

Baptisms net most gains in 1990 SBC statistics

by Linda Lawson

The largest increase in baptisms in a decade topped 1990 Southern Baptist Convention statistics in 10 key reporting areas.

A total of 385,031 baptisms were reported through the Uniform Church Letter in 1990, compared to 351,107 in 1989, for a 9.7 percent increase of 33,924. During 1990, Southern Baptists conducted "Here's Hope" simultaneous revivals throughout the nation.

Two numerical milestones were reached in 1990 as church membership surpassed 15 million and ongoing Sunday school enrollment topped 8 million.

Church membership reached

15,044,413, registering a 0.9 percent gain of 130,875, the largest increase since 1986.

Ongoing Sunday school enrollment climbed by 73,483 or 0.9 percent to 8,009,498, for the second consecutive gain.

Other areas in which increases were reported included number of churches, music ministry enrollment, mission expenditures and total tithes, offerings and special gifts.

Discipleship training and Brotherhood enrollment/participation registered larger totals than 1989, but figures cannot be compared due to changes in reporting procedures.

Only one program, ongoing Woman's Missionary Union enrollment, registered a

decrease. WMU enrollment declined 0.4 percent or 4,476, for a new total of 1,197,987. This was the second consecutive decrease for WMU enrollment.

Ongoing music ministry enrollment increased for the 25th consecutive year. The 1990 total of 1,837,428 represents an increase of 47,560 or 2.7 percent.

The number of churches increased by 189 or 0.5 percent to 37,974. The gain was the smallest since 1987 and the third time in 11 years the increase has dropped below 200.

Total tithes, offerings and special gifts reached \$4,567,834,980, a 6 percent increase of \$258,496,000 over 1989.

Mission expenditures totaled

\$718,476,262, an increase of 0.8 percent or \$5,554,472.

Discipleship training enrollment/participation for 1990 was 2,206,252 in the first year of operation under a new records system. The total for 1989 under the previous system was 2,026,141.

Brotherhood enrollment/participation for 1990 also was reported under a new system with a total of 593,844. The 1989 total was 530,723.

The statistics are based on 37,172 Uniform Church Letters processed by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's corporate planning and research department. (BP)

Next Week: The Kentucky Report.

Accrediting team to evaluate actions of trustees

by David R. Wilkinson

Southern Baptist Theological Seminary has been notified by one of its accrediting bodies that an evaluation team will visit the campus later this year to assess the impact of recent actions by the seminary's board of trustees.

The Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada (ATS) authorized the "focused visit" after reviewing an ATS staff member's report on a November fact-finding visit to the Louisville campus.

In response, the seminary's trustee executive committee voted Feb. 5 to set in motion a process for addressing concerns raised in the report. A committee was appointed to study the report and to "review and restate" several trustee actions in question.

Daniel O. Aleshire, ATS associate director for accreditation, said the investigation by a "peer evaluation team" may come as early as May following the trustees' annual meeting in April. Asked whether the 132-year-old seminary's accreditation is in jeopardy, Aleshire said such speculation is "premature at this point." He added that the evaluation team has a variety of options it may recommend to the accrediting commission, ranging from no action to probation.

The report, he noted, does not constitute an action of the accreditation commission.

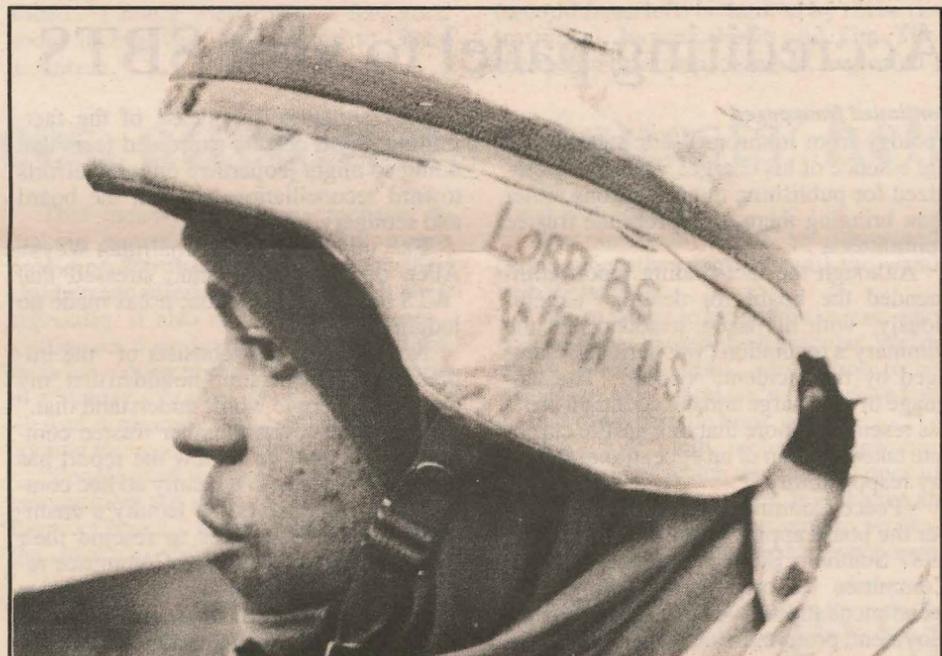
Aleshire confirmed that the commission has invited the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the seminary's other

accrediting body, to include a member on the evaluation team. SACS also sent a staff member to the November fact-finding visit.

In a letter to Southern Seminary President Roy L. Honeycutt, the accrediting commission noted the fact-finding report had "provided sufficient evidence for the

need for further review" of the impact of recent trustee actions on the seminary.

It said the commission plans "to determine the manner in which, if at all, these actions have prejudiced the appropriate roles of the various seminary constituencies, especially the faculty and internal admini-



PETITION IN COMBAT—Pvt. Robert Edwards of Carson, Calif., with a message on his helmet, stands guard duty in Saudi Arabia. State Baptist Brotherhood leaders have lent their support to a magazine to meet the spiritual and personal needs of military personnel. The new periodical will be developed by the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission. See story on page 2. (Photo by RNS/Reuters)

stration."

The letter noted two ATS standards which will be given "special attention." One states that the governing board of an accredited school is responsible for "maintaining the vitality and integrity of the institution." A second states that the board "shall be responsible for the establishment, maintenance, exercise and protection of the institution's integrity and its freedom from the unwarranted harassment of inappropriate external and internal pressures and destructive interference or restraints."

The 17-page fact-finding report noted concerns about the impact of several trustee-related actions on the welfare of the seminary. Among them:

- Accusations against the seminary president. Trustee Jerry Johnson of Aurora, Colo., drew national attention last spring when he charged Honeycutt and several other faculty members with "doctrinal infidelity." The charges were made in a 16-page document circulated just before the April board meeting and published in *The Southern Baptist Advocate*, an independent publication.

After voting in April to postpone action, the trustee executive committee in June set up procedures to address the issue. In the meantime, Johnson's charges were challenged in a series of responses from Honeycutt, the seminary's Faculty Association and officers of the school's alumni association.

Five months later, trustees voted at a special called meeting to accept a written *continued on page 2, "Accrediting panel ..."*

Surge in giving nets best January on record

by Marv Knox, Editor

The Kentucky Baptist Convention's Cooperative Program reversed two straight monthly declines with its best January in history.

The KBC's unified ministry budget received \$1,826,695 last month. That total pushed January 1991 to No. 2 on the list of top monthly receipts, following August 1989's \$1,904,072.

The \$1.8 million total topped January 1990 by \$72,640, or 4.1 percent.

However, three factors blunt the good news of a record January:

- The Cooperative Program's year-to-date total still lags behind receipts for the same period last year.

The budget has received \$6,884,252 since the 1990-91 fiscal year began Sept. 1. That amount is \$147,543—2.1 percent—behind receipts for the first five months of 1989-90.

- Receipts straggle even further behind the pace needed to meet the budget's

\$17,894,462 goal.

Year-to-date receipts have fallen \$571,774—or 7.7 percent—below current budget requirements of \$7,456,026.

- Inflation continues to accelerate, limiting the buying power of the dollars contributed to the budget.

A 6.1 percent inflation rate makes the 2.1 percent drop from last year's pace even worse—the buying power of this year's receipts is 8.2 percent less than last year's.

"January made me feel like a softball team that was 18-0 behind in the fifth inning," reflected KBC Executive Secretary-Treasurer William W. Marshall. "The home team came to the plate and had an 8-run inning."

"That good showing put us back in the ballgame and stimulated hope that we still might win it."

The year-to-date budget shortfall defies tradition, said Barry Allen, director of the KBC business division.

"It is very unusual to be behind the previous year at this point in the budget

year," he said. "It has happened only one other time in seven years."

The downturn in the nation's economy may be the major reason for the sluggish budget, Allen noted. "On the national level, there is a measured, continued drop in consumer confidence. That is affecting our people and our churches. This cautious approach to spending, therefore, affects the Cooperative Program."

Another reason for the drop may be decreasing commitment to the goals of the budget, Allen added. "There is a continued decline in the level of enthusiasm in the churches for Bold Mission Thrust (the campaign to present the Christian message to the whole world) that was so strong in the late 1970s and early '80s," he maintained.

However, the current budget does not reflect significant amounts of designated giving—churches directing their gifts to convention causes but not sending those gifts to the Cooperative Program, he said.

Some churches have begun to designate *continued on page 2, "January sets ..."*

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February 12, 1991

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Search committee set to find successor to Elder

by Linda Lawson

A 10-member presidential search committee was elected by trustees of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board during their Feb. 4-6 semiannual meeting in Nashville.

Trustees also heard a report from President Lloyd Elder who reached agreement with trustees in January to take early retirement, received a progress report on "The New American Commentary" and learned that income for the first quarter of 1990-91 was above budget and above last year.

Wayne Dubose, pastor of Summer Grove Baptist Church in Shreveport, La., was

elected to chair the search committee. Bobby Welch, pastor of First Baptist Church of Daytona Beach, Fla., will be vice chairman.

After his election, Dubose told trustees: "We are going to work with an open mind. We are going to receive input from all Southern Baptists. We are going to be sensitive to the needs of the Sunday School Board."

Other committee members include: Mark Brooks, pastor of Elmdale Baptist Church in Springdale, Ark.; Kirk Humphreys, businessman from Oklahoma City, Okla.; Frank Palmer, pastor of Forest Avenue Baptist Church in Redmond, Ore.; Iris White, busi-

nesswoman from Columbia, Md.; and Bill Wilson, director of the mission ministries division of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

Three ex-officio members are: Bill Anderson, chairman of trustees and pastor of Calvary Baptist Church of Clearwater, Fla.; Gene Mims, vice chairman and pastor of First Baptist Church of Cleveland, Tenn.; and Southern Baptist Convention President Morris Chapman, pastor of First Baptist Church of Wichita Falls, Texas.

Alternates who would assume voting membership privileges if committee members could not serve are: Gene Swinson,

pastor of Hillcrest Baptist Church of Augusta, Ga.; James Hume, pharmacist from Jeffersontown, Ky.; and Danny Strickland, pastor of Parkway Baptist Church in Orlando, Fla.

The committee held an organizational meeting Feb. 5, and Dubose told trustees Feb. 6 he was issuing a statement inviting nominations from any Southern Baptist. He said trustees would receive within two weeks a letter requesting trustee input and outlining protocol for communicating with the search committee.

"We want to communicate with the board of trustees," said Dubose. "However, we need a high level of confidentiality. I hope you will respect our right to privacy. I hope you will trust us."

Dubose invited any Southern Baptist to make a recommendation to the committee. "Those wishing to make recommendations must do so in writing by sending a complete biographical sketch of their nominee, along with a concise statement as to the reason for nominating their candidate."

He said all nominations and supporting information should be sent to: BSSB Search Committee, P.O. Drawer L, Springdale, Ark. 72765.

In his report, Elder described an early January conversation with his 85-year-old mother in Lubbock, Texas, in which he had outlined mounting differences with trustees.

She listened and then responded, "Son, remember Romans 8:28." The verse states, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Elder said he had been encouraged by his mother's response and offered the same admonition to trustees and to Southern Baptists. "An agreement (between the president and trustees) to disagree and to separate does not need to mean the end of our kingdom work because we are kingdom people," said Elder. "We are the kind of people who will keep our eyes upon Jesus Christ and his mission in this world."

In celebrating the centennial of the board's establishment in 1891 and in preparing for a smooth transition of administrations, Elder said, "We're going to ask God to be working in our lives and in the life of the Baptist Sunday School Board."

In other actions, the trustees:

- Dedicated a new nine-story centennial tower, honoring the vision of J.M. Frost, the agency's founder. The \$15.7 million tower, now debt-free, contains conference facilities, office space and one floor for future expansion.

- Tabled a motion that would have required the word "inerrancy" to appear in advertising of "The New American Commentary," the first volume of which is to be released in June. Trustees also agreed that two alternate consulting commentary editors who have been activated to editor status will be questioned by trustees in August, the same as six other commentary editors previously.

- Heard a report that real revenue growth for the first three months of 1990-91 was registered by Holman Bible publishing, Broadman products and Church Information Systems computer hardware and software. Areas of decline included Convention Press, Genevox music publishing and church literature.

- Named a five-member committee to develop a process for facilitation relationships between trustees and employees, to be chaired by Billie Friel, pastor of First Baptist Church of Mount Juliet, Tenn.

- Re-elected Anderson and Mims to second terms as chairman and vice chairman, respectively. Burgess Guinn, deputy state statistician in Cornersville, Tenn., was elected recording secretary. (BP, WR)

Military magazine could meet great need

by Jim Burton

The development of a Southern Baptist magazine to meet the spiritual and personal needs of military personnel received overwhelming endorsement from state Brotherhood leadership.

During their annual meeting with the Brotherhood Commission staff in Memphis, Tenn., David Langford, director of North Carolina Baptist Men, read the following statement from state Brotherhood leaders: "We affirm the concept. It is right. God has opened the window of opportunity at this time."

In a demonstration of their support, state Brotherhood leaders pledged \$21,000 to produce a pilot issue.

"This is one of the greatest needs on the contemporary scene in the area of human needs," said Robert Y. Simpkins, Kentucky Brotherhood director. "We're committing \$1,500 immediately to the project."

This is the first time that state Brotherhood leaders have taken this kind of action, said James H. Smith, Brotherhood Commission president.

"This was strictly a spontaneous initiation on their part," said Smith.

"It is evident that they sense that here is an area of need. This has done more to help our partnership relationship with them than anything that has happened in the years I've been here."

The need for this publication will go beyond the current war in the Middle East, said Smith.

The Brotherhood Commission's adult division began working on a formal magazine development proposal in December.

On Jan. 14, an advisory group of military chaplains, Southern Baptist Home Mission Board and Woman's Missionary Union representatives met and affirmed the need for a publication for military personnel.

The magazine will be previewed at the Southern Baptist Convention June 4-6 in Atlanta. Based upon the response there and the results of additional surveys, the commission should make a final decision by June 15 on a permanent monthly publica-

tion, Smith said.

State Brotherhood leaders and commission staff also heard updated reports on World Changers, a new co-ed missions education program. World Changers targets and estimated 750,000 Southern Baptist youth not enrolled in missions education.

Reports on volunteer missions and related programs of work were discussed by the Brotherhood leaders. (BP, WR)

Accrediting panel to visit SBTS

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apology from Johnson. While standing by the essence of his charges, Johnson apologized for publishing the allegations rather than bringing them to appropriate trustee committees.

Although the fact-finding report commended the board for dealing "expeditiously" with the issue, it added that the seminary's reputation "was seriously damaged by the incident," noting, "The language of the charge and the attendant process resembled more that of a hostile corporate takeover than of an educational fiduciary responsibility."

- Peace Committee Report. In September the board approved the addition of the 1987 Southern Baptist Convention Peace Committee Report—"both findings and recommendations"—as a guideline for employment, promotion and tenure of all faculty.

According to the fact-finding report, that action imposes conditions on faculty personnel decisions "well beyond the approved academic personnel policies and the seminary charter and by-laws." Since its founding in 1859, the seminary has required all faculty members to sign the "Abstract of Principles," the school's governing theological statement.

The trustee decision, the report added, places "an almost impossible burden" on the seminary administration in making contractual agreements with both permanent and temporary faculty and "raises a valid question as to whether the board by this action has exercised fidelity to the charter and therefore to the stated mission of the school."

- Tape recorders in classrooms. Trustee approval of a policy to allow use of tape recorders in all seminary classrooms "constitutes a direct intervention by the board into the relation of faculty and students in the context of teaching," the fact-finding report stated. "Such an action," it added, "goes beyond the normal policy-making function of the board and can be viewed as an abuse of its power."

The seminary previously had no policy prohibiting use of tape recorders, leaving the question to the discretion of the professor.

At its Feb. 5 meeting, the seminary's trustee executive committee voted unani-

mously to authorize release of the fact-finding report despite expressed fears that doing so might jeopardize ongoing efforts toward reconciliation between the board and seminary faculty.

Executive committee Chairman Wayne Allen of Memphis, Tenn., stressed that "ATS has taken no action; it has made no judgment."

Noting the report consists of "the impressions of one person," he added that "my fear is that people won't understand that."

The same seven-member trustee committee appointed to review the report has met three times with a faculty ad hoc committee in response to the faculty's unanimous appeal to trustees to rescind their action related to the Peace Committee report. The two groups plan to meet twice more before the April trustee meeting.

Although seminary president Honeycutt said the ATS notification is "sobering news," he praised trustees for their prompt response and reiterated his pledge to work with the board to "effect positive, constructive change."

"My fervent prayer is that the board and the seminary community will embrace the evaluation visit as an opportunity to dispel clouds of uncertainty and distrust and to recommit ourselves to the shared task of preparing men and women for Christian ministry," he said.

January sets record

continued from page 1

the uses of their contributions or are considering such designations because of their disaffection with the conservative control of the national portion of the budget.

"We're still not seeing significant amounts of dollars channeled to other causes," Allen reported. "February receipts—which were received in churches during January, the first month of their budget year—will provide the first indicator of this trend."

The one-month delay between church receipts and Cooperative Program contributions helped create the strong January, he noted.

"Churches catch up at the end of the year. December usually is the largest month for churches. As a result, we get it in January—historically, one of our best months."

Evangelism meet on TV

If you find standing room only in the auditorium of Severns Valley Baptist Church in Elizabethtown at the Kentucky Baptist evangelism conference Feb. 25-26, don't despair.

Two options may help you.

The church's chapel will be equipped with large monitors and sound system so overflow crowds may witness proceedings on television.

Kentucky Baptist Convention officials, working with the local Telescripts Cable System, also have arranged to carry the conference on local cable channel 25.

Live coverage begins Monday, Feb. 25 at 1 p.m., an hour before the conference opens, and continues until 9:30 p.m. Coverage on Tuesday, Feb. 26, begins at 9 a.m. and continues until 9:30 p.m.

The KBC will supply videotapes and other messages to be programmed during periods the conference is not in session, said Paul Lee, director of the KBC media department.

Senate cites Baptist youth for volunteer service

by Beth W. Prassel
Special Correspondent

Recognition by the Kentucky Senate was one payoff for many hours of volunteer labor by residents of the Baptist Youth Ranch in Elizabethtown.

The boys were cited by senators in January for cleaning up the grounds at 12 neglected cemeteries in Breckinridge, Hardin, Jefferson and Meade counties.

Using chain saws, they removed trees. With hand tools, they cut away briars. Then they mowed tall grass.

"By the time they returned home, they'd been pricked, stumped their toes and hit their thumbs with hammers. They invested a lot of sweat, time and energy," said ranch Director Bob Milburn.

Cleaning the cemeteries grew out of a conversation between Milburn and Alvin Stinnett Jr., who had launched a community effort in Breckinridge County to clean cemeteries. Weekly community service projects were part of the ranch program, including washing fire trucks and picking up litter along highways.

Cemetery clean-up will remain permanently on the project list, Milburn said. He identified more than 280 neglected cemeteries in Breckinridge and Hardin counties. "It's hard work, and there's plenty of it," he added.

The projects are part of the treatment offered at the Youth Ranch, a facility of Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children. The ranch houses 11 teen-aged boys with emotional or behavioral problems and with deep needs that cannot be met by regular residential homes. The community projects provide therapy for the boys, teaching them the Christian work ethic and improving community relations with the ranch, Milburn said.

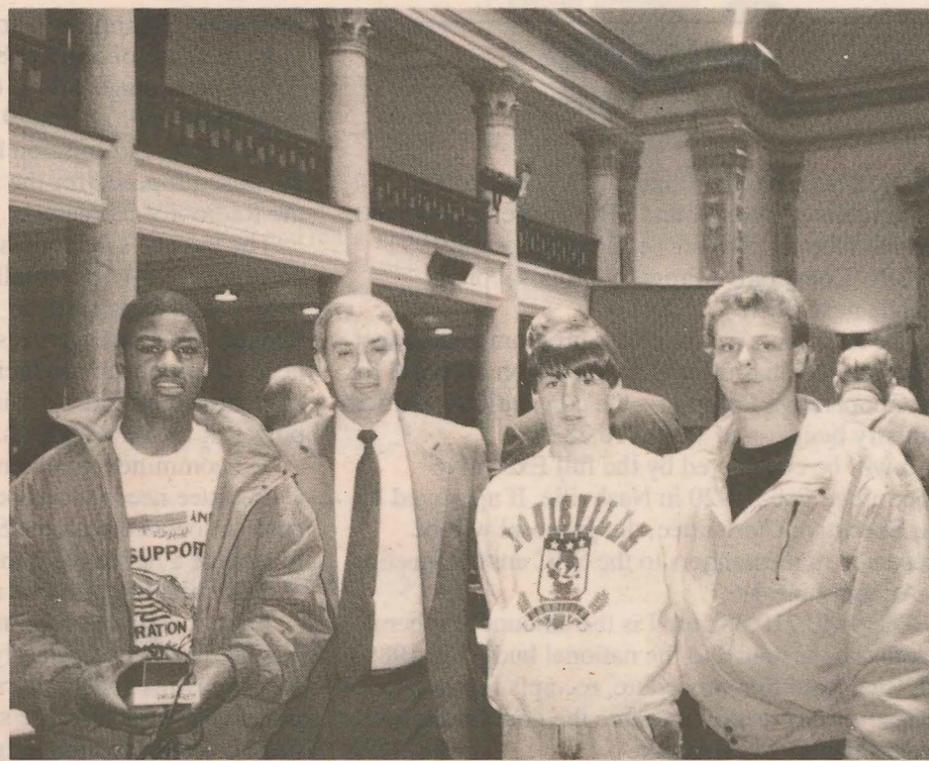
Milburn especially liked the idea of cleaning up cemeteries because of the symbolism attached. Many of the boys have experienced abuse and neglect, like the cemeteries, but now realize that their lives have worth, he explained.

Cleaning cemeteries provides a way for the boys to minister to others, said Milburn: "They may find it difficult to say, 'God loves you' or to go around the state and sing. It's just not their nature."

But they can say it by cleaning cemeteries. They can do it through hard work, through their hands."

The projects help boys learn that God will reward when the boys give without expecting in return, he noted.

The reward the boys received in Frankfort was an increase in self-esteem, he added: "I really want them to feel good about themselves. They ought to. They deserve it."



FRIENDS IN HIGH PLACES—Kentucky Senate Majority Leader Joe Wright (second from left) is flanked by three residents of Baptist Youth Ranch in Elizabethtown (l-r), Jerome, Jason and Tim. The boys were cited by senators in January for their efforts in improving 12 neglected cemeteries in four midstate counties.

Multiple services, attention to 'guests' help church grow

by Marv Knox, Editor

Young adults demand flexibility from their churches, ministry experts maintain.

And Living Hope Baptist Church in Bowling Green—with three worship services and three Sunday schools every Sunday morning—has limbered up to meet those demands.

"The way people live in the '90s, it's no longer a Monday-to-Friday, 8-to-5 life," explained Pastor Brad Johnson. "Ours is a seven-day-a-week, 24-hour-a-day world."

"The 11 o'clock worship service was developed by a generation's attempt to reach an agricultural society. People had cows to milk, so they came to church after the chores were done."

"In the '90s, a middle-of-the-day worship time is not going to be popular for young adults. It splits the day, sometimes their only day off."

Consequently, churches need to offer worship, Bible study and ministry to suit busy people's schedules, he said.

Living Hope offers worship and Bible study at 8, 9:15 and 10:30 on Sunday mornings. Since the early worship service began in November, Sunday school attendance has climbed from the mid-400s to about 500, and worship participation has grown from around 500 to 600.

About 60 percent of the congregation is comprised of young adults—people in their 20s, 30s and 40s.

But numbers are important only because they represent lives touched by Christ, Johnson insisted.

"Numerical growth is the result of the passion of the people," he said. Living Hope members already had that passion for reaching their community before they called him as pastor about a year and a half ago, he added.

"Multiple services and the way we minister to our guests are the result of the way we care for people," he explained.

"Guests" is a key word in the Living Hope vocabulary. "We don't call people 'visitors' when they come to us," Johnson noted. "We call them 'guests'—someone you cater to and care for."

That means placing an emphasis on making guests feel welcome. It means providing top-flight child care for their children and offering programs that fit their schedules. It also means following up—visiting in their homes, calling to thank them for coming to church, connecting them to a Sunday school class of their peers.

And it means accepting them and welcoming them on the spiritual journey.

"People of all walks of life and levels of commitment are welcome at Living Hope Baptist Church," Johnson said, describing the church as "biblically conservative but

not at all traditional."

"Our philosophy is this: Jesus accepted people where they were. We will, too—and help them grow."

"We're trying to attract the person who is a consumer, materialistic, secular. We're trying to follow Jesus' admonition to be 'fishers of men.' And we've found we can do that if we bait the hook right."

That "bait" will include a spacious worship center, which the church hopes to start building next summer. It will have an extra-large foyer, Johnson said, to accommodate hallway fellowship as people trade

places between Bible study and worship.

For even with added worship space, Living Hope still plans to offer multiple services—providing the flexibility young families say they want.

The congregation may get even more flexible before the building is completed: Johnson is encouraging participants in the 8 a.m. worship service to fill the sanctuary, so that the church can add a fourth worship/Bible study alternative.

"We really want to make a difference," he said. "We will not be satisfied if we're stagnant."

Kentucky volunteer weeps over Israel's fate

by Mike Creswell

Kizzie Owens wept quietly.

She sat with other Southern Baptist personnel and recalled the tense moments of her almost-last-minute evacuation from Israel to Cyprus.

An International Service Corps volunteer sent by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, Owens had been in Israel only since Oct. 16, when she arrived for a one-year term of service. But Owens and several other workers left Israel by boat a scant two days before the Jan. 15 deadline set by the United Nations for the departure of Iraqi troops from Kuwait.

Despite the intense publicity about a potential war in recent months, Owens said, "I kept denying to myself war would come."

A resident of Mt. Vernon, Ky., Owens, 56, was a member for many years of Mt. Vernon Baptist Church. She moved her membership to Clays Mill Baptist Church in nearby Lexington after her husband, Floyd, died a year and a half ago. He was a deacon and active member of the Mt. Vernon congregation. She has led MasterLife

discipleship training and helped start a mission that now is Northside Baptist Church in Mt. Vernon.

Soon after his death, she applied for volunteer mission service and a short time later was on her way to Israel.

While conditions in Israel often have been unstable, the situation was quiet when she applied to go there. "But before I finished orientation at the Foreign Mission Board's Missionary Learning Center in Virginia, Iraq invaded Kuwait. After that, everything was in turmoil. There was a lot of indecision about whether I should go or not," she said.

Baptism in the desert

Christian chaplains don't let the Saudi Arabian desert stop them from baptizing new Christians, according to 2nd Lt. Greg Huff, a Kentucky Baptist participating in Operation Desert Storm. "Our chaplain has been conducting Bible study in our tent," Huff told his father, Cordell Huff of London, in a recent telephone call.

"Eight of my fellow soldiers accepted Christ," the younger Huff added. "they wanted to be baptized. We went out in the desert, dug a hole, lined it with plastic, filled it with water and had a baptism."

But she decided to go on. "I really saw the Lord working in this. The country had been closed to a gospel witness and then it became open. I thought the Lord was leading me and I went under faith that there was something there for me. I felt very peaceful and secure."

Since arriving Oct. 16, Owens had worked at Baptist Village, a conference center and meeting complex operated by Southern Baptist personnel in a rural area near Tel Aviv.

Asked about the kind of work she did at the village, Owens cracked a wide grin and said, "I did about everything there was." She worked as housekeeper, cooked and was hostess to make visiting groups comfortable. Other volunteers said they enjoyed hearing her distinct Kentucky twang.

As conditions grew more tense during January, career Southern Baptist workers finally told her to leave. Some of those career workers also went to Cyprus or to the United States; others remain in Israel.

Owens has gotten established in a temporary apartment arranged by Foreign Mission Board administrators in Larnaca, on the southern coast of Cyprus.

Just a few days after her arrival in Cyprus, Owens already was helping with a school set up by Southern Baptist personnel for their children.

Whether she returns to Israel to continue her service depends on the war. (FMB)



Budget proposal could deepen convention conflict

editorial

Marv Knox

The Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee will compound SBC budget woes—and denominational conflict—if it approves the 1991-92 SBC Cooperative Program proposal on its agenda next week.

The Executive Committee's program and budget subcommittee has offered an allocation proposal for the Cooperative Program—the convention's unified ministry budget—of \$140,710,282.

It will be considered by the full Executive Committee Feb. 18-20 in Nashville. If approved by the Executive Committee, the proposal will be presented to messengers to the SBC annual meeting in Atlanta June 4-6.

The \$140,710,282 total is the amount Southern Baptists contributed to the national budget in 1989-90. By convention procedure, receipts for the "latest year of record" become the goal for the budget under consideration.

The \$140.7 million proposal represents a 2.46 percent increase over the current budget goal, \$137,332,252. That compares to the current U.S. inflation rate of about 6.3 percent.

Living with a budget that does not keep up with inflation presents problems. But the real difficulty with the Cooperative Program proposal lies in how the modest increase is to be distributed.

Members of the program and budget committee reported that they evaluated each agency's budget proposal on its own merits. Guess who merits the best percentage increase, in their estimation.

Not our world and national missions efforts. The Foreign Mission Board and the Home Mission Board each got the status quo—2.46 percent increases.

Not our ministers-in-training. The subcommittee recommended a 1.5 percent increase for the six SBC theological seminaries and a 2 percent increase for American Baptist Theological Seminary, sponsored by National and Southern Baptists.

Not our broadcast ministries. The Radio and Television Commission is earmarked for a 1.76 percent gain.

The most meritorious request, according to the program and budget subcommittee, came from its own agency—the Executive Committee. The

Executive Committee is to get a 15.48 percent gain, or an increase of \$369,698.

The percentage gain is 6.29 times greater than the average gain. It's 6.29 times the increase proposed for our mission boards. It's 10.32 times the raise proposed for the seminaries, and 8.8 times the Radio-TV increase.

The budget's defenders might note that a 15.48 percent increase in a small budget is less money than a smaller percentage increase in a larger budget. True, but agencies battle inflation and needs in proportion to their budgets. A percentage comparison provides a fair evaluation of the buying power of the new budgets.

Subcommittee members said the Executive Committee needs the raise to pay for increased costs associated with the SBC annual meeting and to pay for a new SBC public relations program.

That thinking presents a couple of problems.

First, it assumes ongoing increases in the cost of annual meetings. Certainly, convention centers, security firms and vendors are charging increased prices. Nevertheless, the subcommittee should have been listening to Southern Baptists as well as the people who bid on convention contracts.

After last summer's annual meeting and their 12th-straight presidential defeat, many moderates said they don't plan to go back to another SBC battle. Take an informal survey, and you'll still find that response. Without this presence, many conservatives—who sacrificed to attend the meetings so their candidates could win the presidency—will not need to make similar efforts in the future.

The Executive Committee makes contracts on convention facilities far into the future. Those commitments must be kept. But the days of multiple meeting halls, related communications equipment and attendant security are long gone. The Executive Committee should have been listening to Southern Baptists and figuring a way to reduce, not increase, costs of annual meetings.

The second rationale for the increase—a new public relations program—brings mixed feelings. Most Southern Baptists want the world to see us in a positive light. And many who have observed our operations would agree that we should have been doing more in public relations long ago.

However, two problems arise from the subcommittee's rationale.

First, if public relations is so important, why did the Executive Committee recently hire a vice

president for public relations with no experience in the field? All who know him or who have observed him say Mark Coppenger, the vice president, is a bright and engaging person. But the only public relations experience he brought to the job was a short stint as interim editor of the Indiana Baptist state newspaper. And since public relations is so expensive, why hire a leader with no experience and then need to hire expensive consultants to help him do his job?

Second, the Executive Committee fools itself if it thinks it can solve the convention's public relations problems by putting a "spin" on our story. Obviously, we have many wonderful stories to tell, and our agencies are telling them every week. Certainly, we can do a better job of communicating the good news of Southern Baptist life and ministry. But the real reason Southern Baptists have a public relations problem is because we have been fighting for a dozen years. We will improve our public image when we set our hearts right and turn to each other in love and reconciliation.

Unfortunately, the subcommittee's proposal is a step away from that noble venture. The proposal looks like an attempt to reward the conservative-dominated Executive Committee's friends and punish its enemies. Besides the Executive Committee itself, the big percentage winners in the proposal are the Christian Life Commission and the Public Affairs Committee, agencies also dominated by conservatives and favored by conservative causes in recent years. The big loser is the moderate-favored Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, which is to receive no budget increase.

A 2.46 percent overall increase is not enough to make significant percentage or real-dollar increases available to all agencies that participate in the Cooperative Program. Still, the Executive Committee could have been more even-handed.

Now, unfortunately, moderates—who say they feel ostracized by SBC leaders—have more reason to feel left out. If they respond by designating money to SBC causes they would rather support, they will be criticized by conservatives, who want all Southern Baptists to contribute through the traditional approach—undesignated gifts to the Cooperative Program.

If the Executive Committee wishes to deepen the conflict within our convention, it should pass the proposed budget. If it wishes to achieve reconciliation, it should draft a more even-handed budget.

baptist forum

Integrate the handicapped

How unfortunate it is that the Western Recorder chose (Jan. 22) to highlight a segregated program for mentally handicapped people, when the opportunity ex-

isted, at the very same church, to highlight a very good integrated approach to the inclusion of handicapped people. By doing so, the Western Recorder has perpetrated prejudicial stereotypes against persons who are mentally handicapped and over the age of 40.

Please be assured that, contrary to statements made in the article, mentally handicapped persons over the age of 40, includ-

ing those with institutional backgrounds, are being integrated into all walks of life on a daily basis throughout our community. Regardless of how good our intentions may be, there is no place for such divisive programming and damaging stereotyping in the vision of Jesus Christ.

The saddest thing about segregation is that we lose the opportunity to receive and benefit from the gifts of those whom we

exclude from full and equal fellowship. Sometimes those whom we consider the least able can offer us the most profound gifts of understanding and insight.

Let us pray for openness, understanding, acceptance and love. Let us ask for the mind of Christ Jesus to be also in us. Then we will see that we are all one body.

Sarah E. Eastes
Louisville

western recorder

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We pray for genuine, lasting peace

guest editorial

by Morris H. Chapman

In recent weeks our nation has been awakened to the devastating realities of war. We held out hope that diplomacy would be a pathway to peace in the Persian Gulf. We prayed for our president as he led in the persistent pursuit of peace through diplomatic initiatives. One nation after another joined in the efforts to persuade Saddam Hussein to withdraw Iraqi troops from Kuwait—all to no avail.

Now that we have gone to war, let us uphold President Bush and other governmental leaders in prayer asking God's divine guidance during this time of crisis. Surely all Southern Baptists pledge unwavering support for U.S. and allied military men and women serving in Operation Desert Storm. May all Southern Baptist churches resolve to support the families of military personnel with prayer and ministries of encouragement and care.

Let every reasonable step be taken by all nations to safeguard human life, to minimize casualties and to avoid the use of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons. Let every reasonable step be taken by all nations to ensure proper care for prisoners

of war in accord with the Geneva Convention.

We pray for the chaplains as they remind troops of God's love and care, even in the midst of death and destruction of war. We pray that out of the uncertainty of physical life will come a new longing for life eternal offered to all through faith in Jesus Christ.

We pray for a swift end to the war. We pray for the safe and speedy return of loved ones serving our country and the cause of free people everywhere. Finally, we pray for a genuine and lasting peace. God bless America.

Morris H. Chapman is president of the Southern Baptist Convention and pastor of First Baptist Church of Wichita Falls, Texas.



on mission together

William W. (Bill) Marshall
Executive Secretary-Treasurer
Box 43433
Middletown, KY 40253

'Faith awakens discipline,' SBC educator insists

guest editorial

by Arthur L. Walker Jr.

The task of a Southern Baptist educational institution is made more difficult by the perceived difference in the tasks of evangelism and education. Yet Jesus in his Great Commission emphasized that these are, in fact, a part of the same task. In his commission, he gave equal emphasis to discipling and teaching.

As education has grown in importance, it has become increasingly vital for Baptist schools to encourage the study and transmission of human experience from a Christian perspective. Because education provides for some of the most basic and important experiences of life, the world-view incorporated into that education is even more important.

Baptist educational institutions exist because there are those who are committed to the task of an educational objective with a Christian perspective. Even when there is a disagreement over the details of service

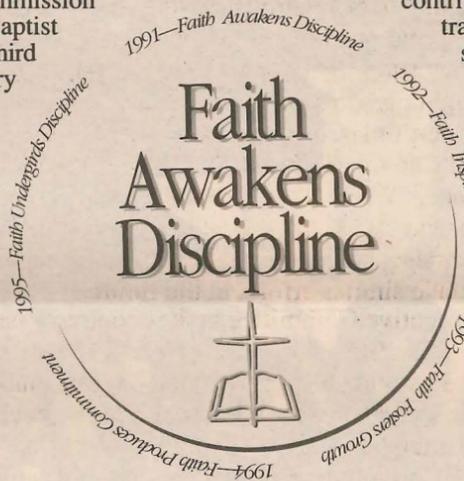
and approach, the commitment to the Lordship of Christ justifies the mission of Baptist institutions.

The emphasis day sponsored by the education commission of the Southern Baptist Convention on the third Sunday in February each year provides the opportunity to underscore the dedication of the 6,500 faculty and administrators of Baptist educational institutions. A majority of these individuals have chosen to spend their professional careers in Baptist institutions because of the opportunity for Christian service. A significant percentage of these receive less pay than they could make at other institutions, yet they prefer to continue to serve at

denominational schools.

Many of those who spend their lives in Baptist-related schools find their greatest satisfaction in knowing that they have contributed to the service and training of those who are seeking to fulfill God's calling in their own life and ministry. They seek to challenge their students to the understanding that personal faith and personal commitment are the best ways to apply human knowledge. They also seek to awaken within their students the desire for a greater knowledge about God and his created order. They understand this desire as a further call to academic discipline.

Arthur L. Walker Jr. is executive director of the Southern Baptist Education Commission Nashville.



Seminary, College & School Day
February 17



James H. Cox
Associate Editor

fourth estate

Winter of discontent

For decades, a major department store in Nashville touted this slogan: "Harvey's Never Knows Completion." Employees of the nearby Southern Baptist Sunday School Board often added: "The board is just like Harvey's—it never knows completion!"

In light of recent actions, things seem about as incomplete at the board now as at any time in its 100-year history.

I have a warm appreciation for the Sunday School Board. My career began there 32 years ago. The operation was on a much smaller, slower-paced scale then, like a family-run business. When James L. Sullivan, executive secretary-treasurer, sat with the hired help in the basement snack room over lunch or coffee, you felt good about the hands that steered the ship.

By and by, progress came, and with it, significant growth, expansion and change. Facilities were enlarged; workers added; regulations increased. Policies, procedures and memos cascaded down from ivory towers. Staff meetings quadrupled. Reorganization became a way of life. Goal-setting was in. Strategies and action plans sought to increase the bottom line by vigorously marketing products and services.

Despite cold and calculating decisions, many staffers remained convinced that management was committed to a higher philosophy: "To bring men and women, boys and girls, to God through Jesus Christ."

I still visualize the Sunday School Board as more than the help it offers me and my church. It also is 2,000 employees and their families—some with lifelong careers devoted to its diverse ministries.

The repeated election of strong

conservatives and defeat of candidates with more traditional views in a decade of clashes at Southern Baptist Convention meetings is taking its toll, however. A large segment of the board's employees is literally running scared. Conceded its livelihood is threatened. These folks have not embraced all of the views held by the 51 to 55 percent who vote together year after year at the SBC. As a result, they are in turmoil, confused and wondering. They believe a Pharaoh who knows not Joseph—and does not care about him—may become their taskmaster.

A Baptist Press news release two weeks ago quoted a highly visible Baptist source: "Fundamentalists own a publishing house. But what if sales continue to decline? And what if the bills can't be paid?" The alarm is audible on several fronts.

So there they are—good men and women, with decades of service, impeccable credentials, belief in the Bible as God's literal word, unquestioned employer loyalty and living in subdued fear.

The saga of Harvey's well-worn slogan continues. In the process, we may have handicapped some valuable workers because those who could speak for them failed to turn up at the polls. For these servants, God's lifetime call could be thwarted.

Baptists' winter of discontent goes on.

A closet zealot

Several have asked me of late why I have not written more in my columns about the war, especially since we have lived and traveled in that area of the world.

I have wondered about that, too, and how some readers might think it even "flippant" to write an article on "grandmothers" in the middle of a war.

The inquiries made me focus on the reasons why I probably will not use the column for reflections on the war.

Among my reasons are:

I am not unbiased. I happen to believe that while there are several root causes of this war, one of the most unappreciated by the average American is the Palestinian situation. Israeli leadership has consistently ignored the reality they created when they displaced the Palestinians in 1948. I happen to believe that the destruction of Iraq and the surrender (or killing) of Saddam Hussein will not end the war in the Middle East.

I am not impressed by pro-Israel propaganda. I have seen it, lived with it and have some understanding of it. I have seen and continued to see an American public intimidated by a fear of accusation that one is "anti-semitic" if one speaks against what Israel is doing to the Palestinians. Palestinians are semitic and Israel today is perpetrating one of the most obvious forms of anti-semitism.

I remember Lebanon. One of the primary reasons for the war still raging in Lebanon after 16 years was the infiltration of thousands of Palestinians displaced by Israel and later by Jordan. Their increasing number ultimately tipped the delicate balance of power in Lebanon. We were there when the war started in 1976 when Lebanon was, but is no longer, the only predominantly Christian nation in the Middle East.

I read my Bible differently from those who equate the secular state of Israel as God's divine work or that this secular state is somehow uniquely set apart by God. My Bible reads that "Jesus people" are the "new Israel," that the new Israel are the believers; the people of God throughout the world, dispersed. In that sense, there is no "Holy Land."

Well, I've said enough to let the reader know why I will not likely write any more columns on the war.

Persian Gulf war opportunity for witness, scholar says

by Tim McKeown

Christians should view war in the Persian Gulf as an opportunity to share the first coming of Jesus Christ, rather than focusing on the Second Coming, according to a Southern Baptist scholar.

"It's a time to share Christ and his first coming. We need to be careful not to set dates but share the good news ... the hope, strength, peace for man right now," said John Newport, emeritus professor of philosophy of religion and vice president for academic affairs at Southwestern Baptist

Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

Newport, author of numerous books including a 1988 book about the Second Coming titled *The Lion and the Lamb*, has been to the Middle East 25 times and said crisis situations like the Persian Gulf war remind people of life's fragility.

"We are finite beings," he said. "We need to be obedient, combining justice and love and forgiveness—recognizing all humanity is caught in the fall of man."

Newport said the heightened interest in biblical prophecy provides a good opportunity for Christians to witness.

Newport said several people, including newspaper reporters, have asked him how Saddam Hussein fits in with biblical prophecy. Newport's answer is that every generation has had the spirit of anti-Christ, from the Apostle John's generation through this generation.

"The spirit of anti-Christ is always with us. We can see its diluted influence in every epoch in history," he said.

But Newport cautioned against over-excitement among Christians about relating the Bible's end times and events in the Persian Gulf.

"We must be alert that we do not make the Bible into a device for divination, instead of a tool for spiritual discernment.

"In the meantime, we are to be busy in our calling. End time theories arise often," Newport said. But he added "none of them should cause us to put down the sickle and pick up the spyglass."

God uses man's rebellion for his redemptive plans in the midst of the circumstances, Newport said, adding he foresees that out of the Iraq situation, there could become a new openness to God both in the United States and in the Arab world. (BP)

Burgeoning Muslim world remains an evangelistic challenge

by Art Toalston

The number of people praying to the Allah of Islam is increasing faster than the number praying to God in the name of Jesus.

Islam became the fastest-growing of the world's major religions long before the Arab oil states jolted the world by flexing their economic muscle, long before the Ayatollah Khomeini routed the Shah of Iran, and long before Iraq invaded its tiny oil-rich neighbor, Kuwait.

Muslim populations have climbed into the millions in countries as far removed from the Middle East as Indonesia, Malaysia, Nigeria, China, the Soviet Union and India. Of the world's 5.3 billion people, nearly 1 billion now are Muslims.

Since the turn of the century, Islam has soared 468 percent worldwide, with high birthrates accounting for much growth, missions researcher David Barrett said. Christianity has grown by 315 percent since 1900, he said.

Further Muslim growth is certain. Muslims comprise the majority in some 40 countries—and they are increasing eight times faster than the populations of such developed countries as the United States, according to the Population Reference Bureau, which monitors population trends.

Islam's strength is buttressed by fundamentalist movements advocating strict adherence to the faith, centuries of tradition, eras of triumph and times of perseverance. These factors fuel Islam's predominant Sunni branch worldwide, Shiite branch that rules Iran and more than 75 sects.

From its earliest days, Islam aimed to grow. Within 100 years after its revered apostle, Muhammad, died in 632 A.D., Muslim warriors had claimed not only the Middle East but an empire stretching from Spain into parts of India and China, extending 4,500 miles wide and 1,000 miles deep.

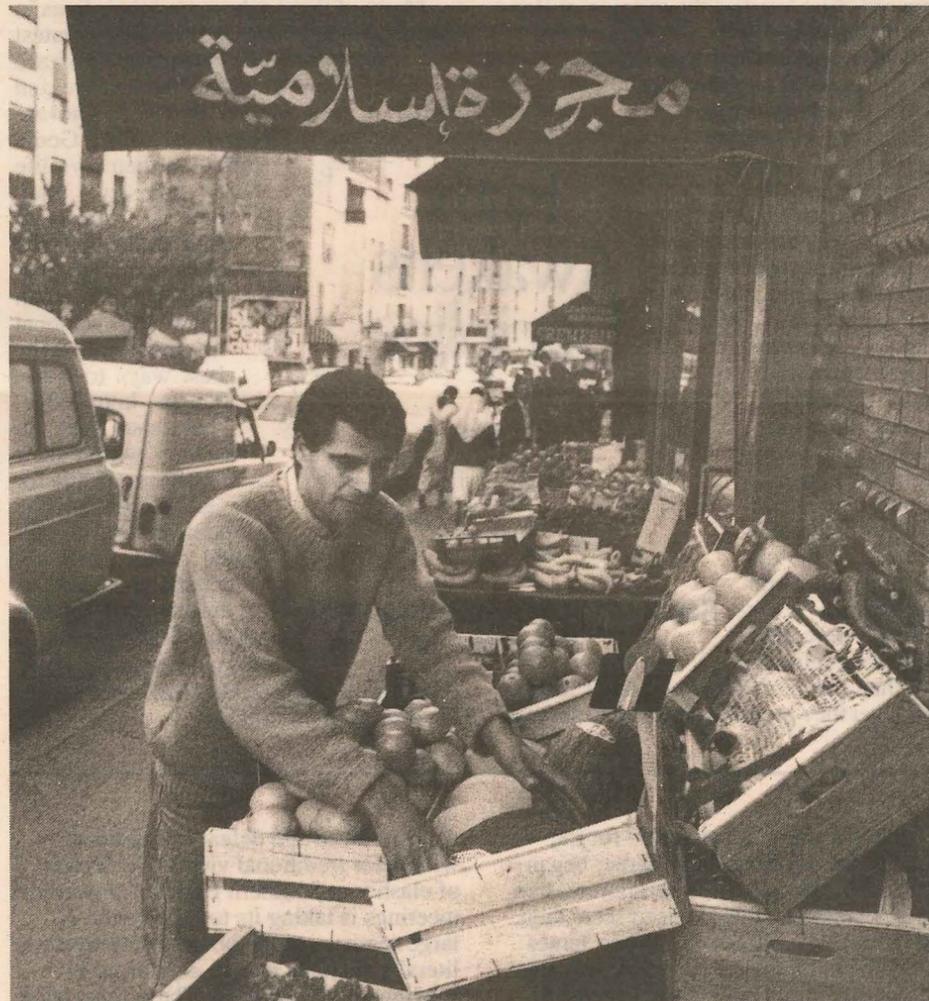
Within several hundred years, merchants had carried Islam to east and west Africa, Indonesia and other parts of Asia. And Sufi missionaries—members of Muslim religious orders committed to deep piety—made converts in other regions now in the

Soviet Union and China and below Africa's Sahara Desert.

Christian researchers now count some 1.3 billion people as "unevangelized"—never having heard in a clear way how to place their faith in Christ. Muslims com-

prise as many as 70 percent of the world's unevangelized people.

"Muslims are sometimes tolerant, sometimes hostile," said Dale Thorne, who directs Southern Baptist work in the Middle East and heavily Muslim north Africa.



MUSLIMS IN EUROPE—The Arabic script advertising an Islamic food market suggests a Middle East street scene, but this street is in Paris. Muslims are growing rapidly throughout Western Europe. Estimates of Muslims in the region range from 6 million to 12 million people. Already France's Muslim population, estimated at some 2 million, is the second-largest faith group in the country after Catholicism. (BP photo by Don Rutledge)

Islam is the fastest growing religion in America

by Mark Wingfield

Islam is an American reality Southern Baptists must prepare to address, an interfaith witness leader said.

Maurice Smith, associate director of interfaith witness with the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, spoke about "The Muslim Challenge in America" to state evangelism directors during their annual meeting in Scottsdale, Ariz.

Islam is one of two major religious movements projected by the interfaith witness department to have the greatest impact on America in the 1990s. The other is New Age movements.

Islam is currently the fastest growing

religious system in America. Worldwide, one in every seven people is a Muslim.

Smith said America has more Muslims than Episcopalians or Presbyterians. More Muslims live in America than Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses combined.

"The religion of Islam is now an American reality," Smith said. "All the Muslims are not in the Middle East.

Smith estimates 4.75 million Muslims live in the United States. However, other estimates range from 3 to 6 million.

He identified five categories of Muslims in America: visitors, immigrants, Americans who have converted to Islam, black Americans and independent or unorthodox Muslims. The largest number of mosques

(Muslim places of worship) are located near university campuses, he said.

Most Muslims in America—especially immigrants—never have thought of converting to Christianity, Smith said, because their faith is so integrally related to their socialization.

American converts to Islam, on the other hand, usually already have rejected Christianity to embrace Islam, he explained.

Twelve cities in North America have the largest concentration of Muslims, Smith said. Those cities are Boston, Chicago, Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, Montreal, New York City, Philadelphia, San Diego, San Francisco, Toronto and Washington. (BP)

"Differing attitudes call for differing strategies in the attempt to give a meaningful and challenging witness to the message of Christ." (BP)

Craig Bird, correspondent for Africa, contributed to this story.

Witness to Muslims by showing love, missionary says

by Mark Wingfield

American Christians face an unprecedented opportunity to witness to Muslims if they will begin by showing love, a Southern Baptist expert on Arabic ministries said.

"God has cracked the door" for Christians to share their faith with one of the most closed groups in the world, said Khalil "Charlie" Hanna, a Southern Baptist missionary among Arabic-speaking people in the United States.

Hanna, who is Egyptian and became a Christian through the ministry of Southern Baptist foreign missionaries, has been a home missionary in California for 15 years.

The current conflict in the Persian Gulf ultimately will provide more opportunities for Christians to present the gospel to Muslims, he believes.

"God is allowing this opportunity for some people from Islamic nations to hear the gospel. As the war in the Gulf takes place, Christians should take spiritual warfare to winning Muslims in the United States.

"I want to encourage Southern Baptists to take the advantage."

Traditionally, Christian work among Muslims has been difficult at best, he explained. "It is not easy to bring a man of Muslim background to become a Christian. Humanly speaking, it is impossible."

Hanna offered these suggestions for witnessing to Muslims:

- Start with respect rather than fear. Instead of looking at all Middle Easterners as potential terrorists, Christians should educate themselves in preparation for ministry, he urged. "I deserve respect because God created me in his image, not because he created me in the Anglo image.

- Avoid politics. "The church should create an accepting atmosphere. We need to say, 'Even though we have war, Southern Baptists still love you and care for you.'"

- Additionally, Southern Baptists especially need to realize that the relation of Israel and the Palestinians is an emotional issue that can create a barrier to Muslims accepting Christianity, Hanna said.

- Find a common ground. "This could be friendship, caring, fulfilling social needs, ministering to physical needs," he explained.

- Nurture the relationship. Even though the Koran forbids Muslims from developing friendships with Christians, most Muslims in America are usually more accepting, he said. (BP)

Historians assess alternatives for SBC moderates

by Larry Chesser

Southern Baptist moderates weighing alternatives to business-as-usual participation in the conservative-dominated denomination face no quick, easy or certain answers, two American church historians told participants at a regional gathering of the Southern Baptist Alliance, meeting at Kensington Baptist Church, Kensington, Md.

Bill Leonard, William Walker Brookes Professor of American Christianity at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., and SBA Executive Director Stan Hastey, who holds a doctorate in American church history, told a gathering of the Northeast Region of the alliance they had revised earlier assessments and now believe a formal schism within the SBC or the establishment of an alternative denominational structure appears more distant and less certain than previously thought.

For the immediate future, Leonard said, the SBC "doubtless will continue to experience conflict and fragmentation, though probably without a major immediate schism." Some churches may break away, he said, but not in significant numbers.

"The lines are still too blurred, the assets too extensive and the Southern Baptist identity too strong for any large scale schism or neatly ordered split."

Also for the immediate future, he said, moderates will continue to relate through local networks, coalitions and state Baptist conventions, while the conservatives will continue to factionalize.

Because of the long-running controversy, Southern Baptists, "particularly moderates,

are even now losing a generation of ministers," Leonard warned. Unless viable alternatives are developed, he said, increasing numbers of moderate churches will be drawn into the new mainstream as the pool of moderate ministers declines and churches inevitably turn to more conservative ministers.

In sketching further what he acknowledged was a bleak forecast, Leonard said, "Finances are even now a major problem and major cutbacks in funding for denominational institutions will occur. Numerical declines, already evident, will deepen. SBC educational institutions will struggle to maintain academic integrity and credibility."

He listed a range of denominational

alignment options for moderates, beginning with a new alliance of Baptists that would include American Baptists, Southern Baptists, various African-American Baptist groups and others.

"Such unity seems impossible, but it is a dream we should not hesitate to pursue," he said.

Some moderate churches may pursue dual or outright affiliation with existing Baptist denominations, he suggested.

Another option is the creation of a new Baptist entity formed by moderate churches leaving the SBC. "Some believe that this will be the outcome of recent developments within the so-called 'fellowship' which convened in Atlanta last August," he said. "While that is a possibility, the 'fellowship'

has a long way to go before it is able or willing to call itself a new denomination.

And many moderates, he said, will "simply hunker down" and remain SBC participants, hoping things will change.

"Frankly, I find that many churches and ministers are apt to remain in that mold for some time to come because it is the least controversial and most comfortable option."

The steering committee is expected to propose at a May meeting of the "fellowship" in Atlanta that it be named the Baptist Fellowship and that a search committee be authorized to seek an executive director for the organization. Also a proposal will be made for the establishment of Center for World Missions as a think-tank at its inception. (BP)

Inerrancy controversy's roots run deep

by Matthew Brady

The inerrancy controversy which has dominated the Southern Baptist Convention for more than 12 years has its roots in events occurring nearly 40 years ago, according to a Broadman Press editor speaking at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Two historic changes took place in Southern Baptist life during the early 1950s that set the stage for today's conflict over the nature and inspiration of the Bible, David Dockery told students during a chapel service at the Fort Worth school.

During those years the introduction of historical, critical studies in Southern Baptist

seminaries and colleges resulted in a "new and challenging way of reading and interpreting the Bible," Dockery said.

At the same time, the "Million More in '54" Sunday school growth campaign began a more program-oriented approach to ministry, he said.

"Consciously or unconsciously, a movement away from theology began to take place," Dockery said.

When later controversies took place in 1960, 1969 and 1979, "a doctrinal foundation was lacking among most people to examine and to evaluate these issues, he said.

The controversy over the Bible is not unique to Southern Baptists and reflects

debates taking place in Christianity at large, he said, adding, however, "the intensity of the (SBC) controversy is unrivaled in other circles."

Dockery stated views held by some theologians who question the Bible's inspiration and authority and who say scripture passages cannot be used to validate the Bible's authenticity.

Dockery argued against such beliefs by telling the students there is more than the citing of II Timothy 3:16 that guides understanding into the nature of Scripture. "It is rather a compounding of the biblical testimony coupled with the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the written word of God in our hearts." (BP)

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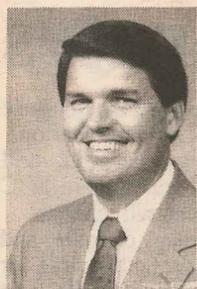
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mountains to the mississippi



Bill D. Whittaker
President
Clear Creek Baptist Bible College
Pineville, KY 40977

clear creek chronicle

Depend on the Lord

"There is no way I would go to college here," was the first impression Doug Criswell had when his pastor, '80 alumnus Dale Denton, brought him to campus. After seeing where they would live, he didn't feel there was any need to pray about the decision. His wife, Denise, remarked, "Is that all the mall they have?" Criswell looks back on that as "the big battle, willing to pray and offering myself to do whatever the Lord wanted." His idea of college was something more like Wright State University in their home state of Ohio.

Criswell was saved eight years after their marriage, "on the same night his mother-in-law rededicated her life. Yet neither of us saw the other until we were at the altar." The Lord's leading into ministry came gradually and was confirmed on Baptist Men's Day. Denise acknowledged, "It took me a while to accept it."

Criswell knew he needed training, but without a high school diploma, felt he couldn't do college work. Mortician school looked like a good alternative. Following good advice, he helped a local funeral director. But "after we prepped two bodies, I knew that wasn't it!" He attended Boyce Bible School in Dayton for a year, completed his General Education Diploma, and moved to Clear Creek.

The Criswells feel right at home now and offer a good model for new students. Many know him as a hard worker, which isn't surprising after never missing "a day of work since age 13." He left a nine year job at Standard Register and moved without any employment guarantee. Their first semester he worked in the family life center and Denise cooked at Kelly Hall. In January 1989, Criswell was referred by the Christian Service office to supply at Newtown Baptist, Pineville. He preached that morning and that afternoon they called him as pastor. The Pineville, First mission now averages 30 to 35 and they remodeled the church and parsonage. He rejoices most in the eight who have been baptized.

Denise takes nine hours of classwork toward completion of the Christian worker's certificate. Somewhere they find time to parent Michelle, 8, and Stephanie, 6.

The Criswells agree on the most important lesson learned at Clear Creek: "We can depend on God. Everything we needed, God has provided."

PERSONNEL: Pastors—Paul Crews retired from Oscar, LaCenter. ... Marty Brown to Oscar, LaCenter, from Calvary, Brookport, Ill. ... Jack Studie to Sharon, Mayfield, from Faith, Wickliffe. ... Ronny Glisson to Hopewell, Arlington. ... Harold Hays Jr. to New Zion, McKee, from Indian Creek, McKee. ... Henry Smith to Rough Creek, Scottsville, from Akersville, Fountain Run. ... Tommy Knight to Central, Lebanon, from First, Fountain Run. ... Claud McCubbin to Akersville, Fountain Run, from Dover, Glasgow. ... Howard Furlong to Trammel Fork, Scottsville, from Lawrence Chapel, Smiths Grove. ... Charles Ziggler to Port Royal, Port Royal. ... Scott Courtney is no longer at Sulpher. ... Mark Bowen to Mt. Vernon, Waddy. ... Michael Duff to English, Stephensport. ... Gary Deane to Central, Hawesville. ... Truett Cocanougher resigned at Central, Maysville to become director of missions for Bracken Association. ... Owen Edwards to East Pittsburg, London. ... Neal Wade resigned Lakeside Mission, Nancy. Others—Eugene I. Enlow to Bethany, Louisville, as interim church administrator, not interim pastor as previously reported. ... James Hargrove of Immanuel, Lexington, and Eric Reed of Crestwood, Crestwood, have been named to the board of directors of Baptist Hospitals Foundation, Louisville. ... James Emery White has been named pastoral leadership consultant for preaching and worship at the church administration department, Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville. White most recently pastored First, Charlestown, Ind., and was previously assistant director of prospective student services at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville. ... David Lohff resigned as minister of

youth at Clifton, Louisville. ... Alan Hensley is now minister of music and youth at First, Clinton.

ORDINATIONS: Herbert Stephens to Ministry at Pilot Oak, Water Valley. ... Deacons—Chris Hopgood by Immanuel Temple, Henderson. ... Leroy Hall by Elsmere, Elsmere. ... Mike Turner by First, Newport.

EVENTS: The adult/youth regional church music festival scheduled for April

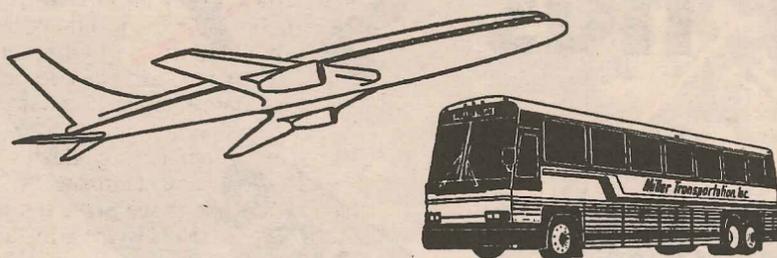
26 at Broadway Baptist Church in Louisville has been changed to Lyndon Baptist Church.

DEATHS: Cecil C. Laster, 79, of Owensboro, died Jan. 18 in Cincinnati. Laster served in several capacities in Kentucky during his 58 years in ministry. He was director of missions in Daviess-McLean and Christian County associations. He pastored Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, Shepherdsville, from 1969 until his retirement in 1976.



REMEMBERING TO PRAY—Royal Ambassadors at Crescent Hill Baptist Church in Louisville have established a ministry to troops involved in Operation Desert Storm and their families. The boys tied yellow ribbons on trees on the church property. They also made photos for each service person and her/his family, sending them with cards promising the church's prayer support. Sharon Schaefer, wife of Robert Schaefer, who has been stationed in the Persian Gulf region, joined the boys for this picture.

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Agencies to host booth

The Kentucky Baptist Convention's agencies and institutions have invited commonwealth Baptists to get acquainted with them during the 1991 KBC evangelism conference Feb. 25-26 at Severns Valley Baptist Church in Elizabethtown.

The KBC's nine agencies and institutions will sponsor a cheese-and-crackers refreshment booth in the display area.

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sunday school lessons

LESSONS FOR FEB. 17, 1991

Life and Work Series

Belief and obedience

John 14:6-11 On the night before his crucifixion Jesus calmly announced to his disciples that he was going to leave them. Thomas said: "Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?" Jesus replied: "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Jesus is the way from the guilt of sin, the wrath of God, and the power of sin. He is the way to God the Father and to heaven.

Philip said: "Lord, show us the Father

and it sufficeth us," acknowledging his faith in Jesus' ability to reveal God. Surely no one could ask for any clearer or stronger claim to deity than our Lord's answer to Philip: "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father."

Following his claim of oneness with the Father, Jesus gave an exhortation to faith, saying, "Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very work's sake." He requested that he be judged by his works, knowing full well that no mere human could perform such works as he did.

John 14:15 A Christian is a person who has experienced the pardoning love of Christ and in turn has an abiding love for him. Love for Christ will manifest itself in thinking, reading, hearing and talking about him, and in obeying him.

During his ministry among his disciples our Lord had guarded, protected, encouraged and guided them, but now that he was leaving them he assured them that the Holy Spirit was coming to be with them and to assume the responsibility of being another guardian of the same kind as he had been.

John 14:21-24 Those who truly love Christ are obedient to his commandments. If we love him we shall strive diligently to do the things that he wants and commands us to do. The only way that we can prove that we love the Savior is by our obedience to him.

International Series

The unforgiving servant

Matthew 18:21-37 Jesus' instruction about how a church should deal with an erring member raised a question in the

mind of Peter on personal responsibility of forgiveness. Peter was familiar with the rabbinical limit of the third offense, after which the obligation to forgive ceased. Seven was used as the number for perfection. Thinking that to forgive seven times would be the acme of perfection, Peter considered himself generous in suggesting that he forgive his brother who had sinned against him seven times. Jesus replied that forgiveness should be unlimited. Love demands that Christians forgive freely and fully.

In the parable Jesus related how a king demanded an accounting from his servants. The first one had been guilty of extravagance, wastefulness, and dishonesty. His misconduct resulted in an indebtedness of such proportions that there was no possibility of his paying it. In his helplessness the man prostrated himself at the feet of the king. He acknowledged his debt and requested forgiveness. He begged for time and promised to pay the enormous debt, which was an utter impossibility. The king freely forgave the man's indebtedness. God forgives all who ask to be forgiven fully of their sins.

Immediately after this experience, the man whose immense debt was forgiven, went out and found a fellow servant, who was indebted to him for a very small sum of money. He demanded payment at once. Unable to pay his debt, the second man fell down and made the same request that the first made of the king. This wretch denied the request and cast the man into prison. What a sad commentary on human nature! From this parable we learn that God will not forgive an unforgiving person. When any person has truly experienced the grace of God he is able to deal graciously with others.



Curtis C. Mooney
President
10801 Shelbyville Road
Middletown, KY 40243

homes for children

Changing a leopard's spots

Dr. Mooney is recovering from recent back surgery. In his absence, the KBHC column is being written by Robin Oldham, director of development/communications.

I am convinced that my life-long love for reading was nurtured by my father. I can recall quite vividly his evening ritual of positioning himself in his favorite chair to catch up on current events in each of the three newspapers he read each day.

Though most of Daddy's reading focused on newspapers and magazines, he would immerse himself in a book from time to time. One secular book that had particular influence on him was "My Shadow Ran Fast," the autobiography of Bill Sands. Sands, the son of a prominent but alcoholic father and seemingly uncaring mother, saw his world crumble at age 12 through a series of domestic battles and the eventual divorce of his parents. Aching for attention, Sands did anything he could to get it. Eventually, his thrill-seeking led to a life of crime and a prison term at San Quentin.

After arriving in prison, Sands found his life captured by discouragement and bitterness. But something happened to change Sands' life. Clinton Duffy was named the prison's new warden. He was instrumental in helping change Sands' attitude and outlook. Within a few years, with Duffy's encouragement, Sands won parole, became a respected citizen and founded the Seventh Step Foundation, a program to help other ex-prisoners make a successful adjustment back into society.

A skeptic once said to Warden Duffy, "You should know that leopards don't change their spots." Duffy replied, "You should know that I don't work with leopards. I work with men, and men change every day."

It is good to know that at Baptist Homes for Children we are able to reach hurting young people before they go as far astray as Bill Sands. We are fortunate, indeed, to have caring staff members whose lives are dedicated to helping young people in need.

Thanks to each of you for the role you play in this effective outreach.



Barkley Moore
President
Oneida Baptist Institute
Oneida, KY 40972

oneida journal

"You stuck with me ..."

The Oneida family is a large and extended one and daily I hear from the students I personally have been privileged to work with during 21 years of Oneida Baptist Institute service. Also I hear from and about many others going back 50, 60, 70 years. Generally a gift for Oneida's ongoing work comes with their letters.

For many years I have heard monthly from one of our 1978 graduates. A civil engineer and professional army man, now a captain, his gifts have increased with his promotions. For well over a year his donations have reached two hundred dollars monthly. He wrote recently: "I'm still in command with my unit in Germany, but will change command in about two weeks. I will move up to the headquarters, U.S. Army, Europe, where I'll

work in the directorate for communications and information. I'm under consideration for a teaching position at West Point Military Academy. If selected, I will go to graduate school courtesy of the U.S. Army. I'm not sure when we'll be back in the U.S. but my wife and I will visit Oneida and see what changes you've made. We still manage to travel a bit. Recently we climbed the highest mountain in Germany, and two weeks later were in Berlin where Kathy ran in the Berlin marathon! The tempo of training for our troops is being increased, particularly in chemical defense. Thank you so much for your words of concern and support in your last letter. It really lifted my spirits on what, otherwise, was a rough day. God bless the faculty and students of Oneida. You represent the greatness and goodness America stands for."

Another dedicated and outstanding Christian young man, who graduated in 1987 after four years with us wrote, "My platoon is getting ready for Saudi Arabia. Two out of four companies in my battalion have left for Saudi. I was commissioned a 2nd Lt. several weeks ago. Please be praying that God's will be done in my life. 'For the Mighty One has done great things for me, holy is his name.' (Luke 1:49)

Another of our graduates writes from near the front lines in Saudi. "I am proud I was a part of Oneida. You definitely had your times with me. You stuck with me and worked with me when I thought I didn't need any help. Now I realize that everything I do is partly because of Oneida. My Mom and Dad know and I know I might never get to look them in the eyes again. They know and you know the risks we have. If we do not see one another again, they know I did the right thing. I'm glad I have a friend like you. Keep the work up."

Another 1990 graduate, now a squad leader, writes, "They have painted some of our trucks 'sand' color. I think we are going soon. I will try to call if we are alerted. It is up to God, if he chooses for me to go or stay. Keep me in your prayers as I keep you in mine."

Then one of our 1989 graduates writes of her boyfriend and classmate: "I haven't been able to see Steve for one and a half years. He's in the army and now in Saudi Arabia. I really miss him. All I can do is wait like he waited for me. Isn't life ironic? I'm going to college to get a degree in nursing. If Steve comes back, we'll be married. If not, my dreams are shattered. Pray for me and Steve. We both miss OBI."

A recent letter from one of our students carrying nearly a "B" average at college and struggling to make ends meet stated, "I ask myself why you cared so much for me when I was just another 'pothead' with a bad attitude. I guess you could see through the drugs and the attitude. You had faith and hope in me when no one else did, not even myself. You gave me chances when no one else would. I'll never forget what Oneida has done for me."

Another writes: "Yes, it's me, probably your most troublesome ex-student. I write to tell you that I am finally growing up. I did a lot of things at Oneida I am not proud of. I would like to apologize for all of my rebellious and disrespectful behavior. Every day I think of Oneida and how I took advantage of the school and you. This past year was a big year for me, Mr. Moore. A lot has changed in my life. When I die I want to have accomplished something. I want my children to be proud. I learned a great deal from your stern discussions. I always knew there was a Lord but never really consulted him until now."

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What a blessing it is to have so many dedicated individuals committed to helping others in the name of Jesus in our hospitals. Often, the first and last person a patient or visitor sees at our hospitals is a volunteer. The helping hand the volunteers extend to each of us cannot be measured in dollars and cents. Their positive attitude always sets the example for everyone they come in contact with.

The words of encouragement and sage advice they give has helped many a person through difficult times. The tireless efforts they put forth and all the fund-raising events they have during the year makes the rest of us seem so insignificant. You can't out-give a volunteer.

Jesus said we are all equal. A lot of us have some catching up to do to become equal to a volunteer! So, the next time you see a volunteer, tell them you appreciate them for helping in Jesus' healing ministry.

If you'd like to make a gift in honor of a volunteer or an employee, staff member, or doctor who has that volunteer spirit, please contact Baptist Hospitals Foundation. Your gift can be used in a variety of ways to help others through the Baptist Hospitals of Kentucky.

Any questions or comments concerning this article, Baptist Hospitals Inc. or Baptist Hospitals Foundation should be directed to Charles W. Cox Jr., vice president of Baptist Hospitals Foundation, BHI Corporate Complex, 4007 Kresge Way, Louisville, KY 40207 (502) 896-5000.

Workshop addresses clergy hugging

by Wilmer Thorkelson

Is it okay for ministers to hug their parishioners?

It depends on the kind of a hugs a counselor told clergy who attended a sexual abuse awareness workshop in St. Paul, Minn. It was sponsored by the St. Paul Area Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

"The reality is that the ministerial-parishioner relationship is inherently seductive even without doing anything wrong," said Gary Schoener, a licensed psychologist who is executive director of the Walk-In Counseling Center in Minneapolis.

That explains why if ministers and other counselors are careless, "trouble happens so quickly," he said.

"I have interviewed dozens of pastors and therapists who shouldn't hug in any kind of close fashion because they can't handle it," he said.

"The parishioners vary. Some find a hug sexually stimulating, some don't. The real issue is that the minister can't handle it. So one of the first things you have to ask yourself with regard to any behavior is: How does it impact on you? Why are you doing it?"

He said, "appearances do count" and "there is no question if someone is hugging a tremendous amount in church, people get uneasy."

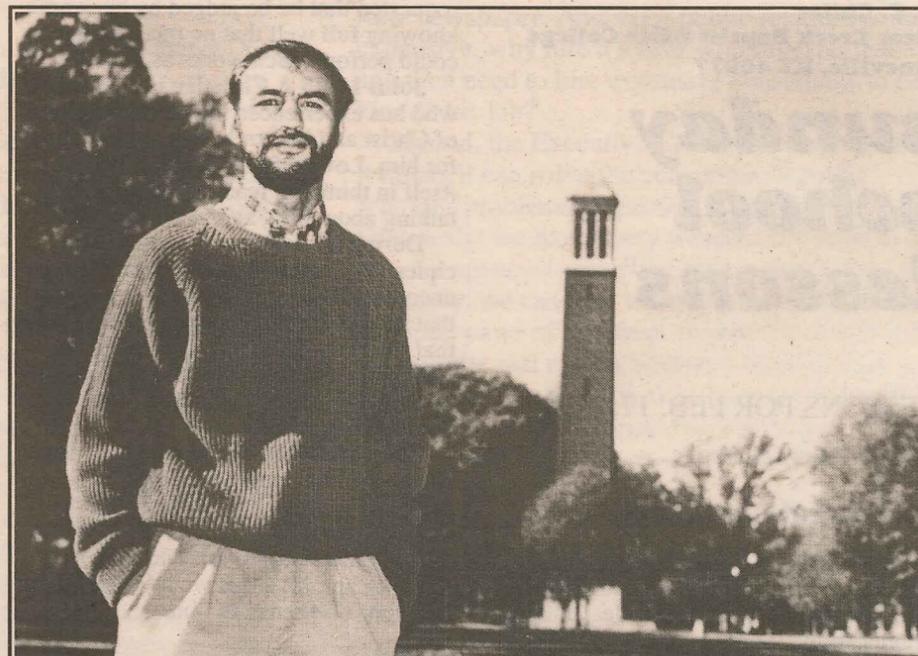
Schoener evaluates cases for a Catholic diocese and told about "a big battle" that had taken place between a bishop and a

priest over the priest's hugging: "The bishop said some parishioners love it and some are uneasy about it.

Clergy and workers with youth should be "very careful" in touching adolescents, who are "entering into sexual feelings and experiences much earlier than they used to,"

Schoener warned.

Hugging, he said, can be a type of communion and a touch can have a healing effect in some situations. But he questioned the wisdom of a minister hugging someone for the purpose of reconciliation after there has been some kind of blowup. (RNS)



PROFESSOR SUES FOR FREEDOM TO EXPRESS BELIEFS IN CLASSROOM—The University of Alabama wants Phil Bishop, assistant professor of exercise physiology, to stop talking about his religious beliefs in the classroom. Bishop says he shouldn't have to quit and has sued the university. (RNS photo)

Growing movement follows Laws of Noah

by Darrell Turner

More than 250 people who practice the Laws of Noah as taught in the five books of Moses but who are not Jews gathered at a former Baptist church in Athens, Tenn., for their fifth annual conference.

Although some of them were ordained into the Christian ministry, they no longer consider themselves Christians. And although they engage in many of the practices of Orthodox Jews, they don't want to convert to Judaism. They are known as Noachides, or Children of Noah, and they

represent a small but growing movement that is returning to practices of some Gentiles of the Greco-Roman period.

"You could call it Judaism for Gentiles," said James D. Tabor, professor of religious studies at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte and a member of the advisory council of the movement.

Tabor, who offered biblical studies at the conference, said Noachides "tend to be, by and large, disenfranchised former Christians. They do not denounce belief in Jesus, but they're not in any way Christians. The most they would say is that he (Jesus) was

a great teacher."

Noachides are Gentiles who are convinced that Jesus was not God but who want to identify with the Jewish tradition of ethical monotheism without actually converting to Judaism, Tabor, a former minister of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), explained.

His own studies of ancient Judaism and Christian origins have led him to conclude that "the early Christians were a Noachide messianic movement in that they were believing in Jesus as Messiah, not necessarily as God," he said.

In an unpublished article on the roots of the movement, Tabor noted that the Talmud mandates that all humans should follow the seven "laws of Noah," traditionally enumerated as prohibitions of idolatry, blasphemy, bloodshed, sexual sins, theft, eating flesh or blood from a living animal and the obligation to establish legal systems to administer justice.

One area of disagreement in the Noachide is how much contact it should have with Orthodox Judaism both in the United States and Israel. Several Orthodox scholars and rabbis have been working with some Noachides to get official recognition by the Chief Rabbinate in Israel. But other participants, like Tabor, favor keeping the movement independent. (RNS)

Student ecumenical movement rebirthed

by Bill Wolfe

An ecumenical gathering of college students in Louisville drew only about half the expected number of participants, but organizers say the mere fact that the event took place bodes well for rebirth of the student ecumenical movement in the United States.

The five-day event was a watershed of sorts, representing the first large-scale gathering of students to take place in two decades under joint sponsorship of Protestant denominations, including the United Methodist Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Presbyterian Church

(U.S.A.) and several of the historic black churches.

Donald G. Shockley, chaplain at Emory University in Atlanta and a workshop leader, said the gathering of 2,100 college youths and other recent student convocations suggest the possibility of a resurgent ecumenical Christian student movement in the United States.

"We believe the Spirit is moving in the lives of the mainline churches. We believe the student conferences are evidence of that. There are many pitfalls along the way," he said. "But we see the embers beginning to glow." (RNS)

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President Bush urges pro-lifers to continue efforts

Stories by Tom Strode

President George Bush and pro-life leaders challenged more than 25,000 persons gathered in Washington to persevere in their crusade to protect the unborn.

The centerpiece of the day's activities was the March for Life, which began on the first anniversary of Roe v. Wade, the Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion.

This year's march had the disadvantage of threats of terrorism in the nation's capital because of war in the Persian Gulf area. Such concern held down the attendance—"no two ways about it," a March for Life spokesman said. National Park Service police, who said they counted participants as they marched, estimated the crowd at 25,000. Nellie Gray, president of March for Life, said she judged the attendance to be 50,000 from the rally platform.

They cheered when President Bush said in a telephone hookup, "... I'm pleased that my voice is part of the growing chorus that simply says, 'Choose life.'

"As I look back at past years' Rally for Life, I am encouraged by the progress which has taken place. Attempts by Congress to expand funding, federal funding, for abortions have been defeated, and the Supreme Court has taken welcome steps toward reversing its Roe v. Wade decision.

"Despite these successes, much remains to be done ...," Bush said. "And you, the thousands of tireless volunteers who have gathered here from across the United States, must make it your goal to keep this issue alive and predominant in the halls of Congress, the courts and in the minds of the American people."

Congressman Robert Dornan, R.-Cal., paralleled the struggle against abortion to the war in the Middle East. He spoke of the United States servicemen who had died or were missing in a "terrible" war and said that there also was a conflict in progress at home.

"The abortionists in this country are perpetrating an American holocaust," Dornan said, "and if we will send our prayers up to God Almighty to save these Americans and to bring an end to the agony of the Iraqi

and Kuwaiti people, should we do any less for this unbelievable slaughter of innocent human life? We must end the holocaust."

Earlier in the day, about 20 persons representing pro-life groups met with Vice President Dan Quayle and Chief of Staff John Sununu at the White House. Among the participants was James A. Smith, director of government relations for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

"We were pleased that the vice president and chief of staff promised that the admini-

stration would continue its opposition to federal funding of abortion," Smith said, "but some of us were disappointed that similar commitments were not made on an executive order banning fetal tissue experimentation and on other requests made by group members."

A variety of religious and pro-life groups shared the platform at the March for Life rally. Included were the Christian Life Commission, represented by Smith, as well as the Family Research Council, Christian Action Council, National Right to Life Committee and American Life League.

Southern Baptists were among those who marched from the rally site on the mall up Constitution Avenue to the Supreme Court building.

Twenty-two members of Siloam Baptist Church in Powdersville, S.C., traveled to Washington on a bus for the event, said Michael Cloer, pastor of the church.

"It's not a commitment to a cause," Cloer said as he marched near the Capitol. "It's a commitment to Christ. He said, 'I came that you might have life,' so every Christian is involved in life, which we believe begins at conception.

"I believe everything that's going on right now is because of the judgment of God upon us allowing this brutal murder to take place."

Some of the church's members have been involved in Operation Rescue for two years, Cloer said. He pointed to a banner carried by church members quoting Proverbs 24:11 and said, "... it's a command to rescue those that are innocently sentenced to death. So really we don't have much of a choice in it. We're commanded to." (BP)



ANTI-ABORTION ADVOCATES MARCH ON ANNIVERSARY—Anti-abortion advocates marched past the Supreme Court on the 18th anniversary of the Roe v. Wade decision, which legalized abortion. (RNS Photo/Reuters)

Church opens eyes to ministry with sanctity of life seminar

A Maryland church took the Southern Baptist emphasis on sanctity of human life and turned it into an outreach that stretched beyond its membership into three states and the District of Columbia.

Glen Burnie Baptist Church, located south of Baltimore, sponsored a sanctity of life seminar this winter. The Southern Baptist Convention observed Sanctity of Human Life Sunday the following day.

The seeds for Glen Burnie's creative approach were sown during a conversation among Woods Culpepper, the church's minister of education and outreach, and some friends. His question: How can our church make Sanctity of Human Life Sunday into an emphasis that equips members and changes lives?

The result was a seminar that trained participants to combat abortion and minister to its victims as well as have an impact in the lives of those touched by AIDS, sexual and physical abuse, drug and alcohol addiction, homelessness and hunger. Sessions educated, motivated and prepared Christians in each of these areas.

One-hundred sixty-eight people registered, including members of about 10 Southern Baptist and 15 non-SBC churches from Delaware, Maryland, Virginia and Washington, Culpepper said.

The seminar fulfilled its purpose, he said. "A lot of eyes were opened. We cannot tell people to minister without giving them tools."

One of those who helped equip participants was Terry Rubley, Maryland director of Women Exploited By Abortion. After the session she said evangelical churches have made some progress in the last five years in ministering to post-abortion women.

"For aborted women, there has been the least amount of ministry and coverage," she said of the pro-life outreach of churches. "I think we're just at the tip of the iceberg of

healing hurt. I think the church is still waking up to this issue."

The post-abortion woman is "a hidden tragedy" in the evangelical church, Rubley said. The number of such women in churches is "awesome," she added.

Rubley shared with her seminar group she had made a profession of faith in Christ as a young girl but had three abortions by the time she was in her early 20s. Soon thereafter, God did a work of renewal and restoration in her life that began the healing process. She said abortion not only can cause physical problems but a destructive psychological pattern of guilt, grief, denial, depression and bitterness. Churches can help post-abortion women by hosting speakers who have been healed by God after their own abortions, she said.

"The only thing that will cause a spark to

get them to turn is to have someone who will not condemn them and will love them," said the mother of three living children.

Lovingkindness, not judgment, also is crucial in ministering amid the AIDS epidemic, said Eric Hoheisel, executive manager of Love and Action. Hoheisel led a session on the church's response to AIDS. Love and Action, based in Annapolis, Md., is a Christian ministry to people who have AIDS or who are HIV-positive.

"Our churches need to be places where people find forgiveness, restoration and hope," he said. "They need to be those places, and they're not right now."

Many church members have the same emotional responses to AIDS as do persons with the disease—fear, anger and denial, Hoheisel said, adding, those reactions are only manifested differently.

Judge rules anti-obscenity NEA rules unconstitutional

A federal judge in Los Angeles has ruled that the anti-obscenity commitment required of grant recipients by the National Endowment for the Arts in 1989-90 was unconstitutional.

U.S. District Judge John G. Davies said in his decision that the requirement infringed upon freedom of speech.

The ruling's effect is limited to the extent that the anti-obscenity pledge was not included in the latest congressional reauthorization of the NEA. Instead, Congress directed the chairman to make certain that grants are made "taking into consideration general standards of decency and respect for the diverse beliefs and values of the American public."

"We urge the Administration to appeal the trial judge's decision," said Michael K. Whitehead, general counsel of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission. "Although the affidavit requirement is no

longer a part of the NEA law, the case raises the important issue of the power of government to oversee the use of public funds.

"Every taxpayer is required to sign an oath on his IRS Form 1040 declaring that the contents are true, correct and complete. In effect, he must promise not to violate the Internal Revenue Code and the laws of perjury. If the taxpayers who fund NEA grants must sign an affidavit agreeing to obey the law, why is it unfair to ask the artists who take NEA grants to sign an affidavit simply agreeing not to break the law?"

"The NEA affidavit requirement does not, in our view, violate an artist's free speech rights," Whitehead said. "Obscenity is not protected by the First Amendment, according to longstanding Supreme Court precedent. The artist has no legal right to produce obscene art with public funds.

"It's not just the people that have AIDS that need compassion and understanding," Hoheisel said. "It's the people in our churches who have the fears and the anxiety and the judgment."

Churches need to have a gracious balance in the way that they approach AIDS and those who have it, he said.

"The church always wants to be right," Hoheisel said. "We have to take this moral high ground, so our society doesn't crumble around us. That's very important.

"We need to have a compassionate response and still stand on the word of God as being truth. It's a difficult place to walk. I think Christ can shine out all the brighter if we can walk that line.

"I think (AIDS) is one of the greatest opportunities for Christian witness that we've had in this century." (BP)

"If the courts ultimately adopt Judge Davies' rationale, voiding any and all content restrictions on tax supported grants, then this becomes a compelling argument for abolition of the NEA. If the courts take away the power of government to regulate the use of tax funds for lawful public purposes, then the program is out of control and should be abolished."

Congress' anti-obscenity language was adopted after revelations were made in 1989 of NEA grants for such projects as a crucifix submerged in urine and homoerotic photographs. The legislation required that grant recipients during the 1989-90 budget year could not produce or exhibit art that was obscene. The NEA included the text of the law in the guidelines it distributed to the grant and fellowship recipients. For 15 years, it has asked artists to sign an agreement to abide by the endowment's guidelines, an NEA spokesman said. (BP)



Focus on WMU



"I am a professional woman who has little time for activities beyond my job, but I feel the need for being involved in missions in some meaningful way. I find that Solo Flight in *Contempo* magazine keeps me sensitive to the needs of the world, aware of God's instructions and promises through His Word, and challenged to be all I can be in my place in this corner of the world."

Question: Who am I?
Answer: A member of WMU.

"I find my work with Baptist Women to be the most stimulating activity of my week. Being involved in mission studies, participating in mission activities, studying the Bible—I just can't get enough of learning about and doing missions! I know not all women have the time to give as I do, but I feel blessed by being in all facets of Baptist Women."

Question: Who am I?
Answer: A member of WMU.

"I have never been able to attend the meetings of the Baptist Women in my church, but I am an IN Team member. I get *Royal Service* each month and enjoy the articles, Bible study and mission study materials. Prayer Patterns is a part of the daily devotional times for our family. I think it is important to teach our children to pray for missions."

Question: Who am I?
Answer: A member of WMU.

"I am just seven years old, but my parents are surprised at how much I know about God's work in the world. GAs in my church is a lot of fun. I invited my next door neighbor who doesn't go to church anywhere to come with me. Now she's a regular member of GA, too."

Question: Who am I?
Answer: A member of WMU.

"A group of us who are widows meet each week in a missions prayer group. It's also a sort of support group for us. We never really talk about the problems we have as widows, but somehow we have many things in common which draw us close together. We use Prayer Patterns and pray for our missionaries. Now we have one other important aspect that ties us together."

Question: Who am I?
Answer: A member of WMU.

"My favorite day of the week is Wednesday because that's the day I go to Mission Friends. Our leaders have the most fun things for us to do! Once we went to take some fruit to some people who live in a retirement home. My mom said not many people go to visit there, but I like singing songs for them. One woman cried. When I grow up, I want to be a missionary."

Question: Who am I?
Answer: A member of WMU.

A single professional who follows Solo Flight. A woman who gives many hours each week in the WMU activities and organizations. An IN Team member whose reading of *Royal Service* brings the world into her heart. A seven-year-old who regularly attends Girls in Action meetings. A group of widows forming a Baptist Women prayer group and using Prayer Patterns for intercessory prayer for missionaries. A four-year-old who is learning early in life to "do missions."

Are these true, bona-fide members of Woman's Missionary Union? Absolutely!

Perhaps you think of WMU as only attending a meeting. But WMU is much more than that! The bottom-line of WMU membership is missions involvement. Whether you choose to participate in a group or prefer to study and pray for missions individually, the purpose of WMU is to help women, girls and preschoolers find ways to learn about missions, pray for missionaries and their work, and give to the missions cause.

A WMU with excited, missions-committed leadership, the courage to try new things, the flexibility to match interest with ministry, a desire to involve the whole church in missions—that's successful missions organization!

by Dellanna O'Brien, executive director, WMU, SBC