

Kentucky's 40 church starts among tops in SBC

by Marv Knox, Editor

Kentucky Baptists have become leaders in starting churches, thanks to sacrifice and priority.

The Kentucky Baptist Convention started 40 new congregations in 1990, one of the best totals in the Southern Baptist Convention, according to a survey conducted by the SBC Home Mission Board.

In fact, the KBC's 33 new Anglo congregations ranked fourth in the national convention, said Floyd Tidsworth Jr., director of the board's new church extension division.

"The increase in new churches must be credited, humanly speaking, to the priorities adopted by the KBC executive board in 1984," said William W. Marshall, the convention's executive secretary-treasurer.

"Out of these priorities came the 'Mission Kentucky' project, with a goal to start 400 new churches by 1990," he noted.

"Together with the state convention's emphasis has been the splendid excitement and cooperation of churches and associations in the state. These were the ultimate 'movers'; these are the folks who put hands and feet to the vision.

"It is truly remarkable to see this growth

in a state considered to be 'relatively churched.' The needs were there; God led some folks to see and declare the need, and he led others to meet those needs. The results have been one of the finest examples of Baptist cooperation in our day."

Kentucky Baptists don't intend to rest on those successes, said Ken Forman, the convention's church extension director.

"We're continuing in the spirit of Mission Kentucky," he said. "Our goal is to begin new work with an approach similar to what we've had before."

Mission Kentucky produced almost 300 churches through 1990, and that total has

climbed to about 325, he said.

"Any place where there's a cluster of people, we can start a new work," Forman insisted. That includes areas not traditionally reached well by churches, such as multi-family housing developments, mobile home parks and the state's growing ethnic/foreign language communities, he said.

Now that Mission Kentucky officially has ended, the task has become more difficult, since MK's church-starting grants no longer are available.

"The grants were one of the biggest incentives," Forman explained. "They pro-

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Southern Seminary covenant ensures conservative shift

by Marv Knox, Editor

Faculty and trustees will cooperate to make Southern Baptist Theological Seminary a more conservative school, according to a "covenant renewal" document approved by trustees last week.

The covenant softens the rigid guidelines for faculty employment and advancement that were set in place by trustees last fall. But it also ensures that only "conservative evangelical scholars" will be added to the faculty until the seminary "has achieved faculty balance."

Faculty approved the covenant 38-5 March 28; trustees ratified it 49-7 April 8. Seminary President Roy Honeycutt said the votes could avert a crisis at the Louisville school.

The seminary has been engulfed in controversy since April 1990, when conservatives took control of the trustee board, instituting their own slate of officers. At that meeting, trustees also received a 16-page document, "The Cover-up at Southern Seminary," accusing Honeycutt and five professors of doctrinal infidelity.

The controversy deepened last September. Trustees convened a called session to consider a Southern Baptist Convention motion calling for the removal of the trustee who wrote the "cover-up" paper, Jerry Johnson of Aurora, Colo.

Trustees treated Johnson's conduct and concerns as two matters. They accepted a letter of apology from Johnson and then addressed the matter of faculty orthodoxy.

Trustees decided not to reconsider faculty matters previously examined by the board. But they determined that the 1987



DECISIVE VOTE—Southern Baptist Theological Seminary trustees approved a "covenant renewal" with faculty last week in Louisville. The covenant ensures the conservative shift of the seminary. (SBTS photo by Tony Aja)

report of the Southern Baptist Peace Committee would "serve as a guideline for the employment of temporary and permanent faculty, the promotion of existing faculty and the granting of tenure."

Adherence to the Peace Committee re-

port would require faculty to affirm beliefs that Adam and Eve were real people, the historical accounts and reports of miracles in the Bible are true and the named authors did write the biblical books attributed to them.

Faculty and alumni protested the new policy, saying it misused the Peace Committee report and violated orderly processes by which the seminary operates.

The controversy expanded, as two accrediting agencies announced they would investigate the seminary.

Subsequently, the trustee executive committee approved formation of a special seven-member committee to work with Honeycutt and a seven-member faculty committee and hammer out the disagreements.

The combined committee's work resulted in the covenant renewal document.

The covenant describes itself as "a spiritual and theological affirmation of our covenantal intentions as trustees, administrators and faculty" and pledges "mutual respect, cooperation and effort to move toward common processes which will maintain the vitality, integrity and mission of the seminary."

The covenant also affirms cooperation in "preserving the Christian heritage of Southern Seminary and in translating that heritage into an inclusive ministry to all Southern Baptists" and to "be sensitive to conservative viewpoints."

The Abstract of Principles, which has guided the seminary since its founding in 1859, remains the "confessional guideline for all teaching within the seminary," the covenant states. It also asserts trustees' commitment to academic freedom and faculty accountability, as well as faculty and administrators' commitment to implement policies developed by trustees.

The heart of the document is a three-

continued on page 6, "Seminary faculty ..."

FMB re-elects Hancock, hears Mid-East report

by Robert O'Brien

Trustees of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board re-elected Kentuckian Bill Hancock as chairman, appointed 31 missionaries and heard a report on efforts to aid Kurds and other refugees of the Persian Gulf war.

In other action at the April 8-10 meeting in Baltimore, trustees heard a progress report on a study of the board's facilities and location and held a memorial service in honor of FMB personnel who have died.

Hancock, pastor of Highview Baptist Church in Louisville, was re-elected to a second one-year term as chairman of the 89-member board.

The appointments, including 25 new missionaries and six reappointees, bring the total force to 3,880 missionaries assigned to 121 countries.

About 7,600 people, mainly from churches in the host Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware, attended an April 9 appointment service in the Baltimore Arena

featuring an 800-voice choir, a parade of world flags and a challenge to new missionaries by FMB President R. Keith Parks.

Seventy-seven people came forward to make spiritual decisions at the end of the service, including 51 committing to foreign mission service.

Tim Brendle, the board staff member named to head up the board's response to the crisis in the Persian Gulf, told trustees strategies already are underway to aid thousands of refugees in cooperation with Southern Baptist personnel and other Christians.

The board already has released an initial \$130,000 for immediate needs in the Gulf region, Brendle said. "The doors of opportunity are opening" in the region, he added, urging trustees to pray that evangelicals will "pay the price without getting the glory for it so that God might accomplish what he wants to do in the Middle East."

Don Kammerdiener, the board's executive vice president, led the service in memory of 11 people related to foreign missions who have died in the past six months. They

included Darla Lovell, a journeyman who died in her sleep March 24 in Uganda, and Lynda Bethea, a missionary murdered March 27 by highway robbers in Kenya.

Trustees viewed a video message from Ralph Bethea, Lynda's husband, in which he said his wife's last comment concerning her attackers was, "They just need to know Jesus."

Kammerdiener, whose daughter, Carol Hawkins, was among missionary appointees, also told trustees he will present a report in June suggesting alternative approaches the board can use to study its facilities.

His report, requested by trustees, grew out of a motion last October by trustee Ron Wilson of California that the board develop criteria it could use if it decides to consider a change of location.

Hancock, noting rumors around the Southern Baptist Convention indicate the board plans to move, said the study will examine "facilities and resource manage-

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Parents 'desensitized' to bad shows

by Chip Alford

As society's moral values continue to decay, an increasing number of parents are becoming "desensitized" to the harmful effects of some movies and television programs on their children, a Nashville-based marriage and family therapist said.

"Parents need to evaluate not only what they are letting their children watch, but what they are watching themselves," Rebekah Land said in an April 10 conference titled, "Helping Parents Evaluate Television and Movies." It was part of the a preschool/children's workers' seminar sponsored by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

Some Christian parents take their children along with them to R-rated movies and consider it "normal behavior," Land said. "They have been seduced (by the world).

They have become desensitized" to the immoral sexual behavior, violence and other anti-Christian themes that occur in many movies and TV programs.

"Parents need to evaluate where they are and think about what they are passively agreeing to," she said.

To help decide which programs their children should watch, Land suggested parents ask several questions, such as: "Who is the hero? Does the show present themes counter to Christian values? What kind of lifestyles are being portrayed? How is the family portrayed?"

Parents should be concerned not only with the overt content of entertainment programming, Land said, but with "covert" messages from programs that can invade the subconscious minds of children.

"A common covert message in many movies and television programs is that

happiness is whatever feels good," she explained. "That is so contrary to what we believe as Christians, but people are just accepting it."

Discussing the impact on children of violence in movies, Land said parents should remember that children's fears can be exaggerated by what they see on screen.

Land encouraged parents to watch shows with their children and discuss any mature themes or anti-Christian values presented.

"We have too many families today that cannot put their feelings into words," she said. "As a result, families don't know how to communicate or solve problems, and that is very dangerous."

She also suggested that parents limit the amount of TV viewing by their children and provide alternative modes of entertainment such as reading, sports and family outings. (BP)

Volunteers needed for Atlanta project

by Mark Wingfield

Volunteers are urgently needed for witnessing and ministry projects related to Crossover Atlanta, the evangelistic emphasis prior to this year's Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting.

Local churches are willing to host more volunteers than have committed to help with door-to-door visitation, said Bobby Sunderland, Crossover Atlanta coordinator.

A one-day Soul Winning Encounter is planned for Saturday, June 1. Volunteers do not have to commit to a three-day evangelism project announced earlier to participate in this event, he said.

To sign up, contact Sunderland at the SBC Home Mission Board, 1350 Spring St. NW, Atlanta 30367, (404) 898-7687. (BP)

'Baptist Hour' celebrates 50th birthday in Kentucky

by Marv Knox, Editor

One of the world's longest-running radio programs brought its 50th birthday party to Kentucky last week.

"The Baptist Hour," Southern Baptists' weekly worship program, produced one of 16 special anniversary episodes at Farmdale Baptist Church in Louisville April 10.

"The Baptist Hour" has been produced by the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission since Jan. 5, 1941.

The program is broadcast weekly on 550 stations across the United States and 500 stations on the Armed Forces Radio Network, said Ed Malone, RTVC vice president for radio.

"The Baptist Hour" is one of the most wonderful radio preaching programs," said Farmdale Pastor C. Wyman Copass, an RTVC trustee. Twenty-one Kentucky stations broadcast the show, Copass noted. In fact, WAVE Radio in Louisville was one of 17 stations that broadcast the first program of "The Baptist Hour," he added.

RTVC President Jack Johnson preached the sermon for the Farmdale program, which should be broadcast in about five weeks.

Speaking from Jesus' model prayer, he said Christians should focus on the prayer's priority—bringing in God's kingdom and doing God's will.

"We at the Radio and Television Commission have tried to proclaim the kingdom of God for over 50 years," Johnson said. The focus of building that kingdom is making sure that "all mankind everywhere will be brought under the will of God" and "liberating people from bondage."

The Farmdale program also featured Wayne Ward, a theology professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville and a former "Baptist Hour" speaker; William W. Marshall, executive secretary-treasurer of the Kentucky Baptist Convention; Russell Bennett, executive director of Long Run Baptist Association; and Farmdale Church musicians.

The 16-church traveling anniversary series and the 50th birthday celebration will wrap up in June in Atlanta, when the Southern Baptist Convention holds its annual meeting, Malone said.

In addition to producing six radio programs, the RTVC operates two television networks.



SOVIET BIBLES—The International Bible Society and the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association have coordinated the Moscow Project, a massive Bible distribution plan for the Soviet Union. The outreach extends across Russia and most other U.S.S.R. republics. Interest in spiritual issues has increased since the government lifted its ban on religious practice, and public evangelization and scripture distribution now is possible. (Photo by RNS)

Foreign Mission Board to study political-change response flexibility

continued from page 1

ment to maximize the stewardship of Southern Baptists."

"The word 'relocation' is not the important word," he said, adding that other Southern Baptist agencies have done studies of facilities. "The important word is 'stewardship' of resources and facilities."

"If we're where God wants us to be as far as our address is concerned right now, all of us ought to feel good if God says 'Stay there' after the study is over," Hancock said. "If we're not where God wants us to be on this corner or where he would want us to be in the year 2025, then we ought to be doing something to help those who will follow us to have some direction in getting where God wants us to be."

In other matters:

• Parks announced Zeb Moss, associate area director for Eastern and Southern Africa, has been named to succeed Bill O'Brien as executive director of public affairs. O'Brien left the board March 1 to become director of a new global strategies center at Samford University. Moss, 61, is a 32-year mission veteran whose work has ranged from media consultation to mission administration.

'PrayerLine' gets new number

The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's toll-free "PrayerLine" is getting a new number: 1-800-395-PRAY.

Thousands of Southern Baptists call the PrayerLine regularly for specific missions prayer requests and news updates. The recorded messages change twice each week.

The new number is 1-800-395-PRAY, or 1-800-395-7729, effective May 1. It will replace 1-800-ALL SEEK. Use of a different phone company will enable the

Announcement of his selection came after trustee officers and committee chairs meeting with Parks agreed to go along with Parks' desire to keep the public affairs job separate from the office of communications. Some trustees had felt public affairs and communications should be combined.

The public affairs post involves relationships with other SBC entities and direction of the FMB's Global Desk, which monitors the status of global evangeliza-

tion and serves as a liaison with other Christian groups.

• The trustee strategy committee asked a committee of staff and trustees to study the board's flexibility when political changes provide unexpected opportunities around the world. The committee will review recent response to situations in Eastern Europe and the Middle East.

• The trustee committee for Europe, the Middle East and North Africa asked staff to

study overall theological needs in Eastern Europe through their normal process, including needs of the Baptist seminary in Oradea, Romania, and report back as soon as possible.

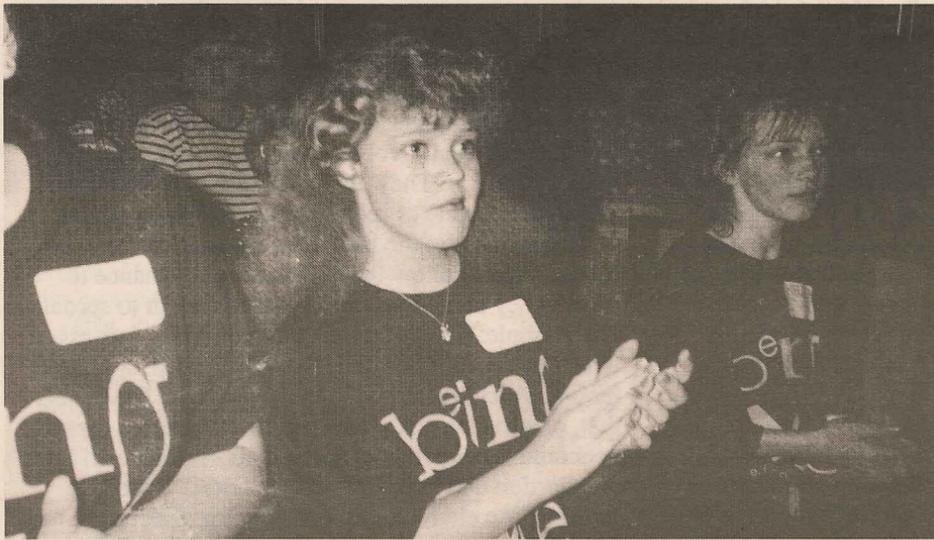
The committee asked for the study after Parks urged that response to needs in Oradea, which a number of trustees support, come through normal channels of evaluation.

• Trustees amended an action from their February meeting that would have eliminated, by attrition at the end of their present terms, 12 Virginia trustees elected to the board.

The amendment, which will be sent to the SBC Executive Committee and then to the full convention for approval, makes reelection possible for any of the 12 eligible for a second term. After that, the positions would cease to exist.

Boards and agencies across the SBC adopted the practice of extra local trustees in earlier years when they held fewer meetings, transportation was time-consuming, quorums were hard to achieve and trustees needed to be available to conduct business between sessions. The extra trustees were elected in addition to those elected on a population-representation basis. (BP)

Acteens learn to be themselves at state conclave



JUST BEING HERSELF—This young lady, one of nearly 1,100 attending the Kentucky Acteens conference April 5-6 at Florence, enthusiastically proclaimed the weekend theme, "Being Me," emblazoned on her shirt.

by Denise Spencer
State Correspondent

Some 1,100 adolescent girls celebrated "Being Me" during the 1991 state Acteens conference.

In the process, they discovered some things individuals can do together.

"Being me sounds so simple, yet it is so profound," Phyllis Baker, Southern Baptist foreign missionary to Spain, told her largely female teen-age audience at Florence Baptist Church in Florence April 5-6.

"There is nothing we can do that will have any influence on our salvation. It is a free gift," she added.

Baker observed: "My job, your job, is to be an instrument of God's grace to a lost and dying world."

Baptist Campus Minister Rick Hower-ton, of Northern Kentucky University in Highland Heights, urged the young women to honestly examine their gifts, abilities and limitations.

"God can use you best when you are yourself, not trying to be somebody else," he said.

"Being me is a continual process. It's not just one plan," Colleen Walker Burroughs suggested. "But if you have faith, you will have peace."

Burroughs, who grew up the daughter of missionaries living in Africa, recalled the time hers was the first white family to move into a black township in South Africa.

"You can't always figure why God has you in a certain place. But if you have faith, you will have peace," she explained.

"The Acteen convention gives those three Acteens from the country church the chance to see 1,000 others just like them," Grace Powell, conference director, said.

Powell, Acteens-Campus Baptist Young Women consultant for Woman's Missionary Union of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, expressed pleasure in the crowd and its enthusiastic response in exploring various types of missions.

Baptist Student Union chooses UK junior for top post

by James H. Cox, Associate Editor

Election of state Baptist Student Union officers and a commissioning service for 71 Kentucky collegians who will be summer missionaries highlighted the BSU's leadership training conference.

Phillip Walker, 20, a University of Kentucky junior from Oak Grove, was elected state BSU president for the 1991-92

academic year.

He will coordinate a team of new officers that includes Tammy Howard, 21, a Lexington Community College junior from Fort Thomas, vice president; and Scott Mikels, 20, a Morehead State University sophomore from Chillicothe, Ohio, secretary.

The trio was elected April 5-7 at Central Baptist Church of Winchester during the

annual meeting of BSU officers from local college campuses, who were preparing for next year's student ministry program in Kentucky.

Host Pastor Dan Francis invited the summer missionaries—who will fill slots from Brazill to Colorado—to reaffirm their willingness to touch the world. Through anecdotes, he challenged them to go to their stations and serve in Jesus' name.

"While the term 'summer missions' is usually applied, the program is actually a year-round process," said Ralph Hopkins, associate director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's student department. Raising a current annual budget of \$84,000, adopting mission points, and enlisting, selecting and training the prospective missionaries requires a calendar year to complete, he explained.

Student department Director Don Blaylock urged 600 meeting participants to "recognize that God may be speaking to some of you, including some who aren't students." He noted that opportunities exist for volunteers to go on short-term mission assignments.

Keynote speaker for the BSU leadership training conference was Jerome Byrd, mission pastor of Good News Baptist Chapel in Cincinnati, and himself a former summer missionary.

"Our service to God is not measured by what we have, but what we are willing to give up," said Byrd. "When Jesus challenged people to follow him, on several occasions he said the task would not be easy."

Following Christ sometimes means going through "God's boot camp," he suggested. "You're called to give everything you have."

The weekend included music by "Witness," an ensemble from Kentucky State University; a series of seminars; orientation sessions for summer missionaries; and fellowship and recreation.

BHI names directors

Baptist Hospitals Inc. announced the appointments of William D. Hacker, Paul Parker and Eugene E. Siler Jr. to its board of directors.

Hacker is a pediatrician in Corbin, where he also is on the medical staff of Baptist Regional Medical Center. He is a member of First United Methodist Church in Corbin.

Parker, former chairman of the board of Clear Creek Baptist College in Pineville, is retired from Commonwealth Life Insurance Company. He is a member of First Baptist Church in Corbin.

Siler, a member of First Baptist Church in Williamsburg, is chief justice of the U.S. District Court for the eastern district of Kentucky and also a judge for the western district of Kentucky. He also has been U.S. attorney for the eastern district and a first vice president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Kentuckians remember missionary martyr

by Marv Knox, Editor

Family and friends celebrated the life of Christian martyr Lynda Bethea last Saturday in Louisville.

Highway robbers murdered her and beat her husband, Ralph, in Kenya March 27.

"There is a special place in heaven for those who are martyred," promised Bill Hancock, pastor of Highview Baptist Church, where more than 200 people remembered the Southern Baptist missionary's life and ministry.

Her death mirrored the death of Stephen, the first Christian martyr, Hancock said, reminding listeners that Stephen saw Jesus welcoming him into heaven. "I believe the same thing happened again," he added. "Jesus stood up and said, 'Welcome, Lynda.'"

The promise that Mrs. Bethea now lives with God in heaven and the memory of her life provide Christians with reasons to be happy, despite her horrible death, said Benton Williams, Kentucky Baptist missions director, who worked with the Bethes through the Kentucky/Kenya Baptist partnership missions project in the 1980s. "We come in joy, not sadness—joy that

God had called them to service," he said.

Mourners mingled joy and sadness as they listened to Ralph Bethea talk about his wife. He spoke to them via telephone from Jackson, Miss., where he had buried her body the day before, April 12.

The Bethes had discussed death, he recalled. But they thought he might be the one who would die violently and young, since he often preached in areas where Muslims angrily opposed the gospel.

She never asked him to hold back from preaching, even in dangerous settings. "She only asked that I let her know, so she could be praying for me," he recalled.

That happened the night before her death. He had gone to the old Muslim part of Mombasa to preach, he said: "The Holy Spirit had been moving. Old-time Muslim leaders were coming to Jesus. ... When I got home, all the lights were out except in our bedroom. And there she was, beside the bed, praying for me."

The next night, that same love for her husband forced her from the safety of their car and to his side as the robbers beat him.

Later, as life poured from her body, he cradled her in his arms. He remembered how she spoke her final words: "God gave

her a peace. She said, 'Ralph, they just need Jesus.'"

Three days later, on Easter Sunday, thousands of Kenyans gathered in a field to remember Mrs. Bethea. She was a registered nurse and had treated many of them. She also was a tireless cook and comforter, and she had fed and consoled many more. As a preacher recalled how she loved Christ and lived among them, 468 people believed in Jesus and were baptized.

"Her labor was not in vain; her life was not in vain," Bethea said.

She upheld the long, noble tradition of missionaries who risked their lives to share the gospel, said William W. Marshall, executive secretary-treasurer of the Kentucky Baptist Convention and a former missionary and staff member with the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

Missionaries do not ask for guarantees of their safety, he noted. Rather, they boldly share their faith, at all cost.

"She lived her faith," said Doug McCall of Louisville, her husband's cousin. "She would tell us not to mourn her passing ... but look to the fields that are 'white unto harvest,' for there are so many who need salvation."

'Cultivative witnessing' leads to creation of churches

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vided seed money for property and buildings.

"I hope the spin-off will be picked up by churches. Much of the work that will be started will not require the traditional kinds of cost."

For example, a congregation started in a family housing development might rent space in the development itself. Other new congregations might take advantage of inexpensive space in strip shopping centers.

Beyond the specifics, the scope of start-

ing focuses on "setting the climate for new work/outreach," Forman noted: "It's an extension of who we are as Christian Southern Baptists into the community. It's meeting needs of the people where they are."

It's also matching strategies to needs, he said. That might involve beginning with daycamps for children in areas where many unchurched families live. It also might mean providing help with shopping or transportation in a housing development for senior citizens.

The key to that approach is people.

"We're calling out the called—getting

more people involved," Forman explained. "We have people, laypeople, watching from the sidelines for various reasons, and we have to develop them as leaders."

And that means teaching people to do what Forman calls "cultivative witnessing"—serving God and people where they are so that ministry to others becomes a natural outgrowth of daily living, as well as breaking down barriers of resistance to God and Christians.

"Once we tap that lay resource," he promised, "we'll see a kind of growth we've only dreamed of."

Southern Seminary covenant: Seed of hope

editorial

Marv Knox

Trustees and faculty at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary have planted a seed of hope this spring.

Unfortunately, the ravages of controversy—skepticism, rumor, distrust, innuendo—already eroded much of the soil into which that seed was planted.

The erosion began long ago, and has progressed through the years:

- Many Southern Baptists always have been suspicious of higher education. Some of them saw no need to start the seminary in 1859.

- They and their descendants for generations viewed seminaries as places that “took the starch out of preacher boys.”

- Southern Seminary particularly became the focus of ill will in 1959, when an internal storm resulted in the firing of 13 professors.

- Denominational controversy stirred the storm during the past decade. “Liberal professors” became a popular focus of Southern Baptists who wanted to steer their convention in a rightward course.

- Lightning bolts struck closer to home in the fall of 1987, when a new majority of conservative trustees took charge of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in North Carolina.

- The storm struck Southern Seminary full force a year ago. Conservatives controlled all but one trustee

office and gained power to control the board's agenda. And a young trustee delivered a 16-page paper charging President Roy Honeycutt and five faculty with doctrinal infidelity.

- The gales raged again last fall. Trustees added another set of guidelines—the Southern Baptist Peace Committee report—to the process for selecting and promoting faculty. Professors and alumni protested, citing violation of academic process and abuse of the Peace Committee report.

But in the downpour that continued to erode the seminary's once-fertile soil of promise, faculty and trustees have planted a seed of hope.

They called it a “covenant renewal.” (Articles about the covenant are found on pages 1 and 10 of this issue of the Western Recorder.) Trustees agreed to back away from the Peace Committee report as a guideline for faculty employment and promotion. Faculty and administrators agreed to fill vacancies with “conservative evangelical scholars,” thus ensuring the school's conservative shift.

Together, trustees, administrators and faculty have the power to shape a positive future for Southern Seminary. It may not be all trustees desire; it certainly will not be what faculty dreamed. Still, it can be a vital force in American Christian life.

To honor the covenant, faculty and administrators must present candidates for faculty vacancies that meet the covenant's guidelines. Affirmation of the covenant's statement on scripture particularly will be important. Nomination of scholars already known for

their conservative theology will fertilize the ground of faith into which the hope-seed has been planted.

Trustees also must honor the covenant. They can begin by treating the seminarians as colleagues, not adversaries. That involves extending trust, not automatic suspicion. They also must resist the temptation to add new layers of requirements for employment.

Unfortunately, the hard-liners among trustees are not inclined to allow that seed of hope a chance to grow. They stepped pruning before it began to sprout. An example: Each of the faculty nominees was asked to affirm the four “findings” of the Peace Committee report, which trustees said they would do. On top of that, one trustee repeatedly quizzed academic personnel committee members about their candidates' views on abortion and homosexuality; another criticized those whose churches are considering diverting some mission money around the convention's unified budget. Another suggested trustees develop a “check-list of seven or eight questions”—none of them represented in the covenant—to test faculty nominees.

Of course, trustees have a right to learn about the beliefs, practices and loyalty of prospective teachers. Nevertheless, the spirit and tone of that inquiry could shred the covenant and uproot that seed of hope.

A self-avowed moderate trustee compared the attitude of one of his colleagues to McCarthyism. Faculty are considered guilty until they prove themselves innocent, he said.

If that attitude prevails, the seed of hope will be uprooted.

Support missions through the SBC Cooperative Program

guest editorial

by Morris Chapman

I have always believed in supporting missions through the Southern Baptist Convention's Cooperative Program Unified budget, but never more than during the Kenyan Coastal Crusade. Building upon what had been established through decades of Southern Baptist mission efforts, approximately 60 SBC missionaries, 540 volunteers and scores of national pastors and laymen worked together during one of the most fruitful evangelistic meetings ever conducted. I had the marvelous privilege of participating in the baptism of more than 53,000 people who professed faith in Jesus Christ.

The lives of those who volunteered for the crusade will never be the same. As they share their testimonies, churches will be blessed. Those who prayed for the project and supported it financially should realize their partnership with those who went.

Southern Baptist churches will have an opportunity to send volunteers to participate in an evangelistic emphasis planned

prior to the denomination's June 4-6 meeting in Atlanta. The objective of Crossover Atlanta is to reach the city with the gospel. Churches desiring to send workers should contact Bobby Sunderland at your Cooperative Program-supported Home Mission Board, 1350 Spring St. NW, Atlanta, Ga. 30367-5601, phone (404) 898-7687.

Through the Cooperative Program, a church can extend its heart of love to the lost and its hands of concern for a world of need far beyond its local setting. Its church staff can be multiplied by thousands of ministers. Its ministries can become as varied and vital as the witness of an evangelistic missionary in Brazil, a Baptist center children's worker in New Orleans and every witness supported through the Cooperative Program.

Our church, First Baptist of Wichita Falls, Texas, gives through the Cooperative Program because of our love for missions. Pastor and people alike believe that the Cooperative Program is the most ingenious plan of giving ever developed by any denomination. You and I realize that neither of our churches can reach the lost world alone. Herein lies the secret of cooperation. By working together, pooling our missions resources, being partners in missions and evangelism, your church and mine—regardless of size,

location or income—can send a bold witness to America and the world.

Because of the commitment of churches like your and ours to mission support through the Cooperative Program, our missionaries do not wait in fear that funds for their work will be exhausted. Our young people can face the future knowing that Christian collegiate education and theological training are only an application away. Our denomination can set bold goals.

The Cooperative Program is Acts 1:8 at work. As we minister in our “Jerusalem” our longing grows to participate in the “uttermost part of the earth.” Cooperative Program gifts help spread the word of God to our state, our nation and our world.

The accountability and the adaptability of the Cooperative Program are key characteristics which keep our trust in this mission support system alive. Both the state conventions and the Southern Baptist Convention present annual audited reports of each agency, board, commission or institution receiving Cooperative Program support.

In the final analysis, the power of working together through the Cooperative Program depends upon the response that each individual Southern Baptist makes to the Great Commission. Each member

should ask: “What does God expect of me? What is my financial responsibility to my church and its mission at home and abroad?” When we accept the biblical view that “the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof,” our whole concept of stewardship is changed. This new way of approaching life includes how much we give and how we spend what we keep. Remembering that the supreme ingredient in a great church is God's power—a power born of a spirit-filled relationship with Jesus—leads us to a fresh commitment to living and giving his way.

Thank God for the privilege of being a part of a conviction that is one link in a long chain of conviction and cooperation among the people called Southern Baptists. I urge all Southern Baptists to celebrate the Cooperative Program as their primary way of supporting missions. It was given to Southern Baptists by God in 1925 during a time of financial crisis to help accomplish the mission goals that we had previously only desired and dreamed.

One way to celebrate what has been accomplished and to review the plans for the future is by observing Cooperative Program Day, April 21.

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

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Jesus leads through church government

baptist doctrine study

Part 3 of a 3-part series

by William H. Stephens

"Polity" may be the most boring word in the dictionary. It conjures up images of organizational charts, job descriptions and tedious committee meetings.

That image has replaced the solidly biblical debate that gave rise to congregationalism, the method of church government for which Baptists were imprisoned and even gave their lives.

The issue of polity is nothing less than the answer to the question, "How does Christ exercise lordship over his church?" The nature of the church is one of the most crucial issues facing Southern Baptists today.

The lordship of Christ is the topic for 1991 Baptist Doctrine Study sponsored by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's discipleship training department. It will be observed April 22-26 in many churches.

The constant conviction of Baptists throughout our history has been that Jesus seeks to exercise his lordship through the congregational method of church government, wherein each church member has an equal vote in decisions.

This position has been maintained by

Baptists since their first recorded church building in London in 1611, the same year the King James Version of the Bible was published.

Only recently has the world seen Baptists shifting on this point. Since 1940, British Baptists have experimented with various means of church government, including the election of elders as the ruling body and reducing the pastor's leadership role.

In the United States, within the last few years, the elder system has been adopted by a number of Southern Baptist churches.

The rationale for the elder system is much the same as has been argued against Baptists throughout our history: Why should immature Christians and unredeemed members determine the future of a church? Why waste the great amount of time usually required to lead a church to make important decisions? Why not elect, or have the pastor appoint, a body of dedicated, proven disciples to make the church's decisions? The process is quicker and surer.

The answer to these questions are not different from those given traditionally throughout our history:

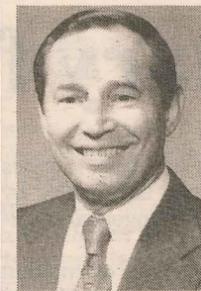
- The church is not a business; it is a school. This body was established by Jesus Christ for the purpose, among others, of teaching believers to seek the mind of Christ. The discipline cannot be easily taught. It must be practiced—thus, the value of those protracted committee and business meetings.

- The congregational form is biblical. Baptists have built their belief in congregationalism on the doctrine of equality of all believers before God through Christ, typically called the priesthood of all believers. Whatever the groups have argued from scripture on this point, Baptists have insisted that priesthood of all believers under Christ is the heart of the new covenant. Baptists have believed that the Bible's mandate must be given priority over practicality. Our option is not to do what is most efficient but what is most biblical.

- The heart and soul of biblical congregationalism is priesthood of all believers, not autonomy of all believers. A priest is a religious official; all believers are religious officials. A priest does not vote his or her own mind; a priest seeks to know the mind of the High Priest and express that understanding humbly and humbly hear out the understandings of other priests. The goal is to negotiate, listen, speak and debate until the group comes to know the mind of Christ on an issue.

- Any system which bypasses the tedious process of allowing every member an equal voice in a church's decision-making violates the new covenant of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

William H. Stephens is a curriculum development coordinator for the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board and co-author of "The Doctrine of Lordship," the 1991 Baptist Doctrine Study textbook.



on
mission
together

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

Hard times ahead?

There are 2,270-plus churches who currently consider themselves affiliated with the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

- In 1990, 351 (15.4%) contributed nothing through the Cooperative Program.

- For the past eight years, an average of 343 churches per year have contributed nothing through the Cooperative Program.

- Approximately one-half of these churches make a contribution to some cause—Lottie Moon offering, Annie Armstrong, Homes for Children, etc.

- During the 1989-90 budget year (which ended Aug. 30, 1990), the top 250 churches in total Cooperative Program gifts provided 61% of the total Cooperative Program receipts; the top 500 contributed 81% of the total. Put another way, 22% of the KBC churches contributed 81% of the total Cooperative Program receipts.

Whatever conclusions the reader may wish to draw from those statistics, it should be clear that the top 500 churches have a disproportionately greater financial impact on the work of the KBC and the SBC, than the remaining 1,770 churches.

This observation is painfully verified by our current financial position. After seven months, ending March 31, the Kentucky Baptist Convention is under budget by \$998,344 (9.6%) and below last year at the same time by \$384,792 (3.9%). The convention has never experienced this kind of shortfall.

The impact of the "top giving" churches is evident upon closer scrutiny of the data available.

By the end of February, the net drop in Cooperative Program giving by only 173 churches amounted to \$896,119!

Put another way, if these 174 churches had contributed only an amount equal to what they contributed during the first six months of last year, the KBC would be only \$102,225 below budget and \$511,327 ahead of last year. Our "problem" would be "no problem."

Of those 173 churches (selected on the basis of their giving more than \$1,000 less than they did over the same period last year), 85% were in the top 500.

There are variables which would impact individual churches in this group, but there is one undeniable conclusion: when the churches which traditionally contribute significantly through the Cooperative Program reduce their gifts, the impact is disproportionately and dramatically felt.

If this is—as some suggest—"just the tip of the iceberg," it will not be possible for any sane skipper to order" full steam ahead."

baptist forum

To all who would write to Baptist Forum: We welcome for consideration your letters on any subject, provided they do not make personal attacks on anyone. We ask, however, that you accommodate a longstanding policy of a 300-word maximum limit for published letters. Thank you for adhering to this, and welcome to the pages of Western Recorder.

Appreciates hugs

Just read the article in the Western Recorder by Rosa Lee Robinson of Greenville. I do not know what Christian state paper of which she speaks; however, I would appreciate a hug as I just lost my mother at the age of 91.

The hugs that I received this past month meant a lot to me in this time of sorrow. I really can't see any harm in a hug now and then.

My mother, Estelle Spaulding, was William W. (Bill) Marshall's Sunday school teacher when he was in the Primary Department at First Baptist Church in Frankfort, Ky.

She often talked of Bill and some of the

things that happened in those days. She was wonderful, but I am rejoicing in the fact that she has gone home to be with her heavenly Father.

*Dorothea Snow
Lexington*

Be as faithful as Zambians

Our sojourn in Zambia will soon be drawing to a close, and we'll return to our home in Lexington. It has been great to come back after almost seven years, meet old friends and see many improvements in the Lord's work.

When teaching a missions class here at the Baptist Theological Seminary of Zambia in 1982-84, I included their mission of

planting churches. It has been most rewarding to learn how many new missions and churches have been started by my seminary and Theological Education by Extension students, as well as other pastors.

One student who graduated in 1983 went to a large area in northern Zambia where there was no Baptist church. He has won many hundreds of people to faith in Christ, trained leaders and started 10 churches.

For several weeks recently I led a class in church starting at the Baptist Building with the help of Jerry Hubbard, the director of missions in Lusaka. There were 23 who enrolled and at least one of these has started a mission and is planning to start another. That makes all the expense of coming more than worthwhile.

We challenge the Baptists of Kentucky to be as zealous in witnessing and as faithful in starting new churches, missions and preaching points as your brothers and sisters in Zambia are. I hope I will have many opportunities to help in this work in Kentucky.

*D.M. and Kay Aldridge
Lexington and Lusaka, Zambia*

ministerially speaking

Barriers to growth

Numerically, Christianity is losing ground in the world today. What is hindering the growth of the greatest religion with the only true God? Why are so few accepting what is so freely offered?

- At the top of the list, we would have to put the lack of loyalty to God by professing Christians. What or who is the center of your life?

- Many surrender fully to the saving grace of God but make only a half-hearted commitment to serve him as Lord of their lives. How fully committed are you?

- Many Christians are not willing to share the joy of salvation which they have

experienced. When was the last time you told someone about your encounter with Christ?

- There are Christians who want a "high security" relationship with God on a cheap basis. In comparison to what God has done for you in regard to your future, what are you doing for him now?

- There is a growing ignorance among Christians concerning the Bible and its truths. What would your score be if you took a comprehensive test on the Bible?

- We have become a very independent type of people—depending on the ability of man, medicine, machines and our own human strength more than depending upon God. In what ways have you totally depended on God this week?

- Pride, rebellion and selfish interests tend to hinder Christians from having time or the desire to tell others about Christ. Are any of these your problem?

I do not believe the world has tried Christ and found him insufficient. The world, more than anything, has not tried him, or has not seen a difference in us because we have him in our lives. Some have said that Christianity has become a respectable, stale, conventional, flat religion.

I believe that Christianity will see new growth when we confront individuals with Christ and his way of life—when we seek the lost and bring them to Christ. We have a responsibility to help lift the fallen and surround them with an atmosphere of Christian love.

May we never forget that the church is not a place for whole people but for imperfect people who help each other to become better people.

*William Cubine, pastor
Immanuel Baptist Church
Paducah*

Seminary faculty, trustees agree on covenant

continued from page 1

page section on faculty selection. It states the seminary will balance the faculty by employing "conservative evangelical scholars" who:

- "Reflect a clear evangelical orientation in their view of the inspiration and authority of the holy scripture."

- Scripture is "entirely and completely the Word of God, as well as words of human authors," it says. Scripture is "totally trustworthy, ... true and reliable in all the matters it addresses, whatever the subject matter (and) free from all falsehood, fraud or deceit."

- "Will teach in accordance with and not contrary to the Abstract."

- "Affirm their experience of the spiritual rebirth through faith in Jesus Christ and demonstrate their active discipleship in a local congregation."

- "Understand and are committed to the distinctive doctrines of our Baptist heritage."

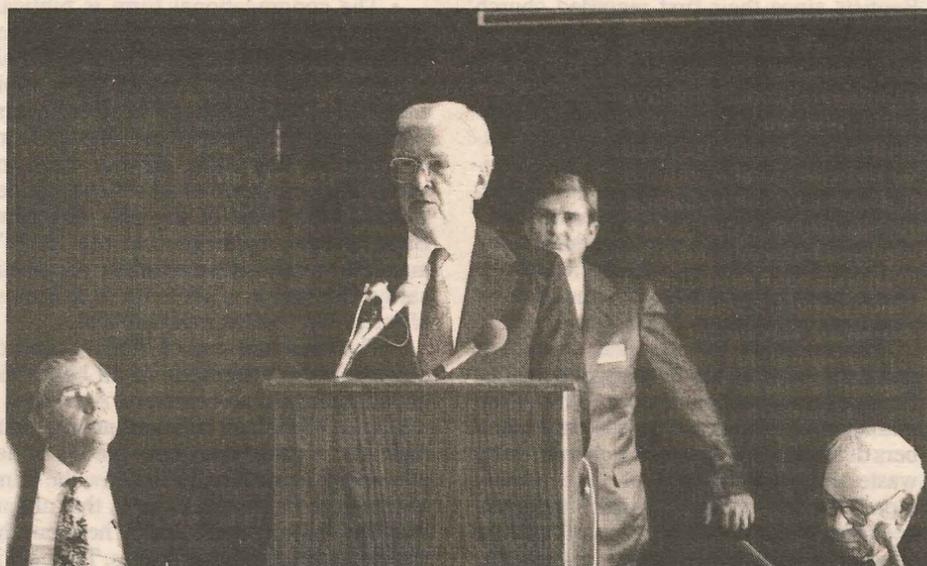
- "Embody the highest qualities of Christian character and life."

- "Are committed to prepare God-called people for Christian ministry in churches and church-related ministries."

- "Are committed to winning the lost and are advocates of the missionary imperative of the Christian gospel."

- "Affirm the covenantal relationship between Southern Seminary and the Southern Baptist Convention and its ... churches."

Until the faculty is balanced, the seminary will only hire and grant tenure to faculty "who sign the Abstract of Principles



PRESIDENTIAL PLEA—Southern Baptist Theological Seminary President Roy Honeycutt asked trustees to approve a "covenant renewal" for the school. Trustees ratified the document 49-7 last week. (SBTS photo by Tony Aja)

and positively affirm this covenant, including its statement on scripture," the covenant says.

It pledges faculty, administrators and trustees to "function with mutual accountability" and "maintain a proper balance between freedom and responsibility."

Since covenants are bilateral, the document notes, "any amendment of matters specifically addressed in this covenant without concurrence of the administration and faculty nullifies its covenantal nature."

That qualification came into doubt as trustees debated the covenant.

Trustee Johnson of Colorado moved to amend the covenant in three places, primarily to insert the Peace Committee document and its view of scripture.

The motion to amend the document failed 16-36. Then Michael Harris, a layperson from Elizabethtown, moved to refer the document back to the special committee to work out "problem" areas.

The motion to refer failed 17-35.

Immediately prior to the final vote, Wayne Allen, a pastor from Memphis, Tenn., and chair of the trustee executive committee, asked Honeycutt to address the trustees. The president urged them to support the covenant if doing so would not violate their consciences.

Trustees bowed in silent prayer for several minutes and then took the 49-7 vote in favor of the covenant.

In later business, trustees:

- Rescinded a year-old policy allowing students to tape class lectures.

The new policy encourages the "principle of openness and disclosure" but leaves to administration and faculty the responsibility to decide "appropriate methods of transcribing classroom lectures."

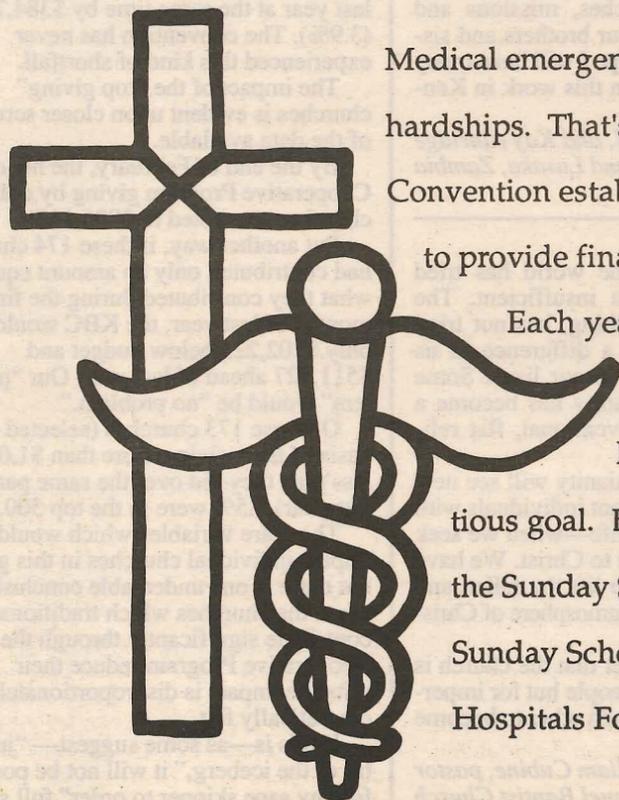
- Voted to give the 1991 E.Y. Mullins Denominational Service Award—the school's highest honor—to Ralph and Lynda Bethea, missionaries to Kenya. They were beaten in a roadside robbery in the African nation last month, and she died of her wounds. He earned two degrees from the seminary.

- Passed a resolution calling for trustees, faculty and administrators to oppose diversion of funds by their churches from the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program unified budget. It also asked them to seek additional means of support for the seminary.

- Approved a \$16.4 million 1991-92 budget, including a 3 percent cost-of-living pay increase for faculty and staff.

See page 10 for reactions to the covenant.

Sunday School Charity... Working Year-Round to Assist Families with Medical Expenses



Medical emergencies can happen in any family. And when they do, they often create financial hardships. That's why the Baptist Hospitals Foundation in cooperation with the Kentucky Baptist Convention established the Sunday School Charity Fund. The Fund has only one purpose: to provide financial assistance to individuals in need of help with their medical expenses.

Each year, hundreds of requests for financial assistance are received by Baptist pastors throughout the state and the chaplains serving within the four Baptist hospitals. Providing a financial helping hand to these individuals is an ambitious goal. But one we can achieve with your help. This Mother's Day, please support the Sunday School Charity Fund at your Baptist church. For more information on the Sunday School Charity Fund, contact the Baptist Hospitals Foundation at 502/896-5013.

BHF
BAPTIST HOSPITALS FOUNDATION

4007 Kresge Way Louisville, Kentucky 40207

Sunday School Board adapts others' inventions

Editor's Note: The Southern Baptist Sunday School Board celebrates its 100th anniversary this spring. Historian Leon McBeth has written an eight-part series to commemorate the event; this is part three.

by Leon McBeth

This year at its 100th anniversary, the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board sponsors no less than 17 "programs" or kinds of ministry.

When the board was formed in 1891 its name and work matched exactly, for Sunday school work was its only assignment. Over the years, new needs have arisen for ministries with children, youth and college students. Needs arose in church architecture, church music, church recreation and many other areas. As new opportunities surfaced, the SSB was asked to develop leaders and literature for new groups which emerged. Today, the original name remains, but the work of the SSB reaches far beyond Sunday school.

Southern Baptists today may assume that the board invented all of these new forms of ministry. That is not the case. In fact, it actually has invented very little. For the most part, others have invented and it has adopted and adapted programs and tailored them to meet Southern Baptist needs.

The Sunday School

What we call Sunday school was developed in England by Robert Raikes in the 1780s. Raikes, a Church of England layman, designed a "school on Sunday" to teach poor children on their only day off from labor in the mills and factories. Raikes used paid teachers in an effort at "social uplift" for poor and often orphan children in reading and writing, math, basic manners and personal cleanliness. The Raikes schools were not usually connected to the church, and teaching religion was only a minor part of their purpose. They were, in fact, often opposed by churches.

We see at a glance how much Sunday school has changed over the past two centuries. The Sunday school movement in this country began in the North, mostly on a non-denominational basis. Somewhat later, the new Sunday school movement caught the attention of Baptists in the South. However, as Southern Baptists adopted the Sunday school from others, they also adapted it to fit the needs of Baptist churches.

Baptists in the South changed Sunday school in at least four ways. First, they included people of all social levels, not just the homeless or disadvantaged. Second, at a time when almost everyone regarded the Sunday school as a children's movement, Southern Baptists formed classes for all ages, including adults. Third, after a brief period of including secular as well as religious training, Southern Baptists restricted their Sunday schools to religious education. Fourth, at a time when most Sunday schools were non-denominational and separate from the churches, Southern Baptist churches opted for Baptist Sunday schools, using Baptist literature, under the guidance of Baptist churches. As one observer put it, the Southern Baptist Convention "Southern Baptized" the Sunday School, making it over in its image.

The Baptist Young People's Union

The people in SBC churches who remember the old days of the famous "BYPU" are fewer every year. As a spinoff from Sunday school, the BYPU over the years paved the way for other spinoffs, such as the Baptist Student Union and the vacation Bible school.

Sunday morning Bible study classes

proved a huge success among Baptist young people. During the 1890s most families followed the so-called "Puritan sabbath," avoiding Sunday work and recreation. This left lively youth with little to do, and the best part of the day, meeting with friends in Sunday school, was too soon over. Thus Baptist youth welcomed the new BYPU, with group meetings of teen-age boys and girls for study and discussion of doctrine, Christian heritage, moral conduct and similar emphases. These youth meetings inevitably included a social dimension, much like the "youth fellowship" of later times. One is not surprised that such groups proved immensely popular.

This early "youth program" did not begin among Baptists. A non-denominational youth movement arose in the North by the 1870s, with non-denominational literature and emphases. In Chicago in 1891 Northern Baptists formed the Baptist Young Peoples' Union of America. This Chicago group established branches in the South in an effort to include all Baptist youth in America.

However, Baptists in the South preferred a youth movement that was distinctly their own. T.P. Bell, who headed the board at the time, said Southern Baptists "are afraid of influences emanating from Chicago." In time, SBC churches formed their own BYPUs, and looked to the board to provide suitable literature and leadership training.

During its early years, the BYPU faced much opposition. Some opposed merely because it was new; others worried because the BYPU included social activities along with religious study. Others objected to what they called the "Northern innovation" of allowing teenage girls to speak in BYPU assemblies attended by boys. Unlike the Sunday school, which put boys and girls into separate classes, the BYPU included both in the same groups. An editorial in a Baptist paper in the South suggested that only boys be allowed to speak or "give parts," and girls be allowed only to listen. Some frankly feared that if girls learned to speak out in church as youth, it would be more difficult to silence them as adults.

Despite this opposition, the BYPU proved an immediate success. By 1927 it enrolled 498,386 youth aged 17 and up in 19,773 unions. Its adopted motto was "Training in Church Membership," and it never swerved from that goal. The effective witness of field workers, the excellent BYPU study materials from the board, and above all, the clear evidence that the BYPU helped transform boys and girls into dedicated adult church members carried the day.

The success of BYPU brought additional challenges. When the youth became adults they were unwilling to give up group meetings that combined interesting study with social activities. This led to adult unions, just at the time when younger children also clamored for group meetings on Sunday night. This led to changes in name and program in 1931, when the BYPU became the BTU (for Baptist Training Union), with groups and study materials for all ages.

Since then, BTU has undergone further changes, and currently is called discipleship training. Despite the new name, the original purpose of training in personal discipleship and in church membership remains.

The Baptist Student Union

By the turn of the century, more Baptist youth were going away to college. Unless college students became active in a church near the campus, which many did not, no specific Baptist organization kept up with them or ministered to them. Landrum Leavell, the first full-time BYPU worker, warned: "We are losing at the top, losing all we had put into them [Baptist youth] through the years in the BYPU. It had to be stopped." The result was formation of the Baptist Student Union, with its assignment to minister to Baptist students.

The BSU provides another example of how the board adapted a work invented by others, turning a non-denominational program into a Baptist program. The YMCA developed programs for youth even before the Civil War, and the YWCA followed later. The World Student Christian Federation worked with students, as did the Student Volunteer Movement later. All of these were non-denominational.

Baptist youth attended some of these student meetings. In 1903 three students from Baylor University attended a YMCA conference in Louisiana and brought back to their campus a desire for a student organization. By 1909 the SBC Foreign Mission Board regularly sent speakers to college campuses, and the next year the Woman's Mission Union formed a special division of the Young Women's Auxiliary to relate to college students.

In 1914 Charles T. Ball, professor of missions at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, helped form the Baptist Student Missionary Movement, and appealed to the Sunday School Board for help in strengthening this organization. In Texas a BYPU convention asked the state convention to appoint a full-time student secretary, which was done in 1920. At a meeting of students and professors that year, the group chose a name in three stages. First they settled on "Student" and then "Baptist." Last of all came the word "Union." They put these together to form the Baptist Student Union, and held their first Baptist Student Convention of Texas in October 1920 at Howard Payne University. In 1934, the southwide student movement took the same name, and in 1928 the work was committed to the Sunday School Board, where it remains.

Vacation Bible School

The daily vacation Bible school is best understood as a spinoff from Sunday school. The VBS is an effort to extend the methods and benefits of the Sunday school for children into weekdays. Early in this century, children had few planned activities during the long summer vacation from public schools.

True to the pattern seen in so many programs, the Sunday School Board did not

invent the VBS. Instead, it adopted VBS from other denominations and transformed it into a distinctly Southern Baptist program. An "everyday Bible school" was conducted in New York City in 1898, and its success led others to try similar summer schools. In 1901 the director of the City Baptist Mission Society in New York City urged churches to use "idle college students" to teach "idle children" in "idle church buildings" during the week. Presbyterians were the first to officially sponsor such vacation schools, with Northern Baptists close behind. A few Baptist churches in the South attempted weekday instruction in the summer.

One cannot discuss the VBS among Southern Baptists apart from Homer L. Grice, 1883-1976. While pastor of First Baptist Church of Washington, Ga., Grice read about these vacation schools in the North. His church had just completed a large educational building. Why should that well-equipped building sit idle during the week, Grice thought. Unable to find suitable VBS materials, Grice and his wife wrote their own, and launched their first daily vacation Bible school in the summer of 1922. The response was overwhelming, with almost 500 children attending. The Grices included Bible study, mission study, character stories, handwork projects and, of course, refreshments. This may sound familiar to VBS workers today, but the Grices' school continued for four full weeks.

The success of this VBS reached the ears of SSB leaders. Other churches also appealed to the board for literature, supplies and guidance in conducting their own VBSes. Always alert to the needs of the churches, in 1924 the board invited Grice to develop VBS literature and guidelines. The Grices worked diligently to prepare guidebooks and have them ready for the summer of 1925. That first summer, fewer than 100 SBC churches conducted a VBS, but that number grew steadily. Over the years, Grice attended many interdenominational conferences and workshops. While open to their insights, he crafted a VBS approach that included the best insights from others, but remained distinctly Southern Baptist in curriculum and emphasis.

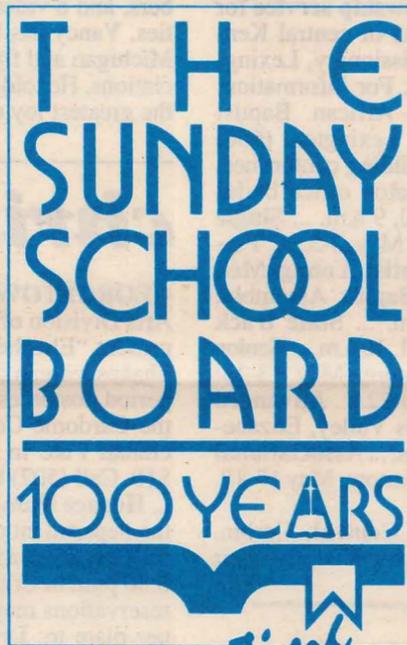
A Pattern Emerges

We have seen that the Sunday School Board invented little but adopted and adapted many programs from others. It has tailored these to the specific needs of Southern Baptists. Perhaps Southern Baptists can be forgiven for thinking that they not only borrowed, but in most cases also improved these programs. These stories are not the only such examples; similar stories of adaptation could be told of church music, church recreation, the January Bible study and many other programs that originated with others. As these new forms of ministry arose, they were assigned to the Sunday School Board, not because they always fit there, but sometimes simply because the board had resources to get the job done.

One president of the Sunday School Board put it this way, "Southern Baptists have been more successful as early adapters than they have as early inventors." A glance at history confirms the truth of that statement.

Looking Ahead

For the early part of the 20th century, one word that describes the Sunday School Board is "expansion." It developed excellent materials in Nashville and mounted an effective drive to put these materials before the churches. The article for next week will describe how the board carried its ministry from Nashville out to the last church.



Celebrating Heritage and Hope

mountains to the mississippi



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

clear creek chronicle

Giving people hope

Your Annie Armstrong home mission offering helped support 1982 Clear Creek graduate Mike York, pastor in Madison Heights, Mich.

York was born in Bell County but moved to Detroit at age three. Although the family had a Baptist background, they were inconsistent in church attendance. Mike's father was an alcoholic and his mother reared four children alone. At age 12, Mike started drinking beer and experimenting with drugs. The next few years he gradually began using harder drugs. He recalls, "My family continued to love and pray for me, but I rejected their love and rebelled even more." Soon trapped in a dangerous lifestyle, he wandered around the country and ended up in southern California.

At age 22 York felt he "had hit bottom." His search for meaning and purpose led him to a coffeehouse where some Christians "were really concerned about me. It seemed they had an inner peace and contentment I was looking for." He trusted Christ in his hotel room on the night of his 23rd birthday.

"Of course it was hard to change all my old habits overnight. But I learned God had begun a new work in me that he will continue until I go to heaven. He has never forsaken me. God's instrument in helping me grow as a Christian was the Santa Barbara Rescue Mission. On Jan. 6, 1978, I joined their rehabilitation and Bible study program. Through his word, God spoke to me about committing my life to him in service. After six months at the mission, I found employment and moved out on my own again. I joined Temple Southern Baptist Church in Santa Barbara and followed the Lord in believer's baptism."

York began looking for a place of help prepare him for ministry. He visited his family in Bell County and the door was opened to Clear Creek. "The four years I spent there became a major turning point in my life. At the end of my first year I met the lady who was to become my wife. During my senior year, God blessed us with a son and pastor in Ewing, Va. God has allowed me to gain much experience in his work and helped me grow as a disciple and discipler."

On May 21, 1988, York graduated from New Orleans Baptist Seminary and soon moved to Michigan. The Madison Heights church has built a new building and looks forward to continued growth. Mike hopes other Clear Creekers will come north, start churches and give people hope.

PERSONNEL: Pastors—Lee Fesler to First, Burkesville. ... Roy Helm to Cedar Point, Ingle. ... Randy Gaskey resigned from Young Grove, Dewitt. ... John Moore resigned from First, Booneville. ... Howard West resigned from Flemingsburg, Flemingsburg. ... Irvingsville, Carlisle, called Russell Jones. ... Alan Witham to Hyland, Henderson. ... Jonathan David Bishop to Third Avenue, Louisville, from Elk Creek, Taylorsville. ... Bennie Chandler to Mint Springs, Ledbetter. ... Gary Wilson to Fairlane, Alexandria. ... Larry Day to Pleasant Hill, Williamsburg. ... John Helton to Pleasant Run, Stab. ... Robert Moore to Hopeful, Nancy. ... James Lochard resigned from Mount Union, Tatesville. ... Lloyd Senters is no longer interim at Sloans Valley, Sloans Valley.

ORDINATIONS: Deacons—David Hardin, Buddy Johnston and Ray Smiley at Eighteen Mile, LaGrange. ... Ray Smith, Randy Walton, Dean McCoy and Steve Cathey at Bethel, Gilbertsville. ... Joe Poole and Bill Pope at First, Mayfield. Minister—Paul Badgett as pastor at Fellowship, Ashland.

EVENTS: Baptist fellowship service for black and white Baptists of central Kentucky, Pleasant Green Missionary, Lexington, April 29, 7:00 p.m. For information: L.H. McIntyre, First African Baptist Church, 475 Price Rd., Lexington; (606) 252-7191. ... Church building conference, Elkhorn Baptist Association office building, Lexington, April 30, 9 a.m. ... Single adult retreat, Aurora, May 3-5. ... Pioneer-High School Baptist Young Men conclave, Cedarmore Baptist Assembly, Bagdad, May 10, 8 p.m. ... State track meet, Cedarmore, May 11, 10 a.m. ... Senior adult retreats, Cedarmore, May 13-15; Jonathan Creek, May 20-22. ... Advanced Growth Spiral, Severns Valley, Elizabethtown, May 14, 8:45 a.m. ... Associational officers' briefing, Cedarmore, May 17-18.

CONGREGATIONS: Central, Corbin, held a groundbreaking March 31 for their

—classified ads—

FOR SALE: LaserMaster 19" hi-res computer monitor, video controller, and laser printer controller—perfect for desktop publishing with Ventura Publisher. \$1,100 off retail price—includes 135 scaleable fonts, special effects software, documentation, installation and training. 502-244-1685. 4-2-3T

WANTED: Junk boats, outboard motors, stern drives, trailers, complete units preferred, immediate settlement, call today: 502-969-7617. 7-17-50T

FOR SALE: Uniden satellite TV receiver, model UST-5000; Heyer electronic scanner (stencil maker), model 7500; ABDick electric mimeograph machine, model 418; Scriptomatic addressing system 29. Equipment may be seen at Pulaski Baptist Association. Sealed bids until May 1. Mail to: P.O. Box 72, Somerset, KY 42502. Phone: 606-678-4465. 4-16-2T

POSITION AVAILABLE: Part-time Minister, Music & Youth. Resume to Berean Baptist Church, Box 405, Elizabethtown, KY 42702-0405 4-16-1T

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new sanctuary and classroom and library space. ... Second Twelve Mile, Butler, will hold a sesquicentennial celebration service May 5, 11:00 a.m. A pot luck dinner and special afternoon service will follow the morning service.

MISSIONS: Pastor Gilbert Robinson and three members of Slate Branch, Somerset, spent three weeks in Nigeria as volunteer missionaries. ... David and Marsha Smith, missionaries to Israel, are in Kentucky until August. Address: 111 N. Main St. Lawrenceburg, Ky., 40342; (502) 839-6358.

ANNIVERSARIES: Pastor Philip Yancy and Lamasco Baptist Church near Eddyville marked a golden Sunday last month—celebrating Yancy's 50th anniversary in the ministry. The festivities included appearances from members of churches where Yancy has been pastor. One special guest was Olen Sisk, Yancy's pastor at the time of his ordination, who preached his ordination service March 9, 1941. Yancy received a bronze plaque presented by Harold Greenfield, director of missions for Caldwell/Lyon Baptist Association, cards and gifts from his church and former church members, and a videotape of the day's festivities. Yancy has been pastor in Tennessee, Michigan and five Kentucky Baptist associations. He told his celebration crowd that the greatest joy of his ministry always has

been seeing people of all ages accept Jesus Christ as their savior. Yancy and his wife, Irene, do not plan to stop with 50 years of ministry. They announced they will go to Brazil in June as part of a partnership mission team. ... First Baptist Church, Leitchfield, honored Pastor George Smith for his 20 years of service. Peyton Thurman, who has been the church's interim pastor on three occasions, delivered the message at a service preceding the reception. Many of Smith's family and church members took part in the surprise event. Smith received a plaque from the church and, along with his wife Carolyn, also received a silver bowl, a gift certificate for a stay at the Opryland Hotel and \$1,600.

Correction

An article in the March 26 Western Recorder about PraiSing II ("Taste of heaven in the Opry House") failed to mention three Kentucky groups that participated in the music conference in Nashville.

Campbellsville College in Campbellsville was the only school to have two groups featured—the Collegiate Chorale and the Handbell Choir.

In addition, the Kentucky Baptist Chorale, comprised of the state's ministers of music, participated in the dedication service for the new "Baptist Hymnal."

christian education

GEORGETOWN COLLEGE—The Fine Arts Division of Georgetown College will present "Elizabethan Evenings," a mix of Shakespearean comedy, dance, music and period costumes, April 26-27 at 8 p.m. in the Cardome Community Center on Cincinnati Pike in Georgetown. Tickets are \$10. Call (502) 863-8174 for reservations. ... Horace Hambrick, former chairman of the department of history, will be honored for 42 years as a faculty member April 27 at 6:30 p.m. in Cralle Student Center. Dinner reservations may be made by sending \$10 per plate to: Dr. Lindsey Apple, Department of History, Georgetown College, 400 East College St., Georgetown, Ky., 40324. Checks should be made to Georgetown College. ... Calvin Miller, pastor of Westside Church in Omaha, Neb., and author of 26 books, will lead the Georgetown College Ministers Fellowship April 23 at 9 a.m. in Giddings Hall. To register, write Steve B. Cook, Office of Church Relations, Georgetown College, 400 East College St., Georgetown, Ky., 40324, or call 863-8041. The registration fee is \$15 and includes lunch. ... J. Robert White, pastor of First Baptist Church in Paducah and Kentucky Baptist Convention president, will speak at the Georgetown baccalaureate service May 10 at 8 p.m. in John L. Hill Chapel. ... Georgetown has become the first institution to access revenue bonds issued through the Kentucky Development

Finance Authority for development projects at Kentucky's independent colleges and universities. ... A training course offered by the Great Books Foundation is being offered at Georgetown June 18-19, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The course trains people to lead students to think independently about literature. To register, call Jane Allison at 863-8146.

CAMPBELLSVILLE COLLEGE—Corpus E. (Chris) Mohedano, 1964 graduate of Campbellsville, has an art exhibit, "Jubilee," at Gosser Fine Arts Center through April 19. ... Financial aid may be available to families with "special conditions," such as long-term layoffs or hourly wage cuts. Current income as opposed to "base year" income may be used to determine financial aid eligibility. For more information, contact Paul Dameron, director of financial aid, at (502) 789-5305.

CUMBERLAND COLLEGE—The Kresge Foundation of Troy, Mich., under its science initiative program, has offered Cumberland a grant of \$250,000 contingent on the college raising an endowment of \$1,000,000.

SOUTHERN SEMINARY—Richard J. Foster, professor of theology and writer in residence at Friends University in Wichita, Kan., is delivering the 1991 Gheens Lectures April 16-19 at 10 a.m. in Alumni Chapel. ... The annual Lay Bible Conference May 17-18 will focus on "The Teachings of Jesus." For information, call (502) 897-4142. ... Tim Harris, student at Southern Seminary, was among seven merit award winners in the eighth annual Kentuckiana Metroversity Art Competition. His mixed media drawing titled "Child with Serpent" depicts the classic struggle between good and evil.

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LESSONS FOR APRIL 21, 1991

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A glorious salvation

Eph. 1:3 The doxology. From this verse we learn that the author of our blessings is God. Our blessings are spiritual because they are connected with the Holy Spirit, and heavenly because they originate in heaven. Christ is the medium or channel through which we receive blessings. He has blessed us with forgiveness, justification, sanctification and eternal life.

Eph. 1:4-14 We have in these verses a hymn of praise of the Trinity for the

definite and distinct part each had (the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit) in our redemption.

According to verses four to six, the Father's part in our redemption was threefold. First, it was election to holiness. The elector is God. The time of the election is "before the foundation of the world." The purpose of election is our sanctification. The ground of our election is "the good pleasure of his will." The object of the election is "the praise of the glory of his grace."

A second part which the Father had in our redemption was foreordination to sonship. This is an act of grace on the part of an all-wise, loving and merciful Father, who has never made a mistake.

A third part in our redemption for which we are deeply indebted to the Father is our acceptance in the beloved. Having been chosen and accepted in loving-kindness in Christ, we should live to the praise and glory of God's grace.

In verses seven to 12 we have an explanation of the Son's part in our redemption. To Christ we are indebted for forgiveness, enrichment, enlightenment and inheritance. Christ loosed us from the guilt of sin, the curse of the law and the judgment toward which we were traveling. As we live in his presence, we are given the wisdom to solve the problems of life.

Verses 13 and 14 set forth the Holy Spirit's part in our redemption. The Holy Spirit persuaded us to believe in Christ and to receive the salvation which was planned by the Father. The Holy Spirit bore faithful witness to the truth of Christ, illuminated our understanding, convicted us of our sins, persuaded us to believe and regenerated us.

Our safe arrival on the day of redemp-

tion has been committed to the Holy Spirit, who will claim us as his acquired possession. As long as we remain on earth, let us be instruments of God for the carrying out of his holy purposes, "unto the praise of his glory."

International Series

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I Cor. 12:27-13:13 Every believer in Christ is the recipient of a capacity for specific service. The Holy Spirit does not bestow gifts for the gratification and glory of the recipients, but always for the glory of Christ, the proclamation of his gospel, the salvation of the lost and the edification of the saved.

In both the human body and the church, members have particular functions, and the proper functioning of each is necessary to the best interests of all other members. If church members are to be healthy cells in the body, they must give Christ preeminence, be faithful in daily Bible study and prayer, worship regularly in the Lord's house, be good stewards of his means and witness to the unsaved.

Various members perform their respective functions for the welfare of the entire body and without any friction between them. If one member of the body suffers, the other members suffer also.

The gifts of eloquence, prophecy, wisdom, knowledge, faith, charity and martyrdom are without value apart from love. The heart and climax of this chapter are found in the statement: "Love never faileth." The greatest thing that can be said about love is that it lasts. Greater than faith or hope, love survives danger, disaster and death. Love is immortal.



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

homes for children

How to enjoy life

I am becoming more convinced each day that how we feel about ourselves and the expectations we put on ourselves are extremely important to our own health. Self imposed stress, and really that is the only kind, is a major cause of health-related problems. I am seeing positive changes in diet and exercise today. Hopefully, we will focus on improving the emotional side of life as well.

Recently I came across the following while visiting at my wife's home church, First Baptist of Clay. It really spoke to some of my needs. Unfortunately, I do not know who wrote it, but hopefully, that individual will not mind my sharing it with you.

"...there is nothing better than that a man should enjoy his work..." (Ecc. 3:22).

When President Eliot of Harvard was 88, he was asked how he could account for his good health and vigorous mind. He said, "A calm temperament, expectant of good."

Some things make life pleasant; others make it miserable. The following rules are not always easy to follow.

1. Make up your mind to be happy. Find pleasure in simple things.
2. Make the best of your circumstances. Everyone has some sorrow. Seek to make smiles outnumber tears.
3. You can't please everyone. Don't let your critics run and ruin your life. The more you accomplish, the more resistant you will meet.
4. Don't borrow trouble. Imaginary problems are heavier than actual ones.
5. Hate poisons the soul. Do not cherish grudges. Avoid people who make you unhappy.
6. Don't hold postmortems—brooding over sorrows and mistakes.
7. Do what you can for those less fortunate than yourself, especially for those who have blessed your life.
8. Keep busy. A busy person doesn't have time to be very unhappy. "I know that there is nothing better for them than to be happy and enjoy themselves as long as they live." (Ecc. 3:12).



Barkley Moore
President
Oneida Baptist Institute
Oneida, KY 40972

oneida journal

Singing their hearts out

Spring has arrived and our choir is traveling several thousand miles singing in various churches. Easter Sunday they were in Bullitt Lick Baptist Church near Shepherdsville with nearly every seat filled. Over the years, various students have come from that church to attend OBI and we presently have two. Also, several have come from there to work as full-time staff volunteers and presently one is doing so.

After eating a delicious meal, our choir returned to Oneida in time to sing at the start of a week-long revival emphasis. Many commented they had never sung more beautifully than that evening singing "Were You There?"

Our students lost an hour of sleep with the change of time the following Sunday

as they rose early, ate a hearty breakfast and traveled to sing at the morning service of Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church about 15 miles north of Frankfort. The church provided a wonderful meal afterwards.

In the afternoon, as we have done with several choirs in other years, we took our choir members to see the old capitol and the state museum, to tour our present state capitol building and then to see the Kentucky Vietnam Memorial.

The memorial is so ingeniously designed that the shadow of a huge sundial falls on the name of each dead Vietnam soldier on the very anniversary day of his death. Again, as before, I looked for and found the name of Paul H. Webb who gave his life Jan. 7, 1968. He had graduated from OBI in the 1967 class. I remember him as a freshman in the dorm where I was assistant dean. That was 28 years ago. How quickly the years pass! Also, I have seen Paul's name on the Vietnam Memorial in Washington. His sister, Myrtle, valedictorian of Oneida's 1960 class, has been our guidance counselor since 1984.

Paul's mother, Margaret Webb, widow of a life-long Baptist pastor, is in her third year of teaching with us as a volunteer. All five of the Webb children attended OBI as have some of the grandchildren.

Our group then went to historic Frankfort Cemetery which I first saw on a class trip while an OBI student 34 years ago. Of course, we saw the resting places of Daniel Boone, Gov. Goebel, the dead of the Mexican and Civil War. There, also, is where OBI graduate Brian Tramotin is buried, drowned while saving his brother from drowning one week after his profession of faith on graduation day, 1983.

That evening, our choir sang beautifully at Highland Baptist Church, Lexington, and I spoke as I had last done there

16 years ago. The Highland folk had a fine meal waiting for our group before the service. Then, we went on to Oneida to prepare for classes the next morning.

The following weekend, it was back to Crestwood Church in Frankfort and Immanuel Church at Monticello that evening, church meals both places.

Our choir and I will leave Oneida early Saturday, April 20, for Williamsburg to sing at the morning session of the state WMU convention. Then it will be a long journey across the state to Henderson to spend the night in the homes of members of Immanuel Baptist Temple. April 21 our choir will give concerts at both their morning services to the glory of God. Also, we will be there to help celebrate the 80th birthday of Maralea Arnett, retired teacher, librarian, historian and writer. Having eaten there, another meal will await the group at Columbia Baptist where our group will sing that night.

The last Sunday of April will be shared with Hazard First Baptist Church and that night our choir will sing in East Williamson (W. VA.) Church after an afternoon of sightseeing and two meals provided by the churches.

Our marching band will be away four days in May to compete in the largest band contest in the U.S., held at Winchester, Va., and to sing May 5 in First Baptist Church, which hosts us.

Mother's Day will find our choir away early to share with Stearns Baptist Church. That evening, they will sing at Somerset First Baptist Church in their last traveling concert of this school year.

In the meantime, they will have sung several major concerts at home including one at homecoming Saturday, April 27, and several graduation weekend, May 18-19. This singing, all from memory, is ably directed by tireless Richard Burns, in his sixth year of service.

Seminary covenant renewal: Miracle or mistake?

by Marv Knox, Editor

Miracle or mistake? Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's new "covenant renewal" document created a range of reactions.

The covenant—approved by trustees 49-7 last week, following 38-5 ratification by faculty—strikes a compromise.

On the one hand, it steps back from a rigid faculty-employment policy adopted by trustees last fall. That policy tied employment and advancement to adherence to the 1987 Southern Baptist Convention Peace Committee report's specific examples of what believing in scripture means.

On the other hand, it extracts from faculty a pledge to work to make the Louisville

seminary more conservative.

"It's a bright light for the future," seminary President Roy Honeycutt told reporters. He cited unique cooperation between trustees and faculty.

"It's an historic document for the seminary and Southern Baptists," he added. "This is the first time in the 10 years of the (SBC theological/political) controversy that principals have gotten together and said, 'We need to sit down and work together to reverse the disintegration of an entity.' And I feel greatly encouraged by it."

Earlier, he urged trustees to adopt the covenant if doing so would not violate their consciences.

"We face a crisis in our institution that

could bring us into disarray," he said. But he added, "We're on the threshold of moving forward. ... Let us move together in a direction that under God can prove profitable for the seminary."

Trustees expressed divided opinions on the value of the covenant.

"We have done the very best job we could in representing you," trustee Wayne Allen, a pastor from Memphis, Tenn., and a member of the committee that drafted the document, told his colleagues.

"We bent far more than we wanted to bend, and the faculty said they bent far more than they wanted to bend. Until the last night, we did not know if we could reach out and touch. ... When we worked on it long enough, ... we found we had a document we could agree upon."

Morris Denman Jr., a pastor from Lynn Haven, Fla., expressed doubts about how the document would work, particularly in maintaining a "balanced" faculty.

"The real issue of balance is something somebody in the future is going to have to deal with," Allen responded. "We're trying to get over a problem and an impasse, understanding we may be putting off some problems for a few years. Hopefully, our relationship will have grown and trust developed so that we can deal with those problems then."

But Delton Beall, a pastor from Forest City, Ark., attending his first trustee meeting, expressed reservations about postponing some solutions.

"I have a problem with this board putting a screen door on a submarine and expecting me to fix the leak in three or four years," he said. "If it's painful today, it will be painful tomorrow."

"Under the circumstances, the document is a masterpiece," contended Gene Russell, a pastor from San Antonio, Texas. "It's not perfect, but if we do not pass it now, we are in for serious consequences."

Ruffin Snow, a pastor from Tulsa, Okla., charged that the covenant asked trustees to compromise too much. "We need a course correction," he said. "The longer you wait to make the correction, the more difficult it is to make."

"This is a matter of trust," said Gerald Primm, retired pastor from Greensboro, N.C. "If this trust is not warranted, we can come back and correct it."

But the trust already is not warranted, claimed David Miller, an associational di-

rector of missions from Heber Springs, Ark. "If we had trust, we would not be dealing with this today," he said.

"This document avoids the issue of a creed, and it maintains the Peace Committee report's emphasis on all scripture's truthfulness," said Jerry Day, a psychologist from Tucson, Ariz.

"It is a document that emphasizes the things we share together—not the differences."

But the divergent views on the document make it unworkable, insisted Wayne Gaunce, a layperson from Glasgow, noting, "When you have this much diversity on a document, it won't work."

"My primary feeling is one of hope. We have an opportunity to keep the seminary alive and strong," said Steve Hogg, a pastor from Rock Hill, S.C.

"To understand the potential disintegration of this place if we don't take advantage of this window of opportunity—that frightens me."

"The window of opportunity is the opportunity for reconciliation," said Rick White, a pastor from Franklin, Tenn. "This is a step forward of great magnitude for this seminary."

After the vote, faculty leader Bill J. Leonard said the covenant offers the seminary community a break in tension.

"This gives us a respite from the crisis atmosphere that has been present on this campus," said Leonard, a church history professor and president of the seminary Faculty Association.

"We have said all along that the use of the Peace Committee document is a violation of contracts, charter and the Abstract of Principles," the seminary's confessional statement, Leonard said.

"The covenant gives us a much broader base by which faculty and trustees can work together in securing new faculty. Also, the covenant is not required of existing tenured faculty. That was a major concern of ours regarding the Peace Committee document."

The covenant also allows the seminary to recruit faculty from a larger group of evangelical scholars than the Peace Committee document allowed, he added.

"This dialogue between faculty and trustees is a first at Southern Seminary, and overall we are hopeful," Leonard said. "We are not euphoric. It is a compromise for both groups. But it is a compromise that keeps us from losing everything."

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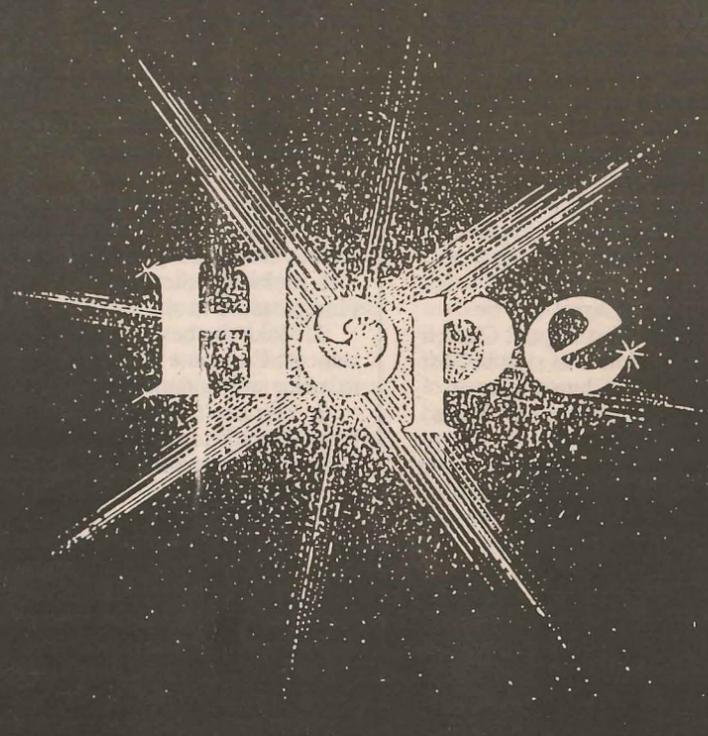
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ACTS ceremony set to air April 25

The sixth American Christian Television System Awards Ceremony will be televised live April 25, at 9 p.m. EDT.

The ceremony recognizes ACTS affiliates—both cable stations and churches—for innovative methods of reaching their communities. ACTS is owned and operated by the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission. (BP)

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Ministry leads to church starts, project shows

Stories by Mark Wingfield

Starting ministry centers in some communities can lay the groundwork for successful church starting, a pilot project indicates.

The pilot also shows a way to redeem unused space in declining churches, a veteran home missionary says.

Bell Baptist Center began in 1989 in an unused educational building at First Baptist Church in Bell, Calif., a small city in metropolitan Los Angeles. The predominantly Anglo First Baptist Church experienced decline as the community changed from mostly Anglo to mostly Hispanic.

This community was chosen by the Home Mission Board and California Southern Baptist Convention as the site for a pilot to test the possibility of starting ministry centers that could develop into churches.

Within six months after its doors opened, the Bell Baptist Center gave birth to a Spanish-language congregation, Iglesia Bautista de Bell. Sunday morning attendance now averages more than 60, with about 90 percent of those being new believers baptized into the church.

The Baptist Center and mission church occupy an educational building that hadn't been used in five or six years, says L.G. Chaddick, church and community ministries consultant. As a veteran home missionary in California, Chaddick has seen hundreds of Southern Baptist churches grow and decline with shifting populations.

Chaddick commends First Baptist for its contribution. Because the church was will-



FEEDING SOULS—Pastor Francisco Juarbe (center) prepares food for distribution to residents of Bell, Calif., where he is director of Bell Baptist Center and pastor of Iglesia Bautista de Bell. The site has been a pilot project to determine the potential for starting churches through ministry centers. (BP photo)

ing to open its building, money that normally would have been used for rent was put into hiring a full-time pastor-director.

"I cannot visualize the association, state convention or Home Mission Board having

enough resources to get facilities like this," he says. "Many of our churches in the Los Angeles area have space not being used. With this example, I can go to other churches and show them that with cooperative re-

sources, we can do something positive."

Additional cooperative resources have come from short- and long-term volunteers. During the first year alone, five Christian Service Corps volunteers cleaned up the facility and made necessary renovations. Other churches in the association regularly provide volunteers and supplies.

"This gives an idea of what we can do together," says pastor-director Francisco Juarbe, who previously served as a Mission Service Corps volunteer in Puerto Rico. "If we have this kind of cooperation, it will be possible to start new churches."

Terese Carlson, a US-2 missionary from Hereford, Texas, has been a key volunteer in beginning the work, Juarbe says. Carlson, who came to California speaking no Spanish, now teaches children's classes in both Spanish and English and heads the center's English literacy classes.

Half of the current congregation came into the mission through the literacy program. Most other members were introduced to the mission through the center's food pantry, clothing closet or other ministries.

Individuals helped by these ministries now are volunteer leaders to keep the ministries going, allowing Juarbe to concentrate on pastoral tasks, such as visiting a list of 300 prospects.

"Members of the church are now taking more responsibility for the center," the pastor says. "We're seeing an empowerment of the community. Because the people received in the beginning, now they want to give." (BP)

Tragedy doesn't deter missionary's purpose, zeal

Christian ministers must not only look for the little boy with the fish and loaves, but attempt to help the remaining 4,999 people see what they can do for God's kingdom, says Russell Grelling.

Grelling, a home missionary in the Los Angeles area, alludes to the biblical account of Jesus feeding the 5,000 to illustrate a point—ministry is most effective when Christians work together to make the best of everyone's strengths and weaknesses.

Grelling is a 40-year-old father, rearing two sons, ages 7 and 9. He walks with a cane due to having polio as a child. His wife, the mother of his two boys, lies in a coma—

technically a persistent vegetative state—as the result of an automobile accident seven years ago.

Yet the last thing Grelling wants is to be cast in the stereotypical role that could be titled "Handicapped man overcomes mountain to save world." Tough as his lot has been, he knows he is not the only person who has overcome handicaps to lead a productive life.

"Being disabled, going through family tragedies, nothing can prevent us from fulfilling God's purpose," he says. "We need to look at all these areas and recognize that God can use them too. We must face our

restrictions and prejudices and closed off places. We need to decide what it means to be a functional church in the communities where we live. God can make it possible for you to do what you need to do."

As a consultant, Grelling helps churches

reconnect with their purpose, redream the dream of ministry and locate the resources to make it happen. "I want to empower people to realize that God gives them power through the intermingling of their experiences," he says. (BP)

Moral decline, churches linked

Starting more churches could reverse America's moral decline, the leader of Southern Baptist church extension efforts declared.

Charles Chaney also called on Southern Baptists to increase their church starts from an average of three per day to four per day.

"The best thing we can do to halt North America's slide into moral chaos is to plant Bible-preaching, soul-winning churches in all segments of society," said Chaney, vice president of the Home Mission Board's extension section.

"If the multiplication of disciples and churches does not affect society, something is drastically wrong with the gospel we preach and practice or the way it is applied," Chaney added.

Chaney made the statements to Southern Baptist church extension leaders during their annual meeting in Chicago.

"The force of our moral influence, even in the decade of the evangelicals, has waned. We no longer have the moral clout to impact behavior in society," he declared.

That decline in moral influence is related to a decline in the proportionate number of churches serving the American population, Chaney explained.

Citing statistics from the Gallup organization, Chaney said Americans who worship together are more likely to reject drugs, be more productive at work and show a higher commitment to children and family life.

He added that churchgoers annually contribute twice as much to human services as do corporations and foundations.

The Christian church impacts morality because it gives people a sense of purpose and worth, he added.

With an estimated 172 million unchurched people, "there are more lost people in this nation than in the total populations of all but four nations of the world.

Chaney admitted the Bible contains no mandate from Jesus Christ that explicitly says, "Go, plant churches."

"However, when I look at what the risen and ascended Christ continued to do and teach... I find that the empowered believers made disciples, met needs and gathered new congregations wherever they made new disciples.

"Nothing is more the essence of the mission of the church than planting congregations of believers wherever they are needed." (BP)

FAMILY—Home missionary Russell Grelling and his two sons, 7-year-old Nicholas and 9-year-old Zachary, live in the metropolitan Los Angeles area, where Grelling attempts to help churches see their potential for ministry. "We need to decide what it means to be a functional church in the communities where we live," he says. "God can make it possible for you to do what you need to do." (BP photo)



CONVENTION FEATURE

Backyard Bible Clubs provide mission outreach opportunities

"I'm a firm believer in Backyard Bible Clubs!" Charles Steger enthusiastically responded in relating about his past experiences in this outreach ministry. Steger, who serves as minister of education at Hickory Grove Baptist Church, Independence, Northern Kentucky Association, should know.

After becoming a Christian during a military tour of duty in Germany, he returned to his native Buffalo, New York and began working in a Backyard Bible Club a local Baptist church was sponsoring in 1972. His involvement continued even as a college student when he was serving as a minister of music and youth at Veterans Park Baptist Church outside Buffalo.

"Backyard Bible Clubs are a good example of pioneer missions, especially from where I'm from," Steger explained. "Veterans Park's outreach ministry helped start three new churches which are all self-supporting now and in their own buildings."

While a student at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Steger served as minister of youth at Buckner Baptist Church. During his tenure at the Sulphur Fork Association church, Steger took several annual youth Backyard Bible Club mission trips back to Upstate New York. "It was because of these annual mission trips that several of our youth later surrendered to ministry or other areas of church leadership" he noted.

Following seminary graduation, Steger pastored a church in New York where Backyard Bible Clubs were sponsored every other week in two to four different locations each summer. "Numerous churches were started because of Backyard Bible Clubs in this pioneer area of

Baptist work," he related.

After leaving New York to serve as an Army chaplain, Steger was called to Hickory Grove three years ago as minister of education. Since beginning his ministry there, he has coordinated the Independence church in Backyard Bible Clubs at Ft. Campbell and is attempting to build up more support in sponsoring and reaching people in low income subsidized housing in northern Kentucky.

In planning Backyard Bible Clubs, Steger finds the following tips have been most helpful in his outreach experiences: (1) Train your volunteer workers for at least a year; (2) Look for a location which will be receptive to church groups and (3) A Home Mission Board resource, Joel Land's "As You Go," is a good blueprint in knowing how to set up and receive mission trip assignments. Another denominational resource recommended is "Mission Trip Administrative Manual," written by Valerie Hardy and R. Clyde Hall, Jr., which is available at most Baptist Book Stores.

Steger has found that two areas have been good for his Backyard Bible Club ministries--parks and housing projects. He recommends letting government officials know in advance about ministry intentions in parks. Investigative checks will give your cause more legitimacy. Steger also said housing project landlords usually welcome Backyard Bible Clubs because it offers neighborhood children more activities.

Steger strongly believes in Backyard Bible Clubs "as a way of strengthening older churches and establishing new ones."

He should know.

Training is key to successful Backyard Bible Clubs

Volunteer training is essential in preparing for Backyard Bible Clubs, according to Jewell Nelson, an associate director in the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Sunday school department.

"Backyard Bible Club leadership needs to be well-prepared and responsible," Nelson said. She added that the Sunday School department hosts six training clinics each spring to help churches and associations in their efforts. Jeff Hicks, another associate director in the department, and the Convention's Student Work department train students in Backyard Bible Club ministries for summer mission trip assignments. Self-contained teaching kits and cassette tapes which enable volunteer workers to lead Bible stories, games and songs are also available.

The week of July 15-19 is the Southern Baptist Convention's Simultaneous Backyard Bible Club Week. Nelson encourages each church and/or association to sponsor this unique outreach ministry. "There's no reason

why every church or association can't sponsor and promote Backyard Bible Clubs," she stated. Nelson hopes more churches will coordinate clubs in-state but those led out of Kentucky may still be counted toward the sponsoring church or association's final total for church letter records.

Kentucky Baptists recorded 142 Backyard Bible Clubs, with an enrollment of 5,694, in 1990. Nelson believes the state had at least 200 clubs but many were never reported. "If every participating church or association will give us [Sunday School department] their 1991 totals, their count will be included in the uniform church letter," she explained.

For more information, contact these departments--Sunday School, Student Work or Direct Missions--at the Kentucky Baptist Convention, P. O. Box 43433, Middletown, Kentucky, 40253, (502) 245-4101.

WHY HAVE BACKYARD BIBLE CLUBS?

Bible learning for children and outreach to unenrolled families are major reasons for a church or an association to plan and promote Backyard Bible Clubs.

This outreach ministry can involve youth in leadership roles who organize, conduct and follow up. Each club needs at least one adult at each location.

WHERE ARE GOOD LOCATIONS FOR BACKYARD BIBLE CLUBS?

"Backyard" does not limit the setting. Clubs may be in homes, garages, subdivisions, city or government parks, trailer parks and apartment complexes.

Remember to gain permission in advance before conducting your ministry.

WHEN IS THE BEST TIME FOR BACKYARD BIBLE CLUBS?

Summer is best. However, other school breaks, holidays, around your church revival time and before or after Vacation Bible School are good possible times.

HOW DO YOU PLAN AND CONDUCT A BACKYARD BIBLE CLUB?

1. Secure support of the church or association
2. Enlist workers -
One worker for seven children
One worker for five preschoolers
Preschoolers and children should be taught separately.
3. Get materials -
Baptist Book Store sells materials.
The Sunday School Department, KBC, loans teaching kits.
Associations often loan kits.
4. Train workers - The Sunday School Department, KBC, offers training for Backyard Bible Clubs.
5. Enlist a host or hostess that will provide a possible meeting place, serve refreshments and is the adult on sight.
6. Secure meeting site if not where host or hostess lives.
7. Determine time and schedule.
8. Advertise
9. Conduct
10. Follow up