:19-20. Southern Baptists have

chosen to promote Bold Mission Thrust. We cannot fulfill this commission if we as a convention choose not to convene in one city over another. Talk about being hypocrites!

If Las Vegas is bathed in prayer prior to our convention, then as Southern Baptists invade this city, our witness could change this major sin city into a city of love even as we hold an annual meeting.

A final note—the Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting should be an evangelistic meeting wherever it meets.—Charles C. Treadway, Heber Springs

Letters to the editor expressing opinions are invited. Letters should be typed double-space and must be signed by one person, though the name may be withheld on request. Mailing address and phone number of the writer should be included. Letters must not contain more than 350 words and must not defame the character of persons. Letters must be marked "for publication." Only original letters will be considered.

## Woman's Viewpoint

## Finding a New Church Home

JANE JONES

After a move, one of the hardest decisions to make as a family has been to find a new church home. Some people may wonder why.

Leaving friends is not easy. During 30 years of marriage, my husband's work has transferred our family several times. With each move, we left a church family that was very dear to us. Going to a new city where we knew no one meant visiting churches where we knew no one. But one of our first priorities was to attend both Sunday School and the worship services.

Once a decision was made on a particular church, we always joined within the first few weeks. Then we became active members. We always felt that since someone else would be teaching our children, we should make ourselves available to teach



and to serve in some capacity—not only in Sunday School but also in other areas. Many times it has been behind the scenes in the kitchen, but Baptists spend a lot of time eating.

Though the years and many moves, each new church has been our new family. We've never had the luxury of living near our own family or relatives, thus our church has become our family. Through our church family, our emotional and spiritual needs have been met. Each fellow teacher and pastor have been our comforter and companion.

In a new setting, be

friendly and make new friends. Don't sit back and wait for others to come to you. Become an active part of the Sunday School as quickly as possible. Whether it be as a teacher, group leader or committee person, become involved.

What do individuals or families do when they don't have a church family as a support group? To whom do they turn? There are times when one doesn't necessarily need help, but has joys to share with others. What better group than a church family?

Each church family has a special place in our hearts. I thank God for allowing us the opportunity to live in several states. All have been different, but what a joy to have these friends scattered throughout the world.

Jane Jones is an active member of First Church, Fayetteville. She is married and the mother of two grown sons.



Church for Everyone  
Week of Prayer for Home Missions  
March 6-13, 1988

## One Layman's Opinion



### Sin Is Unsafe

There they go again! Dr. David Axelrod, New York State Health Commission-

er, announced recently still another effort to make sin safe. He approved the distribution of free syringe needles to drug addicts in an effort to curb the spread of that terrifying fatal disease, AIDS.

After getting over some of my internal anger at the idea of taxpayers being required to pay part of the cost of injecting addictive drugs into human beings, I began to consider where this kind of thinking may lead our country. If we begin to make it accepted public policy that we should protect people from the natural consequences of their foolish actions, a whole host of interesting developments may lie ahead of us. A couple of examples:

(1) It would seem only natural that we should protect murderers from the danger of accidental self-inflicted gunshot wounds from defective weapons. We should supply murderers with quality firearms and thoroughly pretested ammunition, at taxpayers' expense, so that the world is made more safe for murderers.

(2) Then there is the terrorist who takes hostages into captivity without adequate food supply for himself or his hostages. Surely the humane thing to do would be to have a taxpayer-supported emergency unit on duty in every city, ready to keep the terrorist well fed throughout the entire ordeal.

Is it possible that moral relativity has become so strong that we have become blinded as a nation to the very real dangers of public policy that condones private wrongdoing? It may be true that we can never completely wipe out the terrible practice of human abuse of addictive drugs. I for one do not think this justifies requiring taxpayers to pay for clean needles for drug addicts, even to protect them from AIDS. Perhaps I do not have enough information to understand the wisdom of this decision. On the other hand, someone may have lost sight of some eternal moral principles in relation to public policy. In any case, we can be sure that clean needles are no guarantee of safe sin.

Daniel R. Grant is president of Ouachita Baptist University.

## PRIESTHOOD OF BELIEVERS: *Second of a four-part series*

### The History

by William H. Stephens  
Baptist Sunday School Board

The doctrine of the priesthood of believers moved into a dark tunnel when the graves of the apostles were barely cold.

By A.D. 90-100, Clement of Rome argued for the supremacy of pastors. The first writer to use the term "laymen," Clement assigned them a subordinate role to "presbyters" and "deacons." His view was supported in the decades to follow by Ignatius of Antioch, but opposed by Polycarp, Justin Martyr and Aristides.

The strong sense of need for authority was due to a pressing call for security against the heresy and disorder which accompanied rapid growth. Those who had been taught by the apostles or persons close to them most likely would know and teach correct doctrine. Apostolic succession—the belief that the apostles' authority is transmitted through history by ordination—thus had its start.

In the third century, Cyprian of Carthage wrote that "the church resides in the Bishop," thereby setting the hierarchical pattern of church government. The case Cyprian and others built for their authority did not come from the New Testament. Rather, they applied the Old Testament structure of the priesthood, in which priests were a class separate from the people and organized hierarchically.

By the fourth century, the practice of priestly celibacy became firmly entrenched in the Western church, driving a highly

visible wedge between the clergy and the laity. The fourth century also saw the rise of Constantine, whom Christians held as the great benefactor anointed by God. Christianity was given a favored place in the Roman Empire; the results were enormous. The power of the leading bishops was increased, church officials gained additional power and doctrine was decided and enforced with state power.

The pattern of union of church and state was firmly set when the Dark Ages began, and for a thousand years of illiteracy, the clergy carried what little culture survived. Finally, Luther emerged onto the scene.

The Reformation, burning ember-like under the forest floor for a long time, burst into flame. Luther wrote some of history's greatest works on priesthood of believers, yet he backed off too soon. He suffered immense trauma in his conflict with the Roman Catholic Church and brought about enormous changes, for which we are grateful. But he did not take the faith idea to its logical conclusion. Luther retained a priesthood, an established church and state relationship and infant baptism. It was up to more radical souls to insist on applying the doctrine consistently.

Some of Ulrich Zwingli's young followers pressed their leader to adhere to clear Bible teachings. On Jan. 18, 1525, the Zurich city council decreed in favor of infant baptism. Three days later, 12 men met at the home of Felix Manz to decide their

course of action. After agonizing prayer, one man rose from his knees and asked Conrad Grebel to baptize him. Others followed, until all of them were baptized. Four years later, all of the leaders were dead. Felix Manz, the first of the martyrs, was drowned in the river that runs by the church. Grebel died of the plague at age 28. George Blaurock was burned at the stake in 1529.

But the movement they began lived on, littered with the deaths of martyrs—burned at the stake, roasted to death near flames, drowned, starved, beaten, their limbs wrenched from sockets, branded, whipped, noses and ears slit, exiled from city after city, property confiscated.

Yet they were faithful in their message: Only believers may be baptized and all believers are free and equal priests. This is the heritage of Baptists. Our forebears suffered mightily for those convictions. But they were faithful in spite of confiscation of property, imprisonment, dismemberment and death.

Most Baptist pastors in those early years, including Thomas Helwys, were laymen called into service by their churches. They believed strongly in the call to preach and in strong pastoral leadership, but Baptists fought against an established clergy and the laity was firmly in charge of the churches.

Baptist history is clear. Our heritage is that every believer is a priest, has a gift, is a minister, is capable of discerning God's will and acting on it and is free to interpret Scripture.

## A Burden for Vets

by Sherry Snow  
White County Daily Citizen

Almost two years ago, Wes Keith began to feel an "extra burden" for veterans of the war in Vietnam.

A Vietnam vet himself, Keith can identify with the many problems and frustrations other Vietnam veterans experience. "Even though it might be 20 years from when they began serving, there's some folks out there who need help," he said.

Since 1974, 100,000 Vietnam veterans have died through suicide, alcoholism, or drugs, according to Keith. Each month, 2,500 commit suicide.

So Keith, a former Marine Corps pilot, began planning what he might do to help.

The result was "Vietnam Veterans for Christ," a free ministry available to any local church which desires to have a day of special recognition for the sacrifices made by Vietnam veterans and their families.

"I felt I needed to do something, and the best way was through getting into local churches... helping them become sensitive to the needs of the Vietnam veterans, their parents, children, families," said Keith, who works as a claims representative for the Social Security office in Searcy and serves as associate pastor of Searcy Second Church.

"You see friends who have faced a tragedy. Our problem is not just one tragedy, but a series of tragedies," he said. "It's difficult to cope with, but you can-



Vietnam vet Wes Keith

not hide the torment that's inside."

Keith said that, from 1972 until 1979, after spending a year in combat at Da Nang, "I could feel the stress of why I was being bugged by my Vietnam experiences. You go to church and break out in a sweat. You can't stand crowds. You get deathly sick at your stomach. Pressure situations get to you, and you can't stand the pressure. 'As a Christian, I thought I should not have these problems. I should have these licked. 'The church leaders at this time were

not sensitive to the problem," he continued. In a counseling session in 1979, Keith said he found the problem. "Contrary to the movies on Vietnam, the animosity (depicted) is not there. That was not my experience. You reach a point where you quit trying to get to know people (in Vietnam), because you know they may get killed. It's a conscious thing.

"I remember when we lost our executive officer. When he got killed, it tore me up. You stop trying to make friends, and this is a problem when you get out. You have to break down the wall of being sensitive to people, caring about people.

"I really loved those people (I was with in Vietnam). They were some of the best, smartest people I ever knew. You really cared. It still hurts looking back."

Keith said his goal is to put to the churches and their ministers the message that Christ can help the Vietnam veterans and their families.

"The secret is the healing power of Christ. So he can turn and face whatever he may have done. We can learn to live with something, but we must face it first. Recognize it, seek the healing of Christ, and go on," Keith suggests.

Keith recalled a friend of his whose husband is a Vietnam veteran. "He's had problems coping. She was going to commit suicide. She sent me a card, with a razor blade taped to it, saying, 'You saved our family by being there... because we needed ministering to. I had a razor blade in my hand, trying to get courage to use it, when you came.'"

Keith estimates there are a total of 1,500 Vietnam veterans in White County alone. "If you add two children, a wife or widow, and two parents, we should be able to touch about 9,000 people directly in White County through the ministry."

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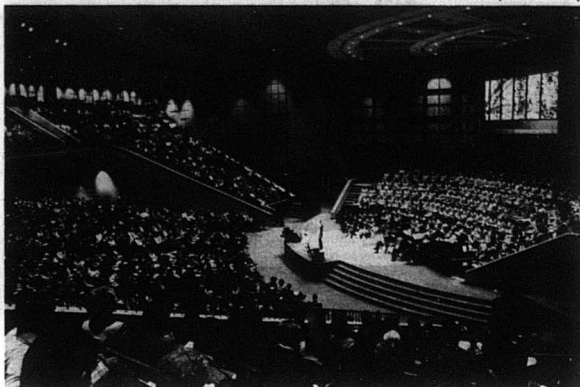
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ABN photo / Mark Kelly



Springdale First's new worship center seats 3,421.

## Springdale First Dedicates

### New Sanctuary Is Largest In State

by Mark Kelly

Managing Editor, Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

It was standing room only when First Church, Springdale, dedicated its new worship center Feb. 14.

The 3,421-seat facility was filled to capacity for the two and a half hour service, which featured Pastor Ronnie W. Floyd, Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton and former First Church Pastor Cliff Palmer.

The day of dedication had been proclaimed "I Love My Church Day," and members of Springdale First were challenged to give the largest single offering of their Christian lives on that day. The celebration culminated 88 days of prayer and began 88 days of celebration. Dubbed "Celebration '88," the church will host a series of special events through May 11 which will feature outstanding speakers and musicians from across the nation.

But the dedication of bricks and mortar was not the purpose of the day, noted Floyd when he took the platform to voice the dedicatory prayer. Hearts, not buildings, must be the objects of dedication, he told the congregation, and he challenged the people to join him in prayer, giving themselves before God to the task of reaching northwest Arkansas for Christ.

Former Pastor Cliff Palmer echoed Floyd's perspective in his comments to the congregation. Palmer said God would not be impressed with a building, nor would he be impressed with a people's worship if it was dependent on a beautiful facility. What would impress God would be a com-

passion that "reaches out to people whether they have anything to offer or not," Palmer said.

Letters of congratulations were read to the congregation from a host of leaders, including ABSC Executive Director Don Moore, Evangelist Billy Graham, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary President Russell Dilday, SBC President Adrian Rogers, former SBC President Charles Stanley, and W.A. Criswell, pastor of First Church, Dallas.

Springdale's new worship center, easily the largest in the state, adds to that congregation's credit of already having the largest Sunday School in the state. And plans were underway the day of the dedication to increase that standing, with final preparations to begin 45 new Sunday School departments on Feb. 21, doubling the capacity of that ministry. Plans call for the congregation to maintain one worship service, which will be held between the two Sunday Schools.

At the close of the dedication service, Floyd announced that the morning's attendance count stood at 4,183, and that 21 individuals had registered decisions during the invitation period.

Among the personalities scheduled to appear in the coming months at Springdale are Jerry Clower, the Bill Gaither Trio and Vocal Band, Tim LaHaye, and Jerry Falwell. For more information on "Celebration '88" events, contact the church at 1709 Johnson Road, Springdale, AR 72765; telephone 501-751-4523.

## Spring Revival

Curtis W. Coleman will be the featured speaker when Southern Baptist College in Walnut Ridge holds its spring revival March 13-16.

Coleman, a vocational evangelist, will be speaking Sunday, March 13, at 8:15 p.m. in the college chapel. Monday through Wednesday he will address the Baptist Student Union at 12:30 p.m., as well as hold evening sessions at 7:00 p.m.

## Hunger Hike

The annual Arkansas 10K Hunger Hike, sponsored by the Arkansas Interfaith Hunger Taskforce, will begin at the State Capitol in Little Rock on Sunday, April 17, at 1:30 p.m.

Hikers and runners participating in the event may select one of the following relief agencies to benefit from the funds collected: Arkansas Foodbank Network, Arkansas Rice Depot, Friendly Chapel Soup Kitchen, Heifer Project International, Helping Hand, Our House Shelter, St. Francis House, Salvation Army, Stew Pot, Watershed Project, and We Care Center.

For a hike ticket or group leader's information packet, contact Sherry Campbell or Frankie Reynolds at 375-7971.

## SBC Receives Challenge Grant

Southern Baptist College in Walnut Ridge recently received a \$175,000 challenge grant from the J.E. and L.E. Mabee Foundation of Tulsa, Okla.

The Mabee grant is contingent upon the college reaching its "New Horizons" base fundraising goal of \$1.25 million by Oct. 15, 1988. "New Horizons" is a three-year project designed to raise funds for endowment, scholarships, and capital improvements.

If the goal is reached, the Mabee funds would be used to modernize the SBC cafeteria and renovate a student housing facility.

## A SMILE OR TWO

"I know a student who's so bad his teacher requires a signed excuse for his presence."  
—Bill Coplin

No man can know his true character until he has run out of gas on the highway, purchased something on installments, and reared a teenager.



## Arkansas All Over

MILLIE GILL

## People

**Jon W. Weygandt** of Houston, Texas, is serving as pastor of Congo Road Church, Benton. He is a graduate of both Baylor University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is married to the former Melissa Ann Van Dyke of Decatur, a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University.



**Bill Talley** was recently recognized by Second Church, Little Rock, as "Deacon of the Year."

**Dennis M. Dodson** observed his ninth anniversary of service Feb. 14 as pastor of First Church, Monticello.

**Carl W. Kluck** celebrated his 28th year of service Feb. 7 at Second Church, Arkadelphia.

**Joe and Mabel Taylor** of Paragould were in India Jan. 7-22 where they participated in the seventh annual crusade to India sponsored by the Tom Cox Evangelistic Association of Mountainburg. They are members of Immanuel Church, Paragould.

**Steve Fulmer** is serving South Highland Church in Little Rock as interim youth director.

**Max Deaton** has resigned as pastor of Otter Creek First Church in Little Rock.

**Joe Berry** is serving as pastor of Holly Springs Church, Little Rock.

**Ronald Long** is serving as pastor of Pleasant Hill Church, Rogers.

**Stephen Brubaker** is serving Pea Ridge First Church as minister of music and youth.

**A. Nathan Davis** joined the staff of Crystal Hill Church in Little Rock Feb. 21 as associate pastor for youth and music. He is a graduate of Grand Canyon Baptist College, Phoenix, Ariz., and Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary. Davis is married to the former B. Jan Gray of Little Rock.

**Jerry A. Kirkpatrick** observed his fifth year of service as pastor of First Church, Heber Springs, Feb. 21.

**Henry West**, director of missions for Mississippi County Association was honored with a reception celebrating his retirement at First Church, Blytheville, on Feb. 21.

**Robbie Jackson**, associate pastor of First Church, Atkins, has accepted a call to be pastor of East Mt. Zion Church in Clarkesville.

**Curtis L. Mathis**, pastor of First Church, Harrison, has announced his plans to retire as of Oct. 1 and begin a new ministry in Texas.

**Don Matthews** is serving as minister of education and administration of First Church, Forrest City.

**Dale Walker**, minister of music and youth for Ingram Blvd. Church, West Memphis, was ordained to the ministry by that church on Jan. 21.

**Reg Fowler** is serving as youth director for Emmanuel Church, Forrest City.

**James Ray Barrett** is the new pastor of Parkin First Church.

**Ronnie and Joyce Miller** of Judsonia have spent three months doing volunteer work in at the Southern Baptist mission in Aljoun, Jordan. Mr. Miller rewired the main building, to be used as a conference center.

He worked under career missionary Charles Browning, also of Judsonia.

**Larry Robertson** has accepted a call to serve as minister of education and youth/college at Pocahontas First Church. He and his wife Janet will be coming from First Church, Pflugerville, Texas.

**Charles "Skip" Jennings** has been called to Monte Ne Church as youth minister.

**Roger Wagner** has accepted a call to serve as minister of music and youth at Kensett First Church. He is a recent graduate of Ouachita Baptist University.

**Barry Crain** has been called as pastor of Midway Church in Judsonia. He and his wife, Pam, are also serving as relief managers at the Emergency Receiving Home in Judsonia.

**Bill and Doris Kreis** were honored Feb. 26 by Faulkner Association in recognition of his retirement as director of missions.

## Briefly

**Ridgecrest and Trinity Churches** in Benton will host the Sounds of Praise in concert at 6 p.m. Feb. 27.



*Actees of First Church, Nashville, recently held a "Jewels of His Kingdom" coronation in which 12 members were crowned as queens. Mrs. David Blase serves as director.*

**Walnut Street Church** in Jonesboro has begun plans for observance of its 75th anniversary Aug. 13-14. Don Moore, executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, will be featured speaker.

**White River Association Woman's Missionary Union** will launch the observance of its 100th anniversary April 16 with a parade and an anniversary celebration will be held May 14 at First Church, Mountain Home.

**Central Church** in Magnolia ordained Robert Turner to the gospel ministry Feb. 14.

**New Hope Church** in Black Oak ordained Earl Cobb and Fred Morgan to the deacon ministry Feb. 21. Pastor Bert Hargett moderated the service.

**Jonesboro New Hope Church** will hold a dedication service March 13 that will feature Floyd Tidsworth, director of church extension for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, and Harold Ray, director of missions for Mount Zion Association, as speakers. Don Vuncannon is pastor.

**Crossett First Church** ordained Bobby White and Tommy Tucker to the deacon ministry Jan. 10.

**Winslow First Church** ordained Wallace Reed to the deacon ministry Feb. 7. Par-

ticipating in the service were Rene Lemons, Kenneth Bradley, Harold Gateley, director of missions for Washington-Madison Association, Lowell Ponder and Pastor Fred Blake.

**Sonora Church** dedicated a new worship center Feb. 28, according to Pastor John Smedley. Burton Miley was speaker.

**Farmington First Church** has broadened its missions awareness program through the organization of a Baptist Women's group, according to Pastor Travis Fullwood.

**Alma First Church** recently commissioned seven people to serve in its new mission, Southside Mission, Alma. Jack Ramsey, church planter strategist for Arkansas Baptist State Convention, preached the commissioning message and presented a New Work Sponsor certificate of appreciation to Pastor Billy Kimbrough.

**Newport First Church** recently ordained Bobby Lassiter to the deacon ministry. Pastor Gene Crawley was speaker.

**Trinity Church** in Fort Smith celebrated its 65th anniversary on Feb. 20-21. Food, fellowship, music and testimonies highlighted the two-day event.

ABN photo / Mark Kelly



*Bayou Meto Church dedicated a Christian life center Feb. 21. The 10,500 square foot, \$400,000 facility includes 11 classrooms and a multi-purpose auditorium and gymnasium. The building represents the first phase of the congregation's long-range building plan, according to Pastor Bill Brown. The afternoon dedication service, which coincided with the congregation's 30th anniversary, included Marvin Peters, director of missions for North Pulaski Association, who grew up in and was ordained by the church, and the Melody Boys of Little Rock, who brought the special music. Pastor Brown brought the dedicatory message.*

**Crystal Hill Church** in Little Rock ordained Gary Almquist, Terry Bryant, Larry Carter, J.R. Dodson, Jeff Haley, Tommy Hammett, Donnie Holdcraft, Jimmy Ramsey, James Rogers and Monroe Smith to the deacon ministry Feb. 28.

**England First Church** received a plaque from Carbon Sims of Ouachita Baptist University Feb. 14 for their participation in OBU's "200 for the future" campaign. Harry Black is pastor.

**Madison First Church** has purchased property adjoining the church. An old motel on the land will be torn down and any salvaged materials will be used to construct a new parsonage.

**Pocahontas First Church** celebrated Pastor Faron Rogers' second anniversary with the church Feb. 14. The church also recently ordained Phil Smith, Danny Holt and Denny DeShaw to the deacon ministry.

**Pulaski Heights Church** in Little Rock celebrated "Wanda Pearce Day" on Feb. 28. She is outgoing interim director of youth. Mark Dose, minister of education and outreach, has assumed the duties of minister of education and youth.

## BAPTIST MEN'S CONGRESS

Friday, May 20  
7:30 p.m.

Saturday, May 21  
8:30 a.m.

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# Missionary Imperative

*Arkansas WMU Reflects On Past, Looks to Future  
As It Prepares to Celebrate 100 Years*

by Mark Kelly

Managing Editor, Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

In Southern Baptist circles, women and children have always led the way in missions support.

And as Woman's Missionary Union observes its 100th anniversary this year, the cause for celebration of this rich heritage is tempered only by the sobering prospects of the challenges which lie ahead.

In Arkansas, as elsewhere, women formed the vanguard of mission support. Their hearts glowing with missionary zeal, resourceful women scrimped and saved in order to send a few dollars to an orphanage here or a foreign missionary there. And they were careful to pass along their vision to the children.

"Woman's Missionary Union has always been responsible for the missions emphasis in our churches," asserts Jane Watson, a member of Little Rock Immanuel Church and author of Arkansas WMU's centennial history, *Labourers Together: A History of Arkansas Woman's Missionary Union*.

"Mission support began as a woman's activity," observes Watson, who spent five years researching and writing the history. "It wouldn't exist if WMU hadn't been there."

In most churches, Woman's Missionary Union is the only source of missions education, contends Watson, herself active in WMU for more than 30 years. "I have not been in a church that provided a missions emphasis outside of what Woman's Mis-

sionary Union has done."

The long struggle to lay a solid foundation of mission support in Arkansas began in September 1883, when M.D. Early of Morrilton First Church issued a statewide call to organize a committee which would encourage cooperative support of missions. Cooperating societies from Austin, Alma, Little Rock, Lonoke, Fort Smith, Morrilton, Ozark, Pine Bluff, Russellville, Searcy, and Fayetteville responded.

Five years later, when the national Woman's Missionary Union was organized, Arkansas was one of 10 states sending delegates to the founding convention. A state organization followed.

The women realized very quickly that the strength of their movement lay in the success in training young people to support missions, Watson observes. In 1891, the first Sunbeam Band, forerunner of Mission Friends, was organized in Monticello. Other age group organizations ensued: Young Women in 1904, Royal Ambassadors in 1908, and Girl's Auxiliary in 1914.

Encouraged and assisted by the women, the children began to support missions. In 1908, Arkansas Sunbeam Bands gave \$600 to pay the salary of a missionary in China. In 1920, 33 Sunbeam Bands pledged \$8,253.75 for missions. Considering the children had no allowances, that no church-wide offerings were being taken, and that the women were limited to their butter and egg money for financial resources, remarkable advances were being



made. In 1987, more than \$3 million was collected through three statewide offerings for mission work around the world. The foreign mission offering alone exceeded \$2 million in 1985.

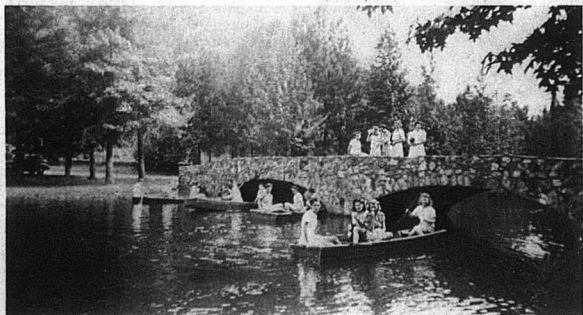
Watson sees WMU's role in helping Arkansas Baptists pay off their "honor debt" as a major milestone of the 100 years.

In the wake of the Great Depression, Arkansas Baptists struggled with the need to settle accounts with their creditors. When an agreement was reached in 1936 to compromise at 35 cents on the dollar, Woman's Missionary Union pitched in and gave \$42,593.01 of the \$200,000 needed to fulfill the agreement. The final \$2,000 to complete that pledge came from WMU.

Yet many Arkansas Baptists, including State Executive Secretary Ben L. Bridges, felt that Arkansas Baptists were morally obligated to pay off the debt to the last penny. In 1943, a campaign was launched to retire the remaining \$700,000 debt, an amount equal to three times the state convention's annual income.

Arkansas Baptist women gave themselves to that effort and, by 1952, the state convention was within \$10,000 of meeting the monumental goal. Bridges took the need to WMU, and the state's women took a special offering to complete the drive and make Arkansas Baptists debt-free.

Over the years, WMU work has grown and developed, Watson observes. In the beginning, the work was confined to the support of the state's orphanage. Today, it embraces literacy work, poverty relief, resort ministries, and a whole host of other concerns, and the challenges which lie



*GA Camp in the early days at Ferncliff.*

before WMU are as great as those which have already been conquered.

Under the banner, "A Century To Celebrate, A Future To Fulfill," Arkansas WMU will devote its annual meeting March 18-19 to the centennial.

"The purpose of our centennial celebration is threefold," notes Julia Ketner, Arkansas WMU executive director since 1975. "First, we want to affirm our missions purpose, which hasn't changed in 100 years. Second, we want to reflect upon our heritage. And third, we intend to focus on our future."

Baptist women began preparing for the annual meeting back in December, when they launched a 100-day prayer project, Ketner says. The program for the annual meeting, which will be held at Immanuel Church, Little Rock, will include historical vignettes in each session, as well as outstanding speakers such as ABSC Executive Director Don Moore; Christine Gregory, former national WMU president; Joyce Mitchell, WMU, SBC; and Bill O'Brien of the SBC Foreign Mission Board. In addition, state, home, and foreign missionary speakers will address the gathering.

Among the challenges which lie before WMU in its second century, Ketner sees a need to find creative ways to involve working women and young women in Woman's Missionary Union. "We've got to overcome preconceived ideas of what WMU is all about," she says. Dramatic lifestyle changes have made traditional WMU activities inaccessible to many women, and churches need to discover innovative ways to allow this large pool of women to become involved in missions support.

A second challenge Ketner sees is involv-



First statewide YWA Houseparty, 1931.

ing churches as a whole in missions, rather than writing the task off as "WMU's job."

"Missions is not optional for the church," Ketner insists. "Missions is what we are supposed to be about. Woman's Missionary Union is just an organization to facilitate the whole church's involvement in missions. It's just there to help the church fulfill its mission."

And Southern Baptists are not meeting their potential in that regard, Watson believes. "The saddest thing for me is that national mission offering goals have had to be reduced or not raised because churches aren't meeting the challenge," she says.

That underlines the challenge for the future. "People respond based on what they know," Ketner says. "Baker James

Cauten used to say that what people do about world missions is in direct proportion to what they know about world missions.


"People are not going to pray and give unless they know why they need to, and that information basically is not coming to the churches through any other source but WMU."

The closing passage of Watson's book states it well:

"The missionary imperative which brought WMU into existence has not changed. Future generations of women and young people must have hearts kindled and informed through missions education. The children must be impressed with the need for prayer: prayer for more missions volunteers, prayer for missionaries serving around the world, prayer for churches to continue mission support through the Cooperative Program and special mission offerings, prayer for the world in which they live. They must be inspired to give of themselves in career service, as volunteers in missions, through financial support, and in mission action."



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# 'Work It Out'

## Severing Of Ties Declined, But Budget Reduced

by **Mary Knox**  
Baptist Press

NASHVILLE (BP)—The Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee has declined to act on a proposal that would dissolve SBC institutional and financial ties to the Washington-based Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

The Executive Committee also recommended the SBC reduce its annual contribution to the Baptist Joint Committee budget by \$48,400. But it allocated budget increases to two SBC entities that are stepping up their Washington profiles.

The dissolution/funding issue culminated last fall, when the SBC Public Affairs Committee, a standing committee of the convention that relates to the BJC, voted 8-4 to seek the split. The PAC also requested \$485,200 to fund itself as the SBC agency "to deal with First Amendment and religious liberty issues." Both measures require Executive Committee approval to be presented to the full convention.

When the Executive Committee met Feb. 22-24 in Nashville, the funding issue surfaced first. The committee approved a four-part recommendation that noted:

— The report of a fact-finding committee which studied Southern Baptist participation in the BJC and was presented to the SBC last summer did not call for, nor prohibit, a change in the funding pro-

cedure through which SBC funds are sent directly to the BJC.

— The PAC, as an SBC standing committee, should request its own funds by following the standard three-part procedure that applies to all SBC entities.

— The SBC treasurer should continue to send the BJC's funds directly to that agency during the 1987-88 fiscal year.

— The BJC should make its SBC budget requests, as adopted by the full committee or its executive committee, through the PAC to the Executive Committee. The procedure includes the understanding that the Executive Committee and its budget subcommittee may request representatives from the PAC and the BJC to provide budgeting information and that the PAC would be free to make recommendations concerning the requests, based on the PAC's perspective.

Later, the Executive Committee considered the PAC's dissolution request. The original motion would have put the issue to a vote of messengers to the SBC annual meeting this summer.

But opponents of that measure said the PAC and BJC had not had time to resolve their situation. They cited the work of the two study committees and noted, for example, that the funding issue had been resolved only hours earlier.

James E. Baucom of Martinsville, Va., and Frank C. Ingraham of Nashville drafted the substitute motion that prevailed. It referred to the work of the study committees and noted, "There has not been adequate time for implementation and evaluation of the effectiveness of the changes called for in these studies."

It concluded the "Executive Committee refrains from any further action pertaining

to this relationship."

Speaking to the motion, John C. Cothran of Greenville, S.C., said, "They need to work together." He was echoed by SBC President Adrian P. Rogers of Memphis, Tenn., who said the action says to the PAC and the Baptist Joint Committee: "Let's give it time. . . . Work it out."

The BJC did not fare so well in budget considerations. The Executive Committee voted to recommend the SBC reduce its annual contribution to the BJC budget from the current \$448,400 to \$400,000 for the 1988-89 fiscal year. The change represents a 10.79 percent reduction. The Cooperative Program provides 70.26 percent of the current BJC budget. It is set to provide 59.69 percent of the 1988-89 budget.

Although Cothran and others noted the nature of the budgeting process prevents direct links between one entity's gain and another's loss, several Executive Committee members noted significant increases went to the two organizations that are stepping up their Washington operations.

The PAC, which previously was funded only for one meeting a year and this year received funds for an additional meeting, was marked to get an additional \$24,200. That amount is to fund PAC meetings, a quarterly newsletter and a national public affairs conference.

And the SBC Christian Life Commission, which last fall approved "an expanded presence in Washington" to address moral concerns, received a \$65,050, or 8.18 percent, increase. The average Cooperative Program increase is 4.25 percent.

In a final PAC/BJC-related action, the Executive Committee cited a 1976 SBC action and "tradition long honored by Southern Baptists" in affirming the convention's position of "non-endorsement of candidates for political office."

The action was a response to a PAC vote last summer to endorse Robert H. Bork for appointment to the U.S. Supreme Court.

## (BP) Affirmed, Restraint Urged

NASHVILLE (BP)—A subcommittee of the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee generally affirmed the Baptist Press news service, but urged greater restraint in reporting sensitive controversial issues in an effort to promote peace and harmony.

Acting on a recommendation of its public relations workgroup, the SBC Executive Committee gave four reasons for declining to conduct an investigation of "objectivity and fairness" in Baptist Press news reporting from 1978 to the present.

(1) It would be contrary to the spirit of the Peace Committee report adopted by

the SBC in 1987; (2) It would relate to personnel no longer under employment; (3) It would entail the prohibitive task of studying more than 9,000 news releases in the 10-year period; and (4) It would preclude the fact that the public relations workgroup is responsible for advising the Executive Committee concerning its public relations and Baptist Press staff.

The public relations workgroup report advised the work of Al Shackleford, director of Baptist Press. The workgroup report noted improvement in fairness and objectivity since Shackleford became director of the news service in 1987.

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# John Hurt Dies At 78

by Toby Druin & Ken Camp  
Texas Baptist Standard

DALLAS (BP)—John J. Hurt, 78, longtime editor of Baptist state newspapers, died Feb. 17 at Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas.

Hurt retired in 1977 after a career in secular and Baptist journalism. He was an editor and manager for The Associated Press before committing his skills to Southern Baptist journalism 30 years earlier.

During three decades as a newspaperman in the convention, he was editor first of the oldest and then the largest Baptist state papers, editing Georgia's Christian Index from 1947 to 1966 and Texas' Baptist Standard from 1966 to 1977.

He was the first layman to edit the Index. During his tenure, Hurt changed the publication's format from a clergy-oriented journal to a news magazine edited for both the laity and ministers. Consequently, he generally is credited with leading Baptist state papers to adopt the news style most of the papers follow today.

The son of a Baptist preacher who nominated six men for the Southern Baptist Convention presidency, Hurt was familiar with the denomination from his earliest years and developed a lasting love for missions and missionaries.

Missionaries and mission board leaders were frequent guests in the Hurt home when he was a child and in later life in the Hurt home in Atlanta and Dallas. He traveled to many foreign mission fields.

As a committed Southern Baptist and professional journalist, he constantly worked for openness in denominational life. When he was refused entrance to one board meeting, he carried a large blank square on the editorial page with the caption, "This is what the Executive Committee wants you to know about your business — NOTHING."

Hurt had a reputation for not being timid about expressing his opinion, on and off the editorial page. Few convention agencies escaped his gouging; none escaped his

scritiny.

While editor of the Christian index, he urged better race relations, opposing a pro-segregation stance by a Georgia convention committee in the 1960s and bringing threats on his life.

Hurt was a reporter for the Memphis (Tenn.) Commercial Appeal and the Jackson (Tenn.) Sun prior to joining The Associated Press in 1936. He worked for the worldwide newsgathering wire service for 11 years, rising to the ranks of editor and bureau chief before entering denominational journalism.

He was a graduate of Union University in Jackson, Tenn., and received an honorary doctor of laws degree from Mercer University in Macon, Ga.

He is survived by his wife, Doris, and two sons, John Jeter III, of Newark, Del., and Robert H. of Washington; two brothers, Harry and Jim of Atlanta; one sister, Mrs. Howard C. Bennett of Marshall, Texas; and two grandchildren, Charles and Christi of Newark.

## Harwell Elected

ATLANTA (BP)—Jack U. Harwell, former editor of the *Christian Index*, Georgia Baptists' weekly newspaper, has been elected editor of *SBC Today*, an independent, autonomous Southern Baptist newspaper, effective June 1, the paper's board of directors announced.

He will succeed *SBC Today* founder, Editor Walker L. Knight, who will remain with *SBC Today* as publisher.

Harwell is to join the *SBC Today* staff as editor prior to the 1988 meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention. Currently Harwell is completing a book on the nine-year theological/political controversy in the denomination.

Harwell, who worked for the *Christian Index* for 30 years, the final 21 as editor, took early retirement last December after a review committee was established to monitor his work.

## WORLD HUNGER

### Gifts Decline For Second Year

NASHVILLE (BP)—Contributions from Southern Baptists to their denomination's program of world hunger relief in 1987 declined for the second year in a row, according to figures released in February by the Southern Baptists Home and Foreign mission boards.

Southern Baptists last year gave \$8.9 million for domestic and foreign hunger relief. The total represents a decline of 2.3 percent from 1986 and is below the record high of \$11.8 million given to hunger relief in 1985.

Gifts of \$1.3 million to domestic hunger relief administered through the Home Mission Board were up \$23,000 over 1986, while the \$7.6 million given to foreign hunger relief through the Foreign Mission Board was down by \$181,000.

According to one hunger expert, hunger gifts for 1987 are cause for both rejoicing and concern.

"Although hunger gifts have leveled off around the \$9 million mark, they are well above the \$5.5 million giving levels from 1980-1983," said Robert M. Parham, an associate director of the Christian Life Commission responsible for the world hunger concerns. "The \$8.9 million given in 1987 is still the third largest amount given by Southern Baptists for world hunger causes."

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## SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE

## Literature Plan Adopted

by Linda Lawson  
Baptist Sunday School Board

NASHVILLE (BP)—Trustees of the convention's Sunday School Board adopted plans for dated and undated lessons on sanctity of human life during their semi-annual meeting Feb. 15-17.

Trustees also approved two projects designed to increase office and operations space in the Sunday School Board headquarters.

During about an hour of discussion, board trustees and administrators unanimously spoke in favor of the need to forcefully support sanctity of human life and oppose abortion through Sunday School and other literature produced by the board.

Gene Mims, chairman of the church program organizations committee and pastor of First Baptist Church of Cleveland, Tenn., said in introducing the committee recommendation, "There is no question on the staff's part, the committee's part or your part that abortion in our country is wrong, a sin."

Differences of opinion centered on whether undated lessons or dated lessons in Sunday School quarterlies would be the best approach. Undated lessons are

published separately for use at any time, while dated lessons in quarterlies would be for use on Sanctity of Human Life Sunday, scheduled in January each year on the denominational calendar.

After two substitute motions failed, trustees adopted a recommendation from the church program organizations committee to publish annual undated lessons for older children, youth and adults beginning in October 1989 and annual dated lessons for all three groups in all curriculum lines on Sanctity of Human Life Sunday beginning in January 1991. The recommendation was adopted in a voice vote with about 12 negative votes.

Concerning treatment of sanctity of human life in board literature, President Lloyd Elder said, "We have done too little in this area, and we can and will make a large contribution from a Bible study approach to application."

In discussion on the issue, Piland told trustees that in addition to the dated and undated Sunday School lessons on sanctity of human life, the board already is committed to supporting the issue through curriculum units on critical issues, application of relevant Bible passages, curriculum support on special days such as Sanctity of Human Life Sunday and channeling of articles through non-curriculum publications. For example, he said 67 board periodicals will include support for 1989 Sanctity of Human Life Sunday.

Board members also approved a preliminary design for a nine-story office/conference tower atop the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's Operations Building and voted to proceed with a \$3.9 million expansion of the Operations Building.

Both projects are part of a long-range Nashville master properties plan developed by the board's administration in conjunction with a trustee space committee and adopted by the trustees in August 1987.

Funds for the projects will come from fixed-asset reserves.

The plan is based on projected space needs of serving a denomination of 17.5 million members by the year 2000. At present, about 14.7 million people are members of churches affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention.

Estimated cost of the tower is \$14.3 million, with completion expected in February 1990. Trustees will be asked to approve construction drawings and bids in August 1988. Completion of the tower will enable board components presently housed in leased space to move into board-owned facilities.

Supreme Court  
Rejects Lawsuit

WASHINGTON (BP)—The United States Supreme Court rejected without comment Feb. 22 a legal challenge brought by four messengers to the 1985 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention seeking federal court relief from what they claimed were parliamentary irregularities by then-SBC President Charles F. Stanley.

Two messengers to the 1985 meeting, Robert S. and Julia J. Crowder of Birmingham, Ala., asked the SBC Executive Committee in September of 1985 to set aside the election of the Committee on Boards because of the alleged irregularities. When the Executive Committee declined, the Crowders—joined by co-plaintiffs H. Allan McCartney and Henry C. Cooper—filed suit Dec. 5, 1985, in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia.

U.S. District Judge Robert H. Hall dismissed the suit May 5, 1986, ruling his court lacked jurisdiction in the case "because it involves the resolution of an ecclesiastical controversy." The 11th Circuit Court of Appeals upheld Hall, ruling Sept. 28, 1987, the district judge was right in refusing on church-state grounds to decide the dispute.

The Crowders appealed to the Supreme Court Dec. 28, 1987. The high court's rejection of the appeal has the effect of leaving in place the lower rulings and marks the end of the case.

Defense of the Crowder lawsuit has, to date, cost \$227,000. Legal bills for the Supreme Court appeal have yet to be paid.

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### *Future Unlimited*

by Marvin E. James, Second Church, Clarksville

Basic passage: Matthew 25:31-46

Focal passage: Matthew 25:34-40

Central truth: Ministering in Christ's love will bring eternal rewards.

The Son of Man will come to judge us, and we can have full confidence in that judgment, for he has lived through our own experiences. Christ will use justice and equity when he sets before us on his throne of heavenly glory. Justice is receiving exactly what the law gives, while equity is law applied with consideration of the relationship between man and man, or God and man. Which do we want? Therefore, Christ will not relieve the solemnity of judgment, but he makes us fully willing to accept his sentence.

Notice, our judge seems to use an unexpected basis for judgment. A judgment based upon charity. The charity he speaks of is the revelation of character, and it is that Christlike character that is the basis of judgment. It is surprising that Christ makes no mention of the sanctified personal life of his disciples, but instead fixes attention on their service to others.

There is goodness based upon what we may receive, and barbaric savages understand that type of goodness, where life has little worth. Contrast that to the fact that God's lonely, sick, and poor are precious in his sight. We are to serve others for Christ's sake. We cannot minister to Jesus in person, but we can minister vicariously to those suffering around us. We can serve others with Christ's love manifested through us. "Even Christ served not himself." Christians are called to serve the hurting among us. How can we overlook them? They are all around us, even in the shadow of the church building.

This service is really a test of the Christ Spirit in us. This is not just neighborliness, sympathy, or charity that is commended, for alone these are not acceptable to Christ.

We should look upon all those who are needy or hurting, as if it were Christ, himself. We should actually feel joy when we receive an opportunity to help others. Our churches must make opportunities to serve those in our communities who are in physical or spiritual need. Our blessings will be uncountable, as we wait for that inheritance, the Kingdom prepared for us since the creation of the world.

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## Life and Work

### *Taming the Tongue*

by Earl Humble, First Church, Osceola

Basic passage: Exodus 20:16; 23:1-2; Proverbs 6:16-19; Matthew 12:36-37; Ephesians 4:14-29

Focal passage: Exodus 20:16; 23:1-2; Proverbs 6:16-19; Matthew 12:36-37; Ephesians 4:15,23,25,29

Central truth: The tongue can be tamed only by God's grace.

The Ninth Commandment reads, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor" (Ex. 20:16). This is broadened somewhat in Exodus 23:1-2 and in the other passages listed above. In the Exodus 23 passage we are told, "Do not spread false reports. Do not help a wicked man by being a malicious witness. When you give testimony in a lawsuit, do not pervert justice by siding with the crowd."

There is probably no vice more prevalent than lying, and probably none more detrimental to character and to an orderly society. Many have gone to prison for lying under oath, and for everyone who has been proved guilty of perjury, legions have escaped that penalty.

Other penalties, however, are sure to follow. Their lies have wrought havoc in society, and the culprits who started the false rumor may never be exposed. But Jesus said that every idle word shall be revealed in the judgment.

The tongue is a very important member of the body, and it has many functions besides talking. The tongue itself is not to be blamed for the mischief in which it partakes. The tongue says what it is directed to say. As the body without the spirit is dead, so the tongue without the mind is dead.

It is possible for even a mute person to be guilty of violating this commandment. There are other ways to communicate even when the tongue can make no sound. It all comes back to the heart of a person. It is no wonder that God hates a lying tongue, for it speaks in harmony with a wicked heart. Lying tongues divide friends and families, churches and communities, even nations.

One of the best ways to control the tongue is to use it for constructive purposes. Start with praising God. Read the Psalms and count the times the reader is invited to praise him. After praising him it seems out of place to use our tongues for evil purposes.

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## Bible Book

### *From Prison to Regal Robes*

by Eddie McCord, Independence Association DOM

Basic passage: Genesis 41

Focal passage: Genesis 41:14-16, 28-30, 37-40, 55-57

Central truth: God is at work in ways which we do not recognize.

Joseph is still in the king's prison. He has correctly interpreted the dreams of the chief butler and chief baker. One can only imagine what was going through his mind. Had he been forgotten? What of his father in the Land of Canaan. The outlook wasn't very bright. But God was at work in ways that Joseph was not aware of at the time. He was at work in Canaan, in Pharaoh's life, in the butler's life, throughout Egypt and, yes, even in the prison preparing Joseph for a leadership role that was about to be thrust upon him.

*Joseph summoned* (Ge. 41:14-16)

Joseph is summoned into Pharaoh's presence. Two very similar dreams have left him troubled. The astrologers and magicians of Egypt were powerless to offer a satisfactory explanation. Two years had passed since the butler had been released from prison. Pharaoh's dreams and the unsatisfactory interpretations reminded him of his own dream and of Joseph's correct interpretation. How excited Joseph must have been! He prepares himself for an audience with Pharaoh. He tells Pharaoh that God shall give him "an answer of peace" or an answer that shall calm his spirit.

*Joseph's interpretation* (Ge. 41:28-30)

He very plainly told Pharaoh what God was about to do. There was to be a severe famine in the land. The seven fat cows and the seven full ears of corn represented seven years of plenty. The seven poor cows and seven thin ears represented seven years of famine.

*Joseph's elevation* (Ge. 37-40)

The interpretation and Joseph's recommendations were well received. Pharaoh immediately recognized that Joseph was the best qualified man for the job. He arranges him in royal robes, puts a gold chain about his neck, and causes him to ride in the second chariot. Joseph was a wise and careful administrator. He looked after the land and made sure that grain was stored during the good years. His wife bore him two sons to whom he gave symbolic names. When the years of plenty ended, Egypt was ready for the lean ones.

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## NATION

# Inerrancy Coalition

'Until the Battle Is Won'

by **Trennis Henderson**  
Missouri Word and Way

BELTON, Mo. (BP)—Insisting that "the stakes are high in this battle," Missouri Baptist pastor David Baker has initiated the formation of the "Southern Baptist Coalition for Biblical Inerrancy."

Baker, pastor of First Baptist Church of Belton, Mo., wrote in the Jan. 20 issue of his church newsletter that he was seeking 50 men in his congregation to each contribute \$50 a year to the organization "until the battle is won." Baker added that "my prayer is that we will be able to enlist 1,000 people in the coalition by April, representing 250 conservative churches."

Baker's actions follow his announcement last July that he was disbanding the "Missouri Inerrancy Fellowship," which he served as president at the time. Baker said in July that the Inerrancy Fellowship being disbanded was a direct response to the SBC Peace Committee's request that "all political factions... discontinue the organized political activity in which they are now engaged."

At the time, Baker told *Word & Way*, newsmagazine of the Missouri Baptist Convention, "We do not want to be part of the problem.... Now we want to let the conservative shift take its course. We do not want to force the issue."

Describing the need for his current actions, however, Baker wrote in his Jan. 27 newsletter, "The moderate/liberal group has significantly intensified political efforts to 'take back' convention agencies and institutions.... I had hoped to move away from 'political' meetings, but it seems that this battle must be fought consistently." Baker said the newsletter was mailed "to every church in the Missouri Baptist Convention, as well as to churches in Kansas and Nebraska."

The Missouri pastor cited "the need to inform Missouri Baptists" as one reason for his new political organization. While insisting that "it is not my intention to attack (*Word & Way* editor) Bob Terry," Baker charged that Terry's "editorial approach... has often been inflammatory and at times misleading."

Baker announced plans for a "Rally for Biblical Inerrancy" March 24 at First Church of Belton. Among scheduled speakers are John Click, pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church, Wichita, Kan.; Gerald Davidson, pastor of First Baptist Church, Arnold, Mo.; Tom Elliff, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church, Del City, Okla.; David Lucas, pastor of First Baptist

Church of Oak Hill, Austin, Texas; and Paige Patterson, president of Criswell College, Dallas.

The rally will focus on the theme, "A Baptist and His Bible!" It will be followed on March 25 by a breakfast meeting featuring a panel discussion by conservative leaders.

Baker wrote that financial involvement in the coalition will finance "efforts to produce a monthly newsletter, schedule rallies and fellowship meetings and support related efforts to move our convention to a more conservative evangelistic position."

## Missouri Plans Crisis Center

BRIDGETON, Mo. (BP)—The first crisis pregnancy center related to a Missouri Baptist Convention entity is scheduled to open March 15.

The Missouri Baptist Children's Home, in partnership with Cane Creek-Stoddard Baptist Association, plans to operate a crisis pregnancy and family counseling center in Poplar Bluff. A second center is planned for Dexter.

When the center opens, it will be the first crisis pregnancy center in the Southern Baptist Convention to be sponsored by a state convention entity or local Baptist association, according to Robert Parham of the SBC Christian Life Commission.

No fees will be charged by the crisis pregnancy center, but follow-up counseling or family counseling will be paid for on a fee schedule based on the client's ability to pay.

## Divinity School Announced

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)—Samford University will open the Southern Baptist Convention's first university-based divinity school on its Birmingham, Ala., campus this fall.

The divinity school is Samford's response to a need in Alabama, Samford Provost William E. Hull explained. The Alabama Baptist State Convention has more bivocational ministers than any other state convention in the SBC, he said, also citing statistics that reveal more than 3,500 ministers without ministerial degrees now serve Alabama churches.

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