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Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

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**January 22, 1987**

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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January 22, 1967

# Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine



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**'I believe this!'**

A Rarely Missed  
Issue



ABN photo / Mark Kelly

**'I believe this!'** — *Nothing can compare to the excitement of the moment someone connects the written Word of God with her experience. When Mei-Qin Tang (left) of Fayetteville connected the English version of John 3:16 with its counterpart in her Chinese Bible, she exclaimed, "I believe this!" This month's "Helpline" feature focuses on literacy missions (p. 10).*

## In this issue

### 7 sanctuary dedicated

The Boles Church dedicated a new 125-seat sanctuary—Dec. 7. The facility was erected through the efforts of volunteer workers.

### 8 'Who will win America?'

Southern Baptist home missionary George Russ believes no city—not even New York City—is too large to be won to Christ.

### Correction

The "Missionary notes" in the Jan. 8 ABN incorrectly reported on the status of missionaries Richard and Beatrice Walker. The Walkers are remaining in Arkansas and may be contacted at P.O. Box 236, Benton, AR 72015; phone 776-0402.

## Phone lines to aid 'Concerts Of Prayer'

by Art Toalston  
SBC Foreign Mission Board

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—A new toll-free number can help Southern Baptists reach out and touch the world. It's 1-800-ALL-SEEK (1-800-255-7335).

In December, Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board trustees urged Southern Baptist churches to begin "concerts of prayer" for world evangelization Feb. 1. The toll-free number will provide the latest prayer concerns from across the world.

The PrayerLine number can be dialed from every state except Virginia, Hawaii and Alaska. For Baptists in those states, a regular toll call will be needed, 1-804-355-6581.

Both numbers, to be activated Jan. 26, can be used 24 hours a day.

Foreign Mission Board trustees have called for concerts of prayer the first Sunday of every month in church worship services, Sunday School, and Church Training.

A concert of prayer, said R. Keith Parks, board president, involves "God's people joined in united, focused, extraordinary prayer for global evangelization."

"I am convinced," he added, "there has never been a great spiritual, evangelistic mission effort unless it was preceded by prayer."

Calls for concerts of prayer are not new. Parks added. In the late 1700s, a Baptist association in England urged prayer for revival and the spread of Christianity. Within a decade, the first Baptist missions group was organized. And its first pioneer, William Carey in India, sparked the modern missionary movement which continues to this day, encompassing Southern Baptists' 3,700-plus foreign missionaries and those of other evangelical persuasions.

Southern Baptist Bold Mission Thrust efforts to share the gospel with every person

in the world by the year 2000 "will never be accomplished without massive prayer," insisted Minette Drumwright, the board's special assistant for intercessory prayer.

Missions may be at "an historic moment," Drumwright said, as Christian leaders are busy sharpening strategies for reaching the world with the gospel. But the most magnificent strategies are powerless without prayer. In fact, the ultimate strategy is prayer."

In addition to its phone lines for relaying prayer concerns, the Foreign Mission Board will continue its monthly prayer alerts. More than 23,000 Southern Baptists currently are on the mailing list.

And, Drumwright noted, the concerts of prayer will complement the National Missions Prayer Plan to be launched during the 1987 Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions and the 1988 Week of Prayer for Home Missions.

The National Missions Prayer Plan will seek to enlist every Southern Baptist in daily personal prayer for world evangelization. It will be coordinated by the denomination's Woman's Missionary Union and Brotherhood Commission.

Carolyn Weatherford, WMU executive director, said the Foreign Mission Board trustees' call for concerts of prayer is "another real, valid way to get every church in the Southern Baptist Convention to focus its prayer" for world missions.

Drumwright listed three hoped-for results from the concerts of prayer: that churches will gain a "heightened, deepened, broadened global awareness" through the times of special prayer each month; that more people will be called into missions involvement; and that "God's power will be unleashed into lives, situations and nations in extraordinary ways."

## Professions made at convicted killer's funeral

by Orville Scott  
Baptist General Convention of Texas

CORPUS CHRISTI, Texas (BP)—Richard Andrade became a Christian only two weeks before his execution for murder in Huntsville, Texas.

But the testimony of his conversion resulted in about 60 of his family and friends praying to receive Christ at his funeral in Corpus Christi, Texas, said the seminary student who witnessed to Andrade during the nationwide Prison Invasion Dec. 5.

During the prison revival Andrade overheard Scott Moneyham, a student at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, telling another death row inmate how to become a Christian.

"I've got 14 days to live. Do you think there's time for me?" Andrade asked.

Moneyham assured him there was time and led the condemned inmate to accept Christ.

As a newborn Christian, Andrade asked,

"Would you pray that my family will be saved?" Subsequently Moneyham was invited by a relative of Andrade's to tell of the experience at his funeral.

Moneyham told, not only about Andrade's conversion, but explained the plan of salvation before the congregation and a Catholic priest who was conducting the funeral service. At the close, Moneyham invited the congregation to bow their heads and pray to receive Christ. About half of about 130 people at the service complied.

Afterward an aunt of the executed man told Moneyham, "I prayed that prayer, and I really meant it."

As Moneyham was leaving, another woman caught up with him and asked, "Can you explain to me why I feel so different. I prayed that prayer, and I feel different."

Andrade's sister-in-law, who had invited Moneyham to speak, told him the following morning, "The whole family is different

## Will you keep giving?

## The editor's page

J. Everett Sneed



The 1987 federal income tax law is dramatically changing from what we have known for a number of years. One of the new features is that non-itemizers of deduction will be unable to claim charitable deductions such as contributions made to churches. Although this should have no impact on giving, in the instance of immature Christians, it may.

A married couple's total deductions must exceed \$3,760 in order for them to qualify to itemize. Those itemizing can include interest paid on a household mortgage, medical bills, 65 percent of interest paid (this will be phased out in five years) and miscellaneous deductions. In the past, non-itemizers could claim the automatic deduction set by the Internal Revenue Service plus charitable gifts. This will no longer be true.

This raises the question, "Why do you give to the Lord's work?" There are many motives for the giving of one's substance. Some individuals fear that, if they fail to give, God will cause a calamity to come upon them.

Still others give because of a sense of duty or from the motive of self respect. These individuals fear what others will say if they fail to give.

A few support the Lord's work out of a sense of compulsion or in an attempt to make-up for past wrongs committed. These individuals feel that by giving they are paying God back for the wrongs they committed in earlier life. Giving, to these individuals, is payment of a kind of "penance."

The New Testament teaches that the proper motive behind giving is love. The New Testament teaches, "God so loved... he gave..." (John 3:16). God's love embraced the totality of man. The Psalms tell us, "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein" (Ps. 24:1). All the physical substance we use, then, belongs to God.

Jesus had a great deal to say about giving and the motives for giving. Christ said, "It is more blessed to give than receive" (Acts 20:35). The word "blessed" carries the idea of happiness or satisfaction, so giving with the right motive will produce great satisfaction.

The Scripture further teaches that giving is a vital part of the worship experience. The wise men, as they came to worship the newborn King brought gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. These men came to worship and to express adoration and praise to the newborn King.

Some of the harshest words of Christ deal with the matter of self-glorification or self-exaltation in giving. He cautioned, "When thou doest thy alms, do not sound the trumpet before thee,

as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward" (Matt. 6:2).

Jesus approved of sacrificial giving as he commanded the woman who brought the alabaster box and broke it over him, as well as the widow who gave her mite. A Christian should give because of the relationship he has with God through Christ. He should further recognize that all that he has belongs to God and that he is but a steward of the possessions that God has placed in his hands.

The word "steward," as used in the New Testament, portrays the concept of God's total ownership of all we have. In Christ's day every, household of distinction seems to have had a steward. He was a servant or a free man who had full charge of his master's affairs and could even use them for his own personal advantage, if he chose. He was completely accountable to his master, however, and had to render a full account when requested to do so.

The Christian should gain insight to his responsibility from the household stewards of the New Testament era but the motivation should always be love and gratitude. The intent should be to glorify God and further the Master's work around the world.

There are many factors which should challenge Christians to be good stewards of their possessions. Paul enumerates several of the factors to the Corinthians which should encourage Christians today to be generous supporters of the local church work. The first of these is the example of others (2 Cor. 8:2). There are many who gave out of poverty. They received the blessings of the Master for their generosity.

Next, Paul emphasized their own past examples (2 Cor. 8:7-9). It would be great if each Christian would always live his life at his own highest standard. Most, if not all, Christians have had high moments when they recognized the responsibility of returning their material possessions to God for the furtherance of the gospel. The tragedy is that all too often we never turn our highest impulses into action.

Finally, we are to give because of the example of Christ (2 Cor. 8:9). The foundation of Christianity is the principle of giving. Apart from giving, there would be no eternal life.

Will the new tax law keep Christians from supporting the Lord's work? Not in the case of committed Christians who understand that they are stewards of their possessions. Those who realize that all that they have belongs to a God who loves them will continue to give.

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## Third installment in a four-part series

# Estate planning: how should I plan for my will?

by Larry Page

This article and the following one will suggest some steps you should take in preparing your will, from planning for your family to choosing an attorney who will draft your will.

Your first responsibility is to your family. The Apostle Paul's words as recorded in 1 Timothy 5:8 remind us of this fact: "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." You must decide what your objectives are, evaluate your circumstances, determine what the needs of individual members of your family are, and plan comprehensively with these things in mind.

You will need to determine the value of your estate. Simply subtract your total liabilities from total assets to discover your net worth. If you are like most people, you will discover you are worth more than you think. Whether your estate is large or small, it is given by God, who expects you to use it wisely and to arrange for its distribution in a responsible manner.

You should decide who will administer your estate. The personal representative will have a great deal of responsibility in satisfying your debts, dealing with business concerns, handling tax matters, and distributing your property and assets as instructed in your will. The personal representative should be trustworthy and competent to deal with financial matters.

If you do not nominate the person you wish to serve in this capacity, the court

will appoint one. A court-appointed personal representative will usually be required to post bond, which is paid by the estate. By your will, you can waive the necessity of posting bond for the personal representative, thereby reducing the expense of the estate administration process.

If you have minor children, a guardian should be named by your will. The guardian would have the care and control of your children should you and your spouse die before your children reach adulthood. As in the case of the personal representative, the guardian will be named by the court, if you leave no will. That could mean your children would be raised in a non-Christian home or with people who you would not have chosen for such an important job. Selection of the guardian should be prayerfully and carefully made.

You should plan for the distribution of your estate. Through a will, your decisions on how your property and assets will be distributed will be carried out. If you leave no will, the court will make those decisions for you, by following the statutory requirements provided for such circumstances.

As you plan for your will, you should determine how you want to provide for your family and which Christian causes you should consider. If you've supported the Lord's work during your life, it is reasonable to provide support for those ministries from your estate at your death.

If you want a trust to be established for your minor children, you should provide for

the trust and nominate the trustee in your will. If you and your spouse die without a will while the children are still young, the court will be required to appoint an individual or a corporate trustee to manage the property and assets you leave your children. As with the other positions necessitated by your death, these critical duties should be performed by someone trustworthy and chosen by you.

In considering how your tangible personal property will be distributed after your death, note that Arkansas law allows you to keep a list of tangible personal property and the intended beneficiary of each item. The list may be handwritten, it should be signed and then attached to the will. In order to use such a list, your will needs to authorize or refer to it.

You may alter or replace the list without having a new will prepared. However, it is important to remember that the list can only be used to distribute items of tangible personal property, such as furniture, appliances, clothing, etc.

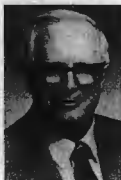
The last article in this series will encourage you to consider Christian causes in your will, help you choose an attorney and discuss where you should keep your will.

For more information, contact your Arkansas Baptist Foundation at P. O. Box 552, Little Rock, Arkansas 72203, or phone us at 376-0732 or 376-4791.

Larry Page is vice-president/attorney of the Arkansas Baptist Foundation.

## Greatest health threat?

Dr. Don Coury, The president of the American Medical Association recently stated that AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) is the greatest health threat in the United States. He said "I think we ought to get people back to basics. I think we ought to get them back to their religion, ought to get them back to faithfulness to their families, to their wives and husbands, teaching a little more morality, less permissiveness."



Parker

Dr. T. Keith Edwards, Southern Baptist gynecologist, Bluefield, West Virginia, wrote the following for the Monday, September 1986 *Open Windows* devotion: "I see people from time to time who suffer from venereal diseases... In all my years of practice I have never seen these tragedies attack

a family where a virgin man and woman come together for the first time within the bounds of marriage and ever after keep themselves away from affairs."

While emphasis is given in our society to encourage youth to say "no" to drugs, it stands to reason that they should be encouraged to say "no" to illicit sex. The tragic consequences of the abuse and use of alcohol and other dangerous drugs in the U. S. are well known. More than half of all accidents are related to the consumption of alcoholic beverages. This is why many are being encouraged to say "no" to alcohol as well as other drugs.

Herpes is another venereal disease that as yet has no known cure. This and other such diseases, along with AIDS, demand that "no" be the response to illicit sex. The Bible plainly teaches, "Abstain from all appearances of evil" (1 Th. 5:22). Both Christians and non-Christians should heed that in light of the fast growing threat of AIDS, herpes, and other venereal diseases. — Robert A. Parker, Christian Life Council

## foreign mission briefs

CASCAIS, Portugal—When government housing takes members of the Evangelical Baptist Church of Cascais to another part of the Lisbon area, a place of worship is waiting. Many members of the six-year-old congregation are Portuguese citizens who left Mozambique and Angola after revolutions in the mid-1970s. When five families received government housing in another area last year, the church started a mission. Several other families are to move to still another area, so a second mission has been started. Meanwhile, the church has paid off its loan from a store-front meeting place and traded up for a two-story house.

## a smile or two

One of the most difficult problems faced by a young man leaving home for the first time is giving up the fridge benefits.

Children will never eat anything that has not danced on TV.

### New covenant tithing

We could avoid all the haggling over what constitutes a "tithing church" if our people would return to a new covenant view of giving.

The example of Abraham does not support the idea of a mandatory tithe for Christians. Abraham gave his tithe freely, because he wanted to—there is no hint in the Scriptures that he tithed because he was under law.

Although Jesus told the scribes and Pharisees that they should have tithed (Matt. 23), the mosaic covenant was still in effect at that time, and Jesus was stressing the need for them to obey an old covenant regulation—not providing them with an eternal moral law.

Grace, not the law, is the rule of life for the believer (Rom. 6:14). The believer is nowhere obliged to tithe under the new covenant, but "each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9:7). How is a tithe required by law consistent with this admonition or with Paul's other words in 1 Corinthians 16:2?

Our insistence on tithing bespeaks a lack of faith in God's ability to provide. If our work honors Christ, will not our heavenly Father provide the funds with which to carry it out—O we of little faith?

This obsession with tithing is really a return to the Galatian error—relying upon the law for fruit; but, "the law is not based on faith" (Gal. 2:12). If we reject the law as a means of salvation, how can we embrace it as a means of Christian living? Is not the grace contained in the gospel sufficient for our every need? Is not Christ a complete Savior—or does man have to enter at some point and correct the situation?

"... If you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all" (Gal. 5:2). — **John Windsor, Little Rock**

### Go further in prayer

As I visit among our churches, I find church members very anxious to pray for the sick members only, when prayer requests are called for. This seems to be their only concern. This may explain why so few are "walking the aisles for Christ," especially

among the young people and adults.

I believe that we need to encourage our people to go further with their prayer requests. I believe that it would be all right for the churches to pray for: (1) their pastors and their families; (2) their missionaries, all over the world; (3) their denominational leaders, their schools, their government, etc.; (4) the broken homes in their churches, the lost, the unchurched; (5) so many of our members are unhappy, they need our prayers, too; and (6) their enemies, yes, right in the church, wherever. (All of us have enemies. If we can't forgive, then we need praying for.)

Some may say, "But we don't have the time to pray for so many people!" Then why are we here in the first place? Our Bible is full of suggestions. Try Matthew 5:44, Matthew 26:41, Mark 11:24, Luke 18:1, Acts 12:12, Colossians 4:3, 1 Timothy 5:25, II Timothy 3:1—just to get you started!

We could "make room" by leaving off so many announcements, church posturings, and braggings. Results? Yes! Our churches would become a leavening influence to the whole world! Like, "the salt of the earth," perhaps. — **Ottis Denney, Norton, Ohio**

## Two new lesson commentaries begin

Two new writers begin this week writing Sunday School lesson commentaries in "Lessons for living."

Harry Kennedy, pastor of Calvary Church, Hope, begins writing commentaries on the Life and Work series. He is a graduate of Southern Baptist College, Ouachita Baptist University, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

Kennedy has pastored several churches in Colorado, Texas, and Arkansas. He and his wife, Marjorie, have two daughters.

Andrew Hall begins writing commentaries on the Convention Uniform series. He is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. He has pastored churches in Arkansas and Florida and was a member of the Foreign Mission Board.



Kennedy



Hall

Since his retirement in 1984, Hall has served in three interim pastorates, including a summer assignment with the Foreign Mission Board in Grand Cayman, an island in the Caribbean. He and his wife, Harriet, have two grown children.

## Student missions conference set for March 6-8

FORT WORTH—More than 800 college students will hear the challenge to "Reach Beyond Me" at the 38th annual Student Missions Conference at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary March 6-8.

Keith Parks, president of the Foreign Mission Board, and Gladys Lewis, a freelance writer and former medical missionary, are key program leaders.

Also featured are seminary personnel Dan Crawford, assistant professor of evangelism and missions; Finlay Graham, SBC missionary to the Middle East; and David Keith, assistant professor of conducting.

Students will dialogue with missionaries in smaller sessions throughout the weekend. Home and foreign missionaries will display their work at a missionary mall.

Southwestern's World Missions and Evangelism Center hosts the conference each year. Justice Anderson, professor of missions and director of the center, said the conference makes students "aware of the foreign missionary challenge."

"Maybe God can use this to call them," Anderson said. "Students come and get the mission vision and begin to think about it and prepare while in college."



Mission begets mission—Grace Chapel in southwest Little Rock has launched a mission effort of its own, Charity Chapel, in the eastern part of the city. Both chapels are extensions of Life Line Church, Little Rock. Members of Grace Chapel held a baptism at the mission site on Jan. 11. Paul Williams, pastor of Grace Chapel, baptized Shirley Toombs. Larry L. Stagers is pastor of the mission, which was organized Dec. 7.

# Arkansas all over

by Millie Gill / ABN staff writer

## people

**Harry Black** is serving as pastor of England First Church, coming there from Immanuel Church in Newport. He is a graduate of Southern Baptist College; Hardin-Simmons University, Abilene, Texas; and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas. His wife, Ivetta, is a native of Cave City and is a graduate of Southern Baptist College and Arkansas College in Batesville. Black has served churches in Texas, Arkansas and Ghana, West Africa, where he and Mrs. Black served as journeymen for two years. They have two children, Shadrach, five, and Matthan, 16 months.

**Don Miller** has joined the staff of Trumann First Church as minister of education and youth. He is a graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. While attending seminary, he served as minister of education at Friendship Church in McKinney, Texas. He also has served as minister of youth and education at Gravel Ridge First Church.

**Eddie Graber** has resigned as minister to youth at Fort Smith First Church to serve as minister of youth at Sagemont Church in Houston, Texas.

**Kirk Crawford** has resigned as pastor of Woodrow Church, Heber Springs.

**Ken Shaw** has joined the staff of Little Rock Olivet Church as part-time minister of youth. He and his wife, Connie, are members of the church.

**Ken Hucks** is serving as pastor of Central Church, Marked Tree.

**Guy Shempert** has resigned as pastor of Trinity Church, Marked Tree, to move to Mississippi.

**Phil Ayres** is serving as minister of music at Pencil Bluff Church.

**Herman Kapherr** and **Paul Sivils** have joined the staff of Glenwood Church. Kapherr is serving as associate pastor, and Sivils is serving as minister of music.

**Ron Nease** is serving as minister of music at Mount Gilead Church, Black Springs.

**Tony Cherry** of Manila is serving as pastor of Etowah Church.

**Malcolm McDow** is serving as interim pastor of Hot Springs Second Church. He



Black

Miller

is professor of evangelism at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

**Dwayne W. Fischer** of Little Rock was initiated into the membership of the Million Dollar Club of Southern Baptist Fund Raisers at a recent staff meeting of the SBC Stewardship Commission. Fischer, who has been a member of the Stewardship Commission staff for three years and formerly served as minister of education at Little Rock Calvary Church, recently led First Church, LaGrange, Ga., in raising over \$3 million dollars. He is currently leading Fischer Street Church, Jonesboro, in a capital fund-raising program.

**L.B. Jordan** recently received the second annual award for starting the largest number of missions in Arkansas. The missions were organized in Little River Association where Jordan serves as director of missions. The award was presented by Floyd Tidworth, director of Church Extension for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

**Edgar Glover** is retiring as pastor of Maple Avenue Church, Smackover, Jan. 25 following 18 years of service there and 39 years as a Southern Baptist minister. The church will honor him at the 11 a.m. worship hour and again with a reception in fellowship hall from 2-4 p.m. Special guests will include church members, former church members, other members of other churches where Glover has served, pastors, friends, and family members.

**Richard Stiltner** observed his 10th anniversary of service as pastor of Hope First Church Jan. 11, when the congregation recognized both him and Mrs. Stiltner for their contributions to both the church and community. They were presented with a monetary gift by Bill Gunter, chairman of deacons. Others on program were Rose Luck, Nita Batson, and W.L. Tate.

**Spence House** is serving as pastor of Acorn Church, Mena. He moved there from Texas.

**Victor Rowell** is serving as interim pastor of Yocana Church, Mena.

**Lyndon Henderson** is serving as interim pastor of First Church, Des Arc. Henderson, who retired from 35 years of service as a full-time Southern Baptist minister in September 1986, has served churches in both Alabama and Arkansas. He retired from Calvary Church in West Memphis, where he served for six and one-half years.

**Jim Miller** of Bryant has joined the staff of Newark Southern Church as youth director. He is married to the former Marcy Lifer of Little Rock. They both are students at Southern Baptist College.

## briefly

**Fayetteville Immanuel Church** youth ministry is embarking on a Wednesday evening study that will provide both challenges and opportunities for youth to become involved in outreach ministry.

**Watson Chapel Church** at Pine Bluff sponsored a "God's Best for Me" conference Jan. 11-14, led by Bill and Norma Cook.

**Forest Highlands Church** in Little Rock youth are preparing for a summer mission trip to Dauphin Island, Ala., June 7-15, where they will assist with Big A Clubs in a local campground, work at the International Seaman's Center and a juvenile detention center in Mobile, and lead campground worship services.

**Batesville First Church** Royal Ambassador Greg Grady recently received his LAD-2 pin in recognition of his completion of the R.A. advancement book for his grade. The award, the first to be received in the church in several years, was presented by Greg's father, Buford Grady, who also serves as R.A. committee chairman.

**McGehee First Church** recognized Julia Weatherall Sunday, Jan. 18, in the morning worship service and with an evening reception. A commemorative plaque and money tree were presented to Mrs. Weatherall, who is retiring following 33 years of service to the church as pianist.

**Central Church** in Jonesboro ordained Buddy Johnston and Don Berry to the deacon ministry Jan. 11.

**Hartford First Church** recently honored Pastor and Mrs. Harold Plunkett for their 35 years of service to the church. They were presented a commemorative plaque and gifts, as well as being honored at a dinner.

**Winfield Church** at Waldron recently organized a Baptist Women group as part of its missions education program. Waldron First Church assisted with the organizational meeting in which Mary Jo McLemee was elected president and Kathy Hunsucker, secretary-treasurer.

**Lakeside Church** at Hot Springs is sponsoring a creation-evolution study Jan. 25-28. Paul Bernard will be guest lecturer.

**Concord Church** members provided food and household furnishings for the Judsonia Emergency Receiving Home as a Christmas outreach project.

**Quitman Church** recently installed Cleo Massey and Ed Lauderdale to its deacon ministry. The men were ordained in other churches.

**Hot Springs First Church** ordained Paul Barnard, Greg Greeson, Bob Riley, Rodney Bottoms, and Larry Lawson to the deacon ministry Jan. 11.

**Conway First Church** ordained Gilbert Baker and Bill Bounds to the deacon ministry Jan. 11.

**North Pulaski Association** recently completed a new work probe, revealing the need for 15 new congregations. Ken Neibel, a consultant with the Home Mission Board, directed the probe. Paul McClung, pastor of North Little Rock Calvary Church and local director, reported three of the 15 congregations are needed in mobile home parks, while 12 are needed in communities such as Shelby Road just off Kiehl Avenue. He also reported the probe recommended outreach Bible studies for six other apartment communities and several smaller mobile home parks.

**Pulaski Association** ended the 1986 fiscal year with a record budget income as the result of budget gifts from associational churches. Calvary Church in Little Rock gave what is believed to be a record monthly budget gift of \$3,163.



**Sanctuary dedication**—Boles Church dedicated a sanctuary Dec. 7 with a seating capacity of 125. The church was organized as a mission by Waldron First Church. The new building was constructed through the efforts of church members, a local Methodist church member, and men of Baring Cross Church in North Little Rock who gave vacation time in construction labor. Participating in the dedication were Johnnie Darr, director of missions for Buckner Association, Nelson Wilhelm, pastor of the sponsoring church, and Floyd Tidsworth, director of Church Extension for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.



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## Music Scholarship Auditions

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February 7, 1987  
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## Missionary believes no city too large to be won to Christ

by Carol Garrett  
SBC Home Mission Board

BIRMINGHAM, Ala.—George Russ is one missionary who is not going to be swallowed up by New York City. He believes his mission field is a winable place.

As associate director of evangelism for the Baptist Convention of New York, Russ serves an area of more than a million people.

He works to encourage and equip pastors and churches all over New York as they minister in urban areas.

"New York City is just a group of neighborhoods. You can go from one street to the next and be immersed in a totally different culture," Russ said. He wants area Southern Baptist churches to design ministries to fit those neighborhoods.

"Each place has its own personality. It's important for churches to pick up on what that personality is. You have to relate to the different cultures," he said.

For churches to be effective in reaching out, Russ says they must have a pastor who believes they can make a difference.

"In the city, you can be overwhelmed and depressed with what needs to be done. A pastor that's overwhelmed and depressed does a poor job of leading his church."

To help in this area, Russ has established small evangelism support groups of about three or four pastors. They meet once a

month for about 10 months to encourage each other, do projects together, pray about difficulties and discuss blessings.

In short, the group gives pastors a much-needed awareness that they are not alone.

"The glitter and glamour of the mission field rubs off very quickly. Demands, needs, and the lack of resources are demobilizing. Support groups really help encourage pastors," he said.

In many instances Russ goes into the churches and helps them determine how they can best grow and minister to their community.

"The church has a tendency to be drowned out by so much going on in the city. It must be positive and aggressive in reaching people!" he said.

Russ performs a variety of other services for churches that include preaching revivals, leading prayer seminars and lecturing on the importance of evangelistic visitation in church growth.

All of these things are important for the church that's trying to minister in the city, Russ believes. The more credible the church proves itself to be, the more realistic its chances of really making a difference.

Christians in the city have "got to prove that you're there to stay, not a fly-by-night. You've got to prove you're not there to rip people off," he said.

If Southern Baptists really want to win America, they must learn how to live and minister in the city, Russ believes. That may mean changing methods to meet needs. And it may mean learning to work within a surprising new reality.

For instance, the largest church in the New York Baptist Convention is Haitian. The fastest growing churches there are Korean, and the strongest are Spanish, according to Russ. Half of the state's work is ethnic, and more than 75 percent of the work in New York City is ethnic.

"Churches will have to be reflective of the community. I'm not sure if we've really come to grips with the fact that it's going to take a different type of church to reach the city."

Southern Baptists are going to have to demonstrate a greater priority in winning the city if they are going to make the March 1-8 Week of Prayer for Home Missions theme more than just words, Russ believes. That means "a greater priority in winning the city—through financial investment, time commitment and personnel."

Russ hopes the Week of Prayer and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering will help put winning America into perspective.

"Southern Baptists are already making a significant contribution in the cities. It's important not to overlook what God is doing. But we have a long way to go."

Hill photo by Mark Sandlin



Home missionary George Russ, as director of evangelism for the Baptist convention of New York, serves a mission field of over a million people.

# Helpline

for the local church

**Advocates:** "to defend; plead for; speak in favor of; one called to the aid of another; one who pleads the cause of another."—Webster. **Adversary:** "an opponent."—Webster.



Moore

There may not be a greater need in our churches than the need to learn how to work together. Everywhere I turn, I face it. It seems no one knows how to get along in the churches. Charges and counter charges between opposing persons and groups spread throughout our churches and communities. Many appear to be adversaries rather than advocates. Displeasure with persons and practices move quickly to dislike and eventually to something very much akin to hate. (I hope no one but Baptists reads this.) Usually a pastor or staff person ends up terminated by ostracism, criticism, or official action. They move on and hope for better the next time. Their supporters continue to live in the same community and church with those they feel have wronged their friend. Anger and bitterness are repressed in an attempt to help the church do better the next time, only to find the same sad drama relived. In disgust, some drop out of church, never to return. Whoever comes on the scene will unknowingly begin to identify with the one or the other of the long-standing factions in the church and become a victim of unresolved conflicts with which they had nothing to do. Such are the complications and crises of ministry today.

Churches have been victimized by inept, unwise, and sometimes unspiritual leaders. Ruthless in their relationships, careless in their responsibilities, and indifferent in their duties, they have destroyed the respect and honor of the office. A suspicious watchdog mentality develops toward all future pastors. The pulpit committee that falls in love with the new pastor first may be the first to fall out of love and turn on him like a rejected teenage lover. The level of trust and respect necessary to good relations is not there.

Pastors and staff people have been disappointed, disillusioned, and burned. Their friends have been burned, too. They, too, are cautious and distrusting. The reputation of churches gets around just like the reputation of individuals. Frightened and insecure, they live with the awareness that any crossing of the power structure in the church will in time result in their undoing.

The picture I have painted is awful, but it is real. Someone, somewhere, sometime must call us all to face this. Pastors, deacons, staff, committees, WMU, and others who should be Advocates for each other are too often found to be Adversaries.

Can't somebody do something? Yes, they can! You can do something. You can do something besides pray! You can learn how to work as a team in your church. If you can, then you should. As a deacon or committee chairman, you can do something. You can learn with your pastor how you can work together as a team and be advocates rather than adversaries. Literally hundreds of our churches are in critical need of help at this point. Burn-out and termination are stalking our pastors. Frustration and discouragement are plaguing our churches. My heart's plea is for both pastors, staff, and deacons to do something. There is help available.

There are simple helps available that will equip a people to come together in gracious and glorious ministry. Guidance in the use of these tools to help your entire church work as a team will be shared at the Holiday Inn Downtown, Little Rock, Feb.

16-17, and at the Kings Inn Motel, El Dorado, Feb. 19-20.

Someone must take the initiative. It may be a concerned lay person, a staff member or the pastor. Take the other by the arm and say, "Let's get whatever help we can in learning to work together as Advocates instead of Adversaries."

.....

**Where has the bulk of missionary education taken place in your church?** You guessed it! The WMU has been that voice crying in the wilderness, reminding us not to forget to give, pray, and go. They have often done it with little support. For their perseverance, they deserve our appreciation and praise. For their continued determination and efforts, they need our help. We honor the youth, the singles, the aged, and have Baptist Men's Day. Why don't you encourage your WMU by having Focus on WMU sometime during Feb. 8-14? Help can be found in the *Dimension* magazine. You might even surprise them with some special recognition.

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## February happenings

by Don Moore

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**Home missions is not just a WMU matter.** Could you make it a church matter? Sure, you could. You can find a way to involve the church in the study of "Across Every Boundary." Then your people can intelligently share in praying for home missions and giving to the Annie Armstrong offering.

.....

**Small Sunday School helps—**For the first time we are coming to your area—at least five areas of the state—with helps for churches with no more than 150 enrolled in Sunday School. You can find the times and places elsewhere in this Helpline. Don't fail to take advantage of these. New products, ideas, and understanding will be yours if you desire it. We feel good that our denomination is giving special attention to these vital churches.

.....

**Tax reform affects all of us.** Our annual Tax Seminars are more important this year than ever. They have grown each year. See if you can make one of the three we are holding for you Feb. 9-10. Call James Walker for more information (376-4791).

.....

**Singles—**A gold mine of talent and energy! Some churches have opened this mine. Everyone is better for it. Singles and their leaders have a great fellowship and training opportunity on Feb. 27-28. Leaders from Fort Worth and Nashville will be coming. Watch for more information, or call Gerald Jackson for more information.

.....

**Volunteer/part-time music leaders are special.** We like to help them! They render a great service to our churches. Directors, pianists, organists, and even pastors are invited to a retreat just for these devoted servants. It's at Camp Paron Feb. 27-28. Churches could reward their volunteers by paying the cost of attending this retreat. Excellent fellowship and helps are shared at these.

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

# Literacy missions: low overhead, small investment, great returns

by Mark Kelly

What would you do if you found a ministry that met a pressing need, required little money and even less training, so that virtually any church member could perform it? Wouldn't you jump at a missions opportunity like that?

There is such a ministry: literacy work—teaching people to read.

The need is enormous. The U.S. Office of Education says nearly one-third of the Arkansas population—667,529 people—has less than a 12th-grade education. Of those, more than one-half—384,158—has not completed the ninth grade. If you assume a ninth-grade education as a minimum for literacy, that means one out of six persons in Arkansas cannot read well enough to get along well on a day-to-day basis. In some counties, estimates run as high as one out of three adults.

It's easy to get started. Low-cost materials are available through a variety of sources, and often area aging and literacy groups are willing to help subsidize even that cost.

Literacy missions requires no highly-specialized training. One 10-hour workshop, usually conducted in two days, will certify a person to tutor one of the more popular approaches to literacy.

In fact, anyone who can read can teach someone else to read, contends Betty Harp, administrative assistant at Park Hill Church, North Little Rock, who has worked in literacy missions for more than 15 years.

"Seeing an adult who can't read learn to read is next in excitement to winning them to the Lord," explains Harp. "It changes their lives and has an impact on the people around them. I don't know what else you could do for a person that would have such a far-reaching influence."

Yet, despite all the favorable factors—pressing need, low cost, minimal training—only 13 Arkansas Baptist churches have trained literacy workers through the regular workshops offered by the state convention's Missions Department.

Of the churches which have members involved in literacy missions, ministry tends to run in one of two basic directions.

One approach focuses on internationals in Arkansas who need to develop English reading skills. Although literate or even highly educated in their native tongue, their English reading skills are low and need improvement.

This is the ministry direction taken by programs like International Friends of First Church, Fayetteville. Offering a weekly, two-hour program of activities, outings, and English classes, International Friends reaches out to the families of internationals associated with the University of Arkansas.

Louise Coker has worked with International Friends for eight years. Last summer, she helped a Chinese woman, Mei-Qin Tang (pronounced *May-Ching Tong*), begin



Last summer, Louise Coker helped Mei-Qin Tang begin learning to read English, working with Scripture portions provided by the American Bible Society.

learning to read English. Working with a Scripture portion provided by the American Bible Society, the two usually met three times a week, discussing translations completed outside of class.

Tang, whose husband, An-Zheng, is a doctoral student at the university, is a third-generation Christian from Shanghai. Her work with Coker deepened her understanding of the Scripture, as well as improved her ability to communicate in English. Perhaps more importantly, the witness to her family resulted in her husband and teenage son, Jie (*Joy*), making professions of faith. Last fall, all three were baptized into membership at First Church.

Coker, who taught elementary school for 20 years, has found her literacy ministry benefits her as much as her pupils. "The internationals are so loving, so accepting," she explains. "I try to be with them outside of class. I have grown to love them. The more involved I get, the more joy it gives me."

The second approach to literacy missions seeks to minister to people who simply do not read well, although their native language is English. Such persons find themselves limited on many fronts, in their social relations, their employment, in their self-esteem.

This second approach may be seen in the ministries of churches like Park Hill. Harp estimates 10 volunteers work on Wednesday evenings and Sunday afternoons, teaching persons referred to them by Literacy Action of Central Arkansas. The church subsidizes the cost of materials for the program.

Many people find shocking the statistics about the number of people who can't read, Harp says. "People insist they don't know

anyone who can't read, but they look just like we do," she explains. And, as numerous as they are, many in need of literacy ministry are difficult to identify.

Harp recalls one young mother she and a friend worked with several years ago. Her friend, Jean Cook, was a school nurse. She had sent notes home with one child, only to discover the child's mother couldn't read them.

"We began working with her," Harp recalls. "One of us would babysit while the other tutored the mother."

"One day, as we were leaving, we noticed a picture of Jesus hanging on the wall," she continued. "We asked her if she believed in Jesus, and she told us no, but that she'd like to know more."

The two women went immediately to their pastor, excited with the prospect of seeing him lead the young mother to faith in Christ. Their pastor—the late Rheubin South—told them to go back and witness to her themselves. They did, and the woman made a profession of faith.

Of course, many of the people with whom Harp works are already Christians. She recalls in particular one man who approached her after a literacy workshop in Cotton Plant.

"He told me, 'I've been praying for you for four years,'" Harp recalls. "When I told him I didn't understand, he said, 'I been praying for four years God would send someone so I could learn to read.'"

"And you ask me, 'Why literacy missions?'"

**Mark Kelly is the managing editor of the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine.**

## Church Training Area Discipleship Conferences to be held

One of the tasks of the Church Training Program is to equip church members for discipleship and personal ministry. Six Area Discipleship Conferences will be conducted during the week of April 9 to help churches focus on discipleship and the equipping ministry of the church.



Holley

"Ingathering": a newly-designed strategy for reclaiming inactive resident church members also will be launched at these conferences. Pastors and church staff members will receive an overview of the Ingathering pro-

cess and the resources to support this effort.

In each of the six locations, there will be leadership conferences for all Church Training leaders and special conferences for pastors and staff members. There also will be a keynote message at each location. The schedule at each location will be 1:30-4:30 p.m. and 7-9:15 p.m. The six locations are in major metropolitan areas of our state and should reach leaders from churches in surrounding areas.

The locations and dates are as follows: Monday, March 9; Little Rock, Calvary Church; North Little Rock, Central Church; Tuesday, March 10; Fort Smith—Windsor Park Church; Pine Bluff, South Side; Thursday, March 12; El Dorado, First Church; Jonesboro, First Church.—**Robert Holley, director**

## Stewardship/Annuity Building fund consultants available

Lower interest rates look attractive to churches contemplating a building program. Many churches, however, still look to a capital funds campaign to underwrite building expenses. Two Southern Baptist programs are available to churches.

The Together We Build program is conducted by consultants employed by the Stewardship Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention. The consultants assist churches in raising millions each year.

The Challenge To Build program is almost identical to the Together We Build program. A Challenge To Build campaign

is led by state-trained consultants. Churches may conduct their own campaigns by using Challenge To Build materials.

Challenge To Build consultants in Arkansas are selected by the Stewardship/Annuity Department. They are available to assist churches in capital funds campaigns. Five men were recently trained in Challenge To Build procedures by personnel from the Stewardship Commission.

For assistance, information, and materials on a building fund campaign, contact your state Stewardship director.—**James A. Walker, Stewardship/Annuity director**

## Church Administration Shared Ministry: the journey continues

James White, consultant in the Church Administration Department at the Sunday School Board, will be the primary leader of two Shared Ministry Conferences in our state during the week of Feb. 16.



White

"Shared Ministry: The Journey Continues" will be the topic of the conference in both locations.

One conference will meet at the Holiday Inn in downtown Little Rock on Monday and Tuesday, Feb. 16-17. The other will meet at the King's Inn Motel conference facility in El Dorado on Thursday and Friday, Feb. 19-20. At each location, the schedule will be 2-5 p.m. and 7-9 p.m. on the first day and 9 a.m.-12 noon on the

second day.

These conferences are designed to build on the Shared Ministry Conferences conducted in our state last year. The basic concepts and the biblical basis for Shared Ministry will be presented, along with the approaches and resources to implement Shared Ministry in practical ways.

Pastors, church staff members, and deacons will discover approaches to strengthening the ministry of their churches and their relationship to one another as they deal with planning, staff relationships, deacon ministry, and how to conduct a Spiritual Directions Emphasis in a church.

Pastors and staff members will receive registration forms soon. Now is the time to put this event in your calendar. For further information contact Robert Holley, P. O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203, phone 376-4791.—**Robert Holley, director**

## Woman's Missionary Union 'Who will win America?'

The United States of America is no longer considered a Christian nation. Even though we have "In God We Trust" inscribed on our currency, approximately 196 million people out of a population of 239 million people have not trusted in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Twenty years ago, 7 million Southern Baptists were baptizing 400,000 people annually. Today, 14 million Southern Baptists are still baptizing only 400,000 people per year. Former Home Mission Board president William G. Tanner has stated that "we are dangerously near losing America."

Each year Woman's Missionary Union observes Focus on WMU in order to inform the church of what WMU is doing to personally carry out Christ's Commission. This year's suggested week is Feb. 8-14. Plan ways to recognize the leaders and members of WMU. Use the January, February, and March issues of *Dimension* to make Focus on WMU an informative missions highlight in your church.

The theme for the 1987 Home Mission Study is "All Are Called to Evangelism." The suggested dates are Feb. 15-18. Adults, youth, and children will become aware of how home missionaries are seeking to carry out Christ's Commission to evangelize our nation. The 1987 Home Mission Study Planning Kit contains one copy of each age-level book and teaching guide, promotional poster, and suggested churchwide plans. This kit can be purchased at the Baptist Book Store. By planning ahead, this home missions study can have a lasting impact on your church members. Remember the age-level home mission studies are designed for everyone in the church.

The 1987 Week of Prayer for Home Missions asks a piercing question, "Who Will Win America?" March 1-8 can be a very significant week in your church as the Week of Prayer focuses on the lostness of America and some ways the Home Mission Board is working to win America. Prayer guides, offering envelopes, and posters are available from the state WMU office. Plan now to use the prayer guides and the videotape which is available from the Home Mission Board to daily pray specifically for the missionaries featured. Church members are urged to give sacrificially to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering. Every dollar you give toward the \$37.5 million goal will help to win America. If we as Arkansas Baptists are to win the people of America, we must pray to God that they will be saved. We must answer the question personally, "Here am I, Lord. Send me."—**Angela Lowe, Acts Intern Director**

## Sunday School

### We want to help small Sunday Schools

The Sunday School Department's 1987 calendar includes several training projects designed for the church with 150 or less enrolled in Sunday School. The first series of these projects is scheduled for Feb. 19.

Five Small Sunday School Leadership Updates are to be held from 7-9 p.m. in these churches: Belview, Melbourne; Temple, Waldron; First, Dierks; Military Road, Jacksonville; and Bakers Creek, Russellville.

The Updates will share new products and new ideas, and they will help to develop an understanding of growth basics for the small Sunday School. Pastors, Sunday School directors, and key church leaders should plan to attend the nearest Update.

Preschool teachers in small churches need to know about materials designed to meet their needs.

"Bible Story Time" is a Bible-centered, easy-to-use literature for teachers of babies through five-year-olds in Sunday School and Church Training. It is designed and planned for churches that have combined ages in one or two preschool groups, limited space, and/or limited resources.

"Bible Story Time" materials are related to the Convention Uniform Series. When possible, this literature uses the same Bible content as the "Children's Bible Study" materials and the youth and adult materials in the Convention Uniform Series. Other Bible content areas are used when the subject is too difficult for a preschooler to understand.

Listed on the Church Literature Dated Form under "Preschool Convention Uniform Series," this literature includes a teacher's guide, a resource kit, a pupil's leaflet for three- to five-year-olds, and a pupil's leaflet for birth to age two.

"Bible Story Time" literature is especially helpful for the church that has one group of preschoolers with babies through five-year-olds or two groups of preschoolers (babies through two-year-olds and three- to five-year-olds).

With good preparation, a loving teacher can take the materials provided in "Bible Story Time" and offer each child a happy, Bible-based, educationally-sound learning experience at church. —Pat Batton, preschool consultant

## Family Ministry

### State Single Adult Conference Feb. 27-28

The annual State Single Adult Conference will be held Feb. 27-28, at the Pulaski Heights Church in Little Rock. The annual conference will provide single adults and their leaders fellowship, inspiration, and growth experiences under the theme, "Living Values for Today's Singles."

The Friday session begins at 7 p.m. and Saturday's sessions begin at 8:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. The conference will adjourn by 3 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 28.

William Tillman Jr. and Tim Cleary will be the featured leaders. Tillman is associate professor of Christian ethics at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. Tim Cleary is a single adult consultant from the Baptist Sunday School Board. —Gerald Jackson, associate



Jackson

## Church Recreation

### Why not do it right?

The above question applies to almost everything imaginable but is particularly true when it comes to areas of Christian ministry. Church Recreation is the newest and probably the fastest-growing area of ministry in our convention. But, unfortunately, some churches have invested huge amounts of money (some in the millions) on buildings and equipment for a Church Recreation ministry to find the buildings virtually unused and the equipment gathering dust. The reason for such problems is not because of a lack of vision or desire but simply not "doing it right" in terms of proper planning and effective training of leadership.

Arkansas' Mini Rec Lab, March 6-7, 1987, is a great way to "do it right." This event promises to be the best ever. We will



Falkner

meet at Park Hill Church, North Little Rock, for two days of fun and training in everything from sports to clowning. Some 12 separate conferences are planned to cover virtually every area of recreation ministry. A conference just for camp planning will be offered for associations and churches conducting camps this summer.

Several special events also are planned for the Mini Rec Lab. A "3 on 3" basketball tournament will be held on March 5-6, a golf tournament on March 6, and a 5K fun run on March 7. Registration information on the Mini Rec Lab and these special events will be mailed to churches soon.

Church Recreation is a valid ministry only if it supports the mission of the church. These events can help your church to make the most of Church Recreation and to reach people and strengthen the church. The key to "doing it right" is informed, trained leadership. Contact the Church Training Dept., ABSC, for more information of the Rec Labs and Mini Rec Lab. —Bill Falkner, associate



## Dare to ask

Week of Prayer  
For Home Missions  
March 1-8, 1987

### Notice: Camp Paron openings

Due to schedule changes in state convention sponsored camps, Camp Paron has the following dates open for 1987: June 22-26, Aug. 10-14, Aug. 17-21, and Aug. 24-28. Churches or associations wanting more information should contact Robert Ferguson, ABSC, P. O. Box 592, Little Rock, AR 72203; phone 376-4791. —Robert Ferguson, Cooperative Ministries director

## Next month in Arkansas: February

**February 2, State Vacation Bible School Clinic, North Little Rock Central Church:** training VBS teams to lead associational clinics (SS)

**February 2-3, ASSIST Training, North Little Rock First Church:** training for associational ASSIST teams (SS)

**February 8-14, Focus on WMU:** annual event in churches to recognize the important role played by local WMU leaders (WMU)

**February 9, Regional Tax Seminars, Fayetteville First Church; Baptist Medical Center, Little Rock:** designed to help church staff members understand their tax options (S/A)

**February 10, Regional Tax Seminar, Hot Springs Grand Avenue Church:** see Feb. 9 (S/A)

**February 15-18, Home Mission Study:** week-long emphasis on home missions to prepare churches for the Anie Armstrong Easter Offering (WMU)

**February 16-17, Shared Ministry Conference, Holiday Inn Downtown, Little Rock:** a first-time event to interpret the Shared Ministry approach to church leadership (CT)

**February 19, Small Sunday School Leadership Updates, Waldron Temple Church, Melbourne Belvuev Church, Dierks First Church, Jacksonville Military Road Church, Russellville Bakers Creek**

*Church: first-time event to share new products and ideas with leaders of Sunday Schools with 150 or less enrolled (SS)*

**February 19-20, Shared Ministry Conference, King's Inn Motel, El Dorado:** see Feb. 16-17 (CT)

**February 27-28, State Single Adult Conference, Little Rock Pulaski Heights Church:** providing a growth experience for single adults and leadership training for singles workers (CT)

**February 27-28, Volunteer/Part-time Music Leader Retreat, Camp Paron:** annual training retreat for volunteer or part-time music directors, pianists, and organists and their pastors (M)

## March

**March 1-8, Week of Prayer for Home Missions and Annie Armstrong Easter Offering (WMU)**

**March 6-7, State Handbell Festival, Little Rock Geyer Springs First Church (M)**

**March 6-7, Mini Rec Lab, Camp Paron (CT)**

**March 9-12, Area Church Training Leadership Conferences (CT)**

**March 17-18, WMU Annual Meeting, Camden First Church (WMU)**

**March 23, Church Building Conference, Mount Ida First Church (SS)**

**March 24, Church Building Conference, Fayetteville Sang Avenue Church (SS)**

**March 24-25, Marriage Enrichment Retreat Leadership Update (CT)**

**March 26, Church Building Conference, Gassville First Church (SS)**

**March 26-27, Minister-Mate Marriage Enrichment Retreat, Ozark Folk Center, Calvary Church (WMU)**

**April 16, Small Sunday School Leadership Updates, Reyno First Church, Crossett Pleasant Lane Church, Alpena First Church, Dermott Bellaire Church, Griffithville First Church (SS)**

**April 17, State Youth Convention, Statehouse Convention Center, Little Rock (CT)**

**April 20, Area Summer Youth Ministry Conference, Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia (CT)**

*Mountain Home (CT)*

**March 27, Church Building Conference, Little Rock Calvary Church (SS)**

**March 28, Youth Choir Festival, Little Rock Immanuel Church (M)**

**March 30, District Bible Drill and Speakers' Tournament, Huntsville First Church, Hope First Church (CT)**

**March 31, District Bible Drill and Speakers' Tournament, Paris First Church, Warren First Church (CT)**

## April

**April 2, District Bible Drill and Speakers' Tournament, Mountain View First Church, Jonesboro Central Church (CT)**

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

**April 3-4, Acteens Encounter, Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia (WMU)**

**April 4, Missions Friends Leaders Training Conference, Little Rock**

**April 21, Advanced Growth Spiral Workshop, North Little Rock Park Hill Church (SS)**

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

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

**April 27-29, Senior Adult Convention, Fort Worth, Texas (CT)**

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

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## Peace Committee discusses report

by Dan Martin

Baptist Press

DALLAS (BP)—After 18 months of work, the Southern Baptist Convention Peace Committee has begun the process of drafting a final report to the June 1987 meeting of the 14.6 million-member denomination.

The 22-member group was created in June of 1985 and charged with the responsibility of discovering the sources of controversy, making findings and then a final recommendation to the 1987 annual meeting.

Following the group's 12th meeting Chairman Charles Fuller told Baptist Press:

"We come now to the composition of our report. We had hoped we would be ready with it or at least a preliminary report or outline to share with the SBC Executive Committee during their Feb. 16-18 meeting. We will not be able to do that, but we will have a progress report.

"The Feb. 18 schedule for the Peace Committee to report on the Executive Committee agenda will afford us an opportunity to have input from Executive Committee members about our final report."

Fuller, pastor of First Church of Roanoke, Va., said that although the report will not be available as early as he at first predicted, he anticipates it will be ready "well in advance" of the June 16-18 annual meeting in St. Louis.

"I still think the report will be released between April 1 and 15," he said. "We have a goal that the people of the convention will have at least six weeks of lead time to study the report and its recommendations."

Fuller added the Peace Committee also will meet with editors of the 37 state Baptist newspapers Feb. 18, immediately following the Executive Committee meeting. "Invitations will go out to the editors to meet with us for a time of questions and answers and suggestions from them," he said.



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R. B. Crotts, bivocational pastor  
Owensville Baptist Church  
Little Rock

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## Convention Uniform

### *Good news for all people*

by Andrew M. Hall, Fayetteville

Basic passage: Acts 11:1-18

Focal passage: Acts 11:1-18

Central truth: God has no favorites.

Sitting in a college classroom I heard a professor point out the improbability of ancient people living to be hundreds of years old. "Divide Methuselah's years into months or moons," he said, "and you have a man living to a respectable 75." My hand shot up. "Sir, here is a person who lived 60 and five years and begat a son. According to your theory this person became a father at five and one-half years of age." His uneasy reply was, "If you want to debate, join the debate club."

Notice in today's lesson the unanswerable question posed by Simon Peter: "Who was I that I could withstand God?" He had six witnesses to vouch for his comments about the reception of the Gentiles in God's plan (11:12). Peter's doctrine was plain and simple—the Good News of the Gospel is to all peoples.

Most of the Christians that I know accept the all encompassing love of God as a truth. Many, however, do a poor job of getting the Word out to the people who need it. If something is good, it needs telling and re-telling.

My wife and I were living in the missionary residence in Grand Cayman in the Caribbean, while the missionaries were on furlough, during the summer of 1985. One afternoon a teenage boy came to our home and we had an opportunity to witness to him. He had shown evidence of conviction of his sin during an earlier worship service. John read the passages shown to him with openness and eagerness. He made a profession of faith. Up to this point, there is not anything too unusual in the story. He left us and returned to his home. He picked up his telephone and one by one, he called his friends to share the good news that Christ was now his Savior. That is unusual.

The late R.G. Lee of Memphis once told of a young girl who was saved in a morning worship service. Later in the day a neighbor phoned the girl's mother. "Do you know what Susie has been doing this afternoon?" The mother answered that she thought she was playing with the neighbor's children. "She has been knocking on every door in this block to announce that this morning she gave her heart to Jesus." That's good news!

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## Life and Work

### *Responding to forgiveness*

by Harry T. Kennedy, Calvary Church, Hope

Basic passage: Luke 7:37-43,47-49

Focal passage: Luke 7:41-42

Central truth: To experience forgiveness, we have to realize we have a sin debt that only he can release.

Forgiveness is the one thing that is wanted by most people deep down on the inside. Yet, whether or not you or I will experience forgiveness lies in our approach in understanding Jesus.

Our passage uses two people who were in the presence of Jesus, yet only one will hear Jesus say, "Your sins are forgiven." We can be sure that Jesus would have gladly forgiven both of these people. This leads us to ask "why didn't this happen?"

To the Pharisee, Jesus was just a 'good person' to have around. He saw Jesus as a celebrity figure and to improve his self-image, he must have him in his home for all to see. His entire manner demonstrates conceit and contempt for anything or anyone who stood in the way of his self-image. He shows that he is more concerned over how others react to his guest and the intruding woman than whether or not Jesus could do anything for him.

Simon would be the modern day individual whose interest in Jesus is for show rather than for the purging of sin in one's life. For the present day Simon he cannot be seen as seeking forgiveness because he cannot comprehend his life as needing forgiveness. The idea never enters his mind or heart.

Yet, on the opposite side is a woman who comes off the street and reacts to Jesus' presence. Jesus was already reclined at the table with his shoes off when she enters the house. Without introducing herself or acknowledging anyone else; she immediately comes to his feet. Standing there, she begins weeping and stopping down, began to wash his dusty feet with her tears; wiping them with her hair; kissing his feet and anointing them with the fragrant oil. All this occurs before the watchful eyes of Simon and his guests without a hint of remorse of shame for her conduct.

This scene of deepest humility and brokenness demonstrates the very thing that brings a positive response from Jesus. She shows her sense of needing forgiveness and an apparent desire for a different life born out of a sense of knowing she is forgiven, though undeserving. That's when one finds it easy to follow Jesus!

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## Bible Book

### *Teaching humble service*

by Tim Reddin, Barcelona Road Church, Hot Springs Village

Basic passage: John 13:1-30

Focal passage: John 13:13-14,21,25-27

Central truth: Humble service is the true path to greatness.

If asked to name the seven worst sins, which ones would you choose? Murder? Adultery? Theft? Drunkenness?

Did you know that God has such a list? It is found in Proverbs 6:16-19. And the sin that tops the list is "a proud look." Pride is a sin which is repulsive to God!

One of the primary criteria by which God judges greatness is humility. The background of today's text is found in Luke 22:24-27. The disciples were disputing among themselves as to which one of them was the greatest. Jesus rebuked them for their self-centered pride and reminded them, "I am among you as one who serves." Our text today shows how Jesus reinforced his words with his personal example.

The disciples entered the upper room with the power struggle unresolved. No servant was there to perform the traditional duty of washing the guests' feet. No doubt they had all been thinking, "Who's going to do it?" And no doubt they had all concluded silently, "Well, it surely won't be me!"

The meal began, their feet still unwashed. Nobody dared give in. Each disciple was protecting his own rank.

Then Jesus did something that both shocked and shamed his men. First, he got up from the meal and laid aside his outer clothing. Then, taking a basin and a towel, he did what all the others were "too important" to do. He washed his disciples' feet.

Our Lord's actions were powerfully symbolic. Paul speaks (Phil. 2:7) of how Jesus divested himself and "took upon him the form of a servant." Soon he would perform the ultimate service by giving his life as a sacrifice for others.

Our Lord's actions also were powerfully instructive. Peter's objection is characteristic. But apparently he learned the lesson Jesus was teaching. In 1 Peter 5:5b he wrote, "Gird yourself with humility." (Do you suppose he visualized his Lord, girded with the servant's towel, as he penned these words?) He continued, "... because God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble."

May we, like our Lord, "gird ourselves with humility." May we, like him, take up the basin and the towel as true servants.

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## Pastor warns leaders of 'empty bucket syndrome'

by Frank Wm. White

Baptist Sunday School Board

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Constantly helping others can create an "empty-bucket syndrome" which pastors and denominational workers must guard against, a Nashville, Tenn., pastor warned Sunday school leaders.

"The empty-bucket syndrome is so subtle, the bucket can be totally empty before we realize it," Charles Page, pastor of First Church of Nashville, told state Sunday school leaders and Sunday school department workers attending annual planning meetings at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

Church staff members and denominational workers continually are giving to others to help their spiritual lives. The daily outflow causes a drain on their own creativity and freshness, Page warned.

"People think that we are always fresh and renewed because we deal with spiritual things daily," he said. But the danger of full-time Christian work is that we can allow spiritual things to become mundane and casual, he added.

Page said it is essential for persons who are responsible for the spiritual health of others to be aware of the need to maintain a balance between spiritual, emotional, and physical health.

Without a balance of the three, a pastor or denominational worker will not be able

to maintain the spiritual zeal needed to help others, he cautioned.

Because of the demands on a pastor's time, it is important to schedule time for prayer, Bible study, family, leisure and exercise. Page recommended a disciplined schedule of prayer, Bible study, witnessing and participation in local church activities to maintain the spiritual dimension.

Prayer may be the simplest element of spiritual life, but it is not the easiest to do, Page said. "Prayer is work. It's the hardest work we will ever do. There are always things to keep that work from being done."

Emotional freshness requires a positive outlook and an awareness of what is going on in the world.

Page said he makes a point of reading motivational literature to help maintain a positive outlook: "You cannot stay fresh with a negative outlook on life. You can't help others unless you know what is going on in the world."

Although good physical condition is difficult to maintain, it is essential for total freshness. "Without physical condition as well as spiritual and emotional condition, you will never be as fresh as possible and totally able to help others," he said.

Without a freshness as a Christian and a balance between the three areas, leaders will not be able to meet the needs of others effectively, Page warned.

## Student's ministry speaks for itself

by Elizabeth Watson

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—Lee Pitts lets a dummy do the talking when she shares the gospel.

The Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary student is a ventriloquist. Through Nicky, her wooden puppet, Pitts puts smiles on faces with the story of a living Christ.

But smiling is something Pitts only recently learned to do herself.

She grew up in a broken home in Alabama, devoid of physical and emotional warmth. For eight years, she lived in a trailer house with no heat or hot water, thankful for the single blanket on her bed.

Thinking she was the most unfortunate and "ugliest girl in the world," Pitts considered suicide at age 12. But through a local church's bus ministry and Vacation Bible School, she found a reason to live.

"I discovered there was someone who loved me—Jesus," says Pitts. "I accepted Christ, but there were still many hard roads I had to travel. Parental quarreling and family break-ups never stopped, so I often changed schools three or four times each year."

When Pitts was 15, her stepfather held her family hostage, threatening to kill them. Pitts and her brother escaped through a window and ran for help to Bob and Betty DeLoach, her church choir director and his wife.

The DeLoaches took Pitts as a foster child. She traveled with them around Alabama as a member of the church youth choir and puppet team. Pitts first saw ventriloquy performed on one of these trips.

"The ventriloquists who traveled with Dad's team fascinated me," Pitts remembers. "So I decided to secretly learn the art myself and surprise my foster parents."

In only a few months, she mastered the pronunciation of the ventriloquy alphabet. With "Little Nicky," a puppet she borrowed from a church in Georgia, she soon was using her newly-developed talent.

"Nicky helped me blossom as a young lady," Pitts says. "Because he is able to say things I could never say, he's like the other side of me no one ever saw."

"My ventriloquy ministry is proof that God uses ordinary people for his extraordinary purposes. The message Nicky and I share with others is that God is not concerned with our abilities but with our availability."

Pitts draws large crowds with Nicky. She has ministered in more than 500 churches and schools. But it is the powerful testimony she shares through Nicky that causes people to seek new lives in Christ.

"People can relate to the 'hard knocks,'" Pitts says. "Even though I have been through so much hurt, God has healed me, and that's encouraging to people."

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