

FOR THE RECORD

Abortion bills & others awaiting votes

By Mark Wingfield
News Director

FRANKFORT—Two Baptist legislators warned last week that Kentuckians concerned about regulating abortion should contact elected officials quickly about three bills passed by the House and awaiting action in the Senate.

The bills—one requiring parental consent for minors, one establishing health and safety standards for abortion facilities, and one requiring informed consent and a 24-hour waiting period for all women seeking abortions—were approved by the House March 3.

However, critics of the bills contend they place unnecessary restrictions on abortion and interfere with a woman's freedom to make all decisions about abortion by herself. Critics also have charged the bills would require additional state funds to en-

force—a move they say is ill-advised since state finances are so tight.

The abortion bills also face an uphill battle to get out of the Senate Judiciary Committee, where they were assigned by President Pro Tem Sen. John "Eck" Rose, D-Winchester.

Sen. Bob Leeper, a member of First Baptist Church in Paducah, called the chances of the abortion bills being heard in committee "slim."

Leeper is a sponsor of Senate Bill 115, a companion to the House bill on parental consent. The Senate version of that bill was filed Jan. 27 and has yet to be heard in committee.

Rep. Thomas Kerr, D-Taylor Mill, was a sponsor of the parental-consent bill in the House. Kerr, who is a deacon at an independent Baptist church, said none of these bills would prohibit abortion but are "common-sense matters."

The parental-consent measure, he said, is favored by a majority of Ken-

tuckians and should receive a favorable hearing if it gets out of committee.

However, the committee chairman, Sen. Kelsey Friend, D-Pikeville, has not given the bill's sponsors much encouragement, Kerr said.

Both Leeper and Kerr said Kentuckians concerned about this legislation should contact elected officials—especially senators on the Judiciary Committee.

(See "Encourage senators ..." on page 5 for details on Judiciary Committee members and how to contact them.)

Here is a summary of the abortion bills and several other bills of interest to Kentucky Baptists:

■ **House Bill 203** on establishing health and safety standards for abortion facilities. Passed in the House 69-22 March 3 and sent to the Senate Judiciary Committee.

□ See Bills pending ..., page 3

Stats show pastors stay longer now

NASHVILLE (BP)—Pastors are staying longer at one church and tend to have longer tenures than music ministers or youth ministers, the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board reports.

Statistics reported by churches nationwide in 1991 show the average pastoral tenure in Southern Baptist Convention churches is 5.5 years.

By comparison, the average was 4.3 years in 1975, 4.6 years in 1980 and 5.1 years in 1985.

But since these "mean" average figures include a few extremely long tenures, denominational statistics specialist Jim Lowry said a better gauge might be the "median" pastoral tenure—the middle value when half the cases are above and half are below. That number stood at 3.4 years in 1991—up from 2.6 years in 1975, 2.7 years in 1980 and 3.1 years in 1985.

Tenure statistics for music ministers were not collected in 1991, but the latest figures available show pastors

□ See Pastors staying ..., page 9

Modern isolation hinders children, author warns

By Terri Lackey
SBC Sunday School Board

NASHVILLE (BP)—A generation ago, children played in the woods by day and stared at the stars by night.

Today, they still gaze at galaxies, but the moon and stars are on a television monitor being manipulated by Nintendo controls.

"Kids are growing up in an electronic bubble," said Richard Louv, an author and columnist. He spoke to participants in a preschool/children's conference at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville.

"Kids don't get out and play anymore; they play indoors," he said. "Kids can't tell you very much about the last time they spent much time in the woods."

A child's sedate existence indoors is not entirely his or her fault, contended Louv, author of "Childhood's Future: Listening to the American Family—New Hope for the Next Generation."

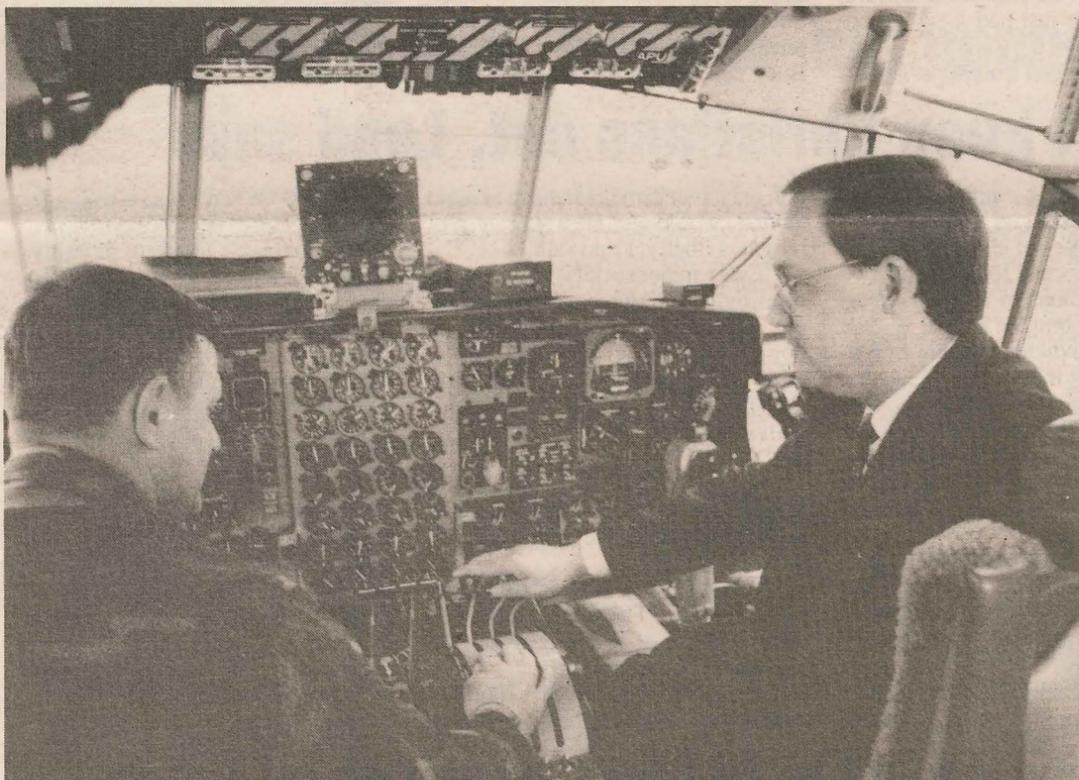
"Kids are doing what society is telling them to do," said the columnist with the San Diego Union. "Parents have such fear of what's outside."

Louv said when he was a child he would take off on his bike, daring to explore outside the physical boundaries set by his mother. He said his mother knew he would be safe because neighbors would watch as he passed their homes.

"Today that physical boundary I had when I was a kid is replaced by an electronic boundary. Kids can go as far as Nintendo will take them," Louv said. "I don't know what we are doing to the next generation when we cut them off from nature. I think that relationship is extremely important."

He has labeled this phenomenon the "mean world syndrome" because "everybody now believes their neighborhoods are so

□ See Isolation traps ..., page 7



MILITARY MINISTRY Chaplain Tom Curry, pastor of of Parkland Baptist Church in Louisville, visits with a technician working on a C-130 cargo plane at the Kentucky Air National Guard base at Standiford Field. Curry serves as chaplain to the 123rd Tactical Airlift Wing based there. He ministered to families and friends of the five-person crew that died in last month's crash of a C-130 in Evansville, Ind. See story on page 3.

Americans believe in creationism more than literal Bible

PRINCETON, N.J.—Americans' belief in a literal interpretation of the Bible continues to decline, but belief in the biblical account of creation is still common, the Gallup Poll reports.

A new nationwide poll found only 32 percent of Americans believe the Bible should be taken literally, word for word. The percentage of the population holding this belief has steadily declined since 1963, when 65 percent of Americans claimed a literal belief in every word of the Bible.

The largest segment of Americans (49 percent) still express confidence in the Bible as the inspired word of God but claim it should not be interpreted literally in every instance.

The number of Americans holding

this view has increased as the number of literalists has decreased, the Princeton Religion Research Center explained in reporting the poll. In 1963, only 18 percent of the population held this belief in an authoritative but not always literal Bible.

Since 1963, the number of Americans who view the Bible as an ancient chronicle of myths and precepts has grown only slightly, from 11 percent to 16 percent.

Southern Baptists are more likely to view every word of the Bible literally than the population in general, the poll found. Sixty percent of Southern Baptists hold this view.

Among evangelical Christians in general, 59 percent hold a literal view,

compared to only 14 percent of non-evangelicals.

Biblical literalists are more likely to be found in the South than any other region, the poll found. Further, biblical literalists are most likely to be found among people who did not complete high school (58 percent).

However, the Genesis creation story appears to be one of the biblical accounts Americans view literally. The poll found 46 percent of those interviewed believe "God created man pretty much in his present form at one time within the last 10,000 years."

Another 40 percent believe humans "developed over millions of years from less advanced forms of life, but God guided this process."

Only 9 percent believe humans "developed over millions of years from less advanced forms of life and God had no part in this process."

Baptists are most likely to hold a view of strict creationism, the poll found, but Southern Baptists (56 percent) are outnumbered by other Baptists (61 percent) in this belief.

The poll found a strong correlation between educational level and belief in creationism. While 66 percent of adults who have not completed high school believe in strict creationism, only 25 percent of college graduates hold this view. However, the majority of college graduates (54 percent) believe creation was guided by God over millions of years.

Moving? See page 4 (0310)

BAPTISTS

BAPTIST BITS

■ **The National Convocation** on the Bible, scheduled for April 21-23, has been canceled. Southern Baptist Sunday School Board leaders, who planned the event, blamed the nation's economy for anemic registration totals.

■ **Critical biblical scholarship** is of the occult, theologian Eta Linnemann told students at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. No truth can emerge from scientific study of the Bible's text, she insisted.

■ **Girls and boys** in grades 1-6 will be able to participate in a missions day camp while mom and dad attend the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Indianapolis June 9-11. Cost is \$8 per day per child, including lunch. Registration will be held at the convention center.

BUILDER Earl Thuman, a member of Severns Valley Baptist Church in Elizabethtown, repairs a window frame during a recent mission trip to New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Thuman and 19 other members of Baptist Builders helped renovate four apartment buildings on the seminary campus. (Photo by Kevin Devine)

Two more church history profs leave Southern

RICHMOND, Va. (ABP)—Two more professors at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary announced last week they intend to leave the school.

The departure of Glenn Hinson and Loyd Allen will leave the seminary's church history department almost vacant.

Hinson, professor of church history since 1962, said he has reached "a point of saturation" with attacks against him. He is expected to be named professor of spirituality and church history at the Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond (Va.). Trustees there will be asked to approve Hinson's appointment April 6-7.

Allen, an untenured associate professor of church history, submitted his resignation to become chairman of the department of religion and philosophy at Mississippi College, a Baptist school in Clinton.

The departure of Hinson and Allen will mean four church history professors have left the school in a year. Only one professor—Charles Scalise, an assistant professor who transferred recently from another area—remains in the department.

Others who have left are Bill Leo-

nard, who went to Samford University in Birmingham, Ala., and Karen Smith, who went to South Wales Baptist College and the University of Wales.

Hinson, 60, has been criticized frequently by Southern Baptist conservatives for more than a decade, particularly for his writings on the deity of Christ.

He became the focal point of an international controversy last October, when trustees of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board defunded the Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland, after learning Hinson was teaching there while on sabbatical.

Southern's trustee leaders issued a "warning" in February, indicating Hinson would be "in jeopardy of dismissal" if he teaches the views that some have accused him of teaching.

Hinson told Associated Baptist Press March 6 the warning, issued by the trustee executive committee, was the last straw.

"That kind of thing reaches a point of saturation," he said from Oxford, England. "I've just had it up to here with the attacks."

Hinson charged trustees at South-

ern "are more interested in indoctrination than in education now."

Southern Provost Larry McSwain disagreed. "I haven't seen any evidence of trustee intervention in the classroom," he said.

McSwain added, however, trustees have increased scrutiny of what a professor writes or says in public, such as Hinson's 1977 book that has been the basis for all trustee complaints. "There probably is less freedom to be controversial," he said.

Hinson may have misinterpreted the recent warning issued by trustee leaders, McSwain added, noting it was not a threat but a purposely ambiguous statement, "designed to close the door" on past accusations.

According to McSwain, the warning said that if Hinson were teaching what he had been accused of teaching, he would have been in violation of the seminary's governing theological document and subject to dismissal.

However, McSwain added, Hinson was misinterpreted by his critics.

Allen's resignation was announced in the same faculty meeting in which Southern professors received a press release regarding Hinson's departure. But Allen said his decision to take the

Mississippi College post was not dependent on Hinson's.

"Had he decided to stay or go, that would not have made a difference in my decision," said Allen, who will begin his new job in August.

Allen, 40, acknowledged the stresses of controversy at Southern Seminary played some part in his decision to leave, but he said Mississippi College also offers numerous attractions.

"Any time you go toward a job, the context of the job you're leaving matters," he said. "There has been considerable stress at Southern Seminary; that's not news. That's a factor in my decision, but it's only one factor in interpreting my call to Mississippi College."

In departing, Allen had positive words for Southern Seminary.

"I leave with a sense of support for the faculty and administration of Southern Seminary and a sense of hope about the future of this institution," he noted. "I do care about this school. I would continue to recommend students to this school."

Reported by Greg Warner, executive editor of Associated Baptist Press, and Marv Knox, Western Recorder editor.

Separation shouldn't keep Christians out, Land says

By Tom Strode
SBC Christian Life Commission

PRINCETON, N.J. (BP)—"Separation of church and state" does not mean Christians are prohibited from taking part in the public debate over values, the executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission told students at Princeton Theological Seminary.

Richard Land also said it is a myth to say governments cannot legislate morality.

Religious freedom and separation of church and state are Baptists' "peculiar gifts to the Reformation," he insisted.

The separation of church and state, however, does not prevent people with religious convictions from par-

ticipating in the government's policy-making process, Land said.

The examples of early Americans Roger Williams and John Leland, two Baptist champions of religious liberty, prove the point, he added.

"The first indictment against (Williams) was not that he was preaching against the church of England, not that he was saying that there should not be an established church in Massachusetts Bay," Land said. It was that he said the land belonged to the Indians, not the colonists.

"In other words, Roger Williams, champion of separation of church and state, was up to his colonial eyebrows in the hottest political, social-justice issue of his day."

Leland and other Baptist preachers agreed to support the U.S. Constitu-

tion only after James Madison assured them he would include a guarantee of religious liberty, Land said.

"Every major social wrong that has been righted in this country throughout history—slavery, child labor, labor reform, the civil rights movement—all of those had their backbone ... furnished by people of religious conviction and religious faith," he said.

Turning to a related topic, Land insisted the myth that says governments cannot legislate morality needs to be confronted.

"All governments legislate morality," he said. "The only question is what is going to be the basis for the legislation of that morality."

The groups arguing that morality cannot be legislated have changed,

Land said: "When I was a teen-ager, it was conservatives who were saying, 'Well, you can't legislate morality,' when what they really meant was they didn't want any civil rights laws."

"Now, it is those who are saying, 'Well, you can't legislate morality,' when what they really mean is they don't want any legal restrictions on a woman's right to abort her unborn baby. They're both wrong."

"Laws against murder, laws against theft and laws against rape are all the legislation of morality. And when we pass laws making murder and theft and rape illegal, we are not so much seeking to impose our morality on murderers and thieves and rapists as we are seeking to prevent them from imposing their immorality on their victims."

N.C. church votes to bless homosexual union

RALEIGH, N.C. (ABP)—Despite criticism from across the Southern Baptist Convention, a Southern Baptist church in North Carolina has voted to bless the union of two homosexual men.

Although not a marriage ceremony, the service at Pullen Memorial Baptist Church in Raleigh apparently represents the first time a Southern Baptist church formally has endorsed a homosexual relationship. No date for the service has been set.

Even before the vote was announced March 1, the church's action drew the ire of Southern Baptist leaders.

A resolution passed in February by the SBC Executive Committee condemns Pullen for condoning "the gross perversion and unquestioned sin" of homosexuality. The committee also denounced another North Carolina church, Olin T. Binkley Memorial Baptist Church in Chapel Hill,

which will consider in April whether to give a homosexual divinity student a license to preach.

The Executive Committee also is trying to exclude churches that affirm homosexuality from membership in the SBC.

However, Pullen Memorial's members approved the "blessing" ceremony with 64 percent voting in favor of it by secret mail ballot.

Pastor Mahan Siler said the church is not launching a "crusade" for homosexual rights.

"We're taking a stand toward a responsible expression of sexuality," Siler told the Raleigh News and Observer. "It's a stand of support toward persons who want to commit to a long-term monogamous relationship."

Kevin Turner, a 27-year-old church member, asked last September for the church to recognize his relationship with 23-year-old Steven

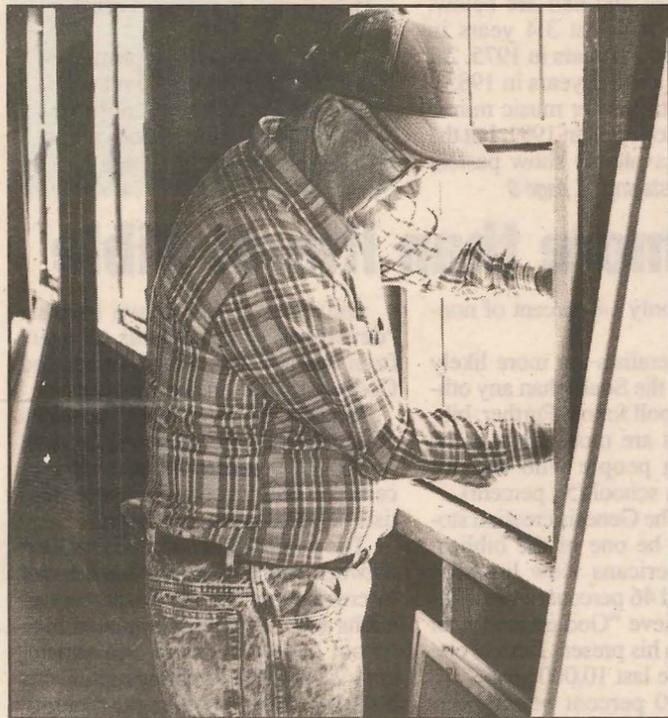
Churchill.

Church leaders said the blessing ceremony will not be a wedding rite, with legal rights and responsibilities which marriage confers. But it will be a public promise of mutual love and monogamy.

In addition to blessing the union, church members voted to accept homosexuals into "full membership" (94 percent) and voted to establish a church document which will include an example of a ceremony of blessing, "along with its biblical, theological and historical underpinnings" (75 percent).

The church mailed out 750 ballots to members in February. A total of 531 members returned the ballots. The results were announced at the end of Sunday morning worship March 1.

While church members worshiped that day, opponents of the decision placed anti-homosexual fliers on cars in the parking lot.



Scott County Baptists help with housing

By Melanie Childers
Staff Writer

GEORGETOWN—Retired FBI Agent Tom Scholl has found one important clue to solving Kentucky's housing problem.

Since 1989, Scholl has been on his own special assignment bringing the Habitat for Humanity organization to the Georgetown area.

He said the organization provides an excellent channel for Baptist involvement in local mission work.

"Habitat is a Christian, non-profit organization committed to providing decent, affordable housing for the poor," Scholl said. "We profess Christ's love by using hammers and nails to help our neighbors."

Scholl has lived just north of Georgetown since his retirement in 1980, but is a member of Calvary Baptist Church in Lexington, where he first was introduced to Habitat.

Although the Scott County affiliate was incorporated in February 1990, the initial efforts to enlist volunteer labor and secure property and

funds took time. The first house in Scott County was completed last month.

"We'll be able to step up our progress now that we have gotten established," Scholl said. "We have plans to build three more houses this year."

The property on which the first house was built is large enough to support 16 houses.

Almost all the labor and much of the equipment and materials were donated, Scholl said. The Habitat program is designed to operate on a voluntary basis.

Baptists were well-represented among the volunteers for this first project. And of the 16 members of the Scott County board of directors, nine are Baptists.

Although Habitat relied heavily on local churches from many denominations, some of its strongest supporters were Baptist churches, such as Faith Baptist Church in Georgetown.

Pastor Stephen Hadden and Associate Pastor Carolyn Hale are on the board. They led the church to raise

more than \$1,000 for the first house and enlist 60 volunteer workers.

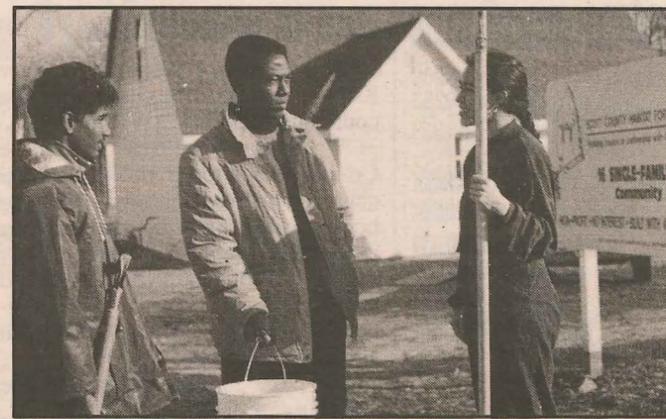
"One of our church's goals is to increase our involvement in local missions," Hale said. "Habitat has provided us with an opportunity to do that. It means linking arms with other churches of other races and different economic backgrounds, and making a difference."

Habitat's success depends on this type of involvement, and according to Scholl, more Baptists need to take an active role. Churches giving to the Cooperative Program rarely look beyond that to immediate needs right in their community, he said.

Yet Scholl stressed that Habitat is not a charity.

"We don't give houses away," he said. "The families interviewed and approved for houses in our program are employed people in low-income, substandard housing who are able to make payments on the cost of the house. They are also required to contribute what we call 'sweat equity' hours during the building process."

Connie and Dana Jackson were



only too happy to contribute these hours and take part in building their new house, said Connie Jackson, mother of four. While her husband assisted with the actual construction, Mrs. Jackson and several relatives swept, painted and cleaned.

"There's no way we could have gotten a house like this on our own," she said.

Through Habitat, Scholl and others are offering "help-ups rather than hand-outs." And they're having a good time doing it.

"I've never had so much fun in my life," Scholl said.

INTERNATIONAL HOUSE

The first house built by Scott County Habitat for Humanity has an international twist. Among the 50 volunteers working on the project were Joseph Gollapalli of India, Phillip Akande of Nigeria and Sylvia Grimaidi of Mexico. (Photo by Ed Boden)

Plane crash was 'terrible' but opened doors for witness

By Mark Wingfield
News Director

LOUISVILLE—Tom Curry often calls his work as a military reserve chaplain exposure to the "real world," but that world took on a new reality Feb. 13 when a cargo plane crashed in Evansville, Ind., killing 16 people.

Curry, pastor of Parkland Baptist Church in Louisville, said the experience was terrible to live through but opened opportunities for ministry.

He compares what has transpired since the crash to the biblical parting of the Red Sea: "I have an open door to do ministry like never before."

As chaplain to the Kentucky Air National Guard's 123rd Tactical Airlift Wing based at Standiford Field in Louisville, Curry led a ministry of consolation and comfort for families of the crash victims and the 1,500 peo-

ple who work at the base.

He organized and preached at a memorial service attended by the governor, a congressman and National Guard officials from Washington and broadcast live on television.

"Ever since that day, the relationships I have with the base have been different," he explained. "Now people want to talk to me. They are open to ministry. You can't imagine the difference in the way people treat you."

Curry said he foresees many more opportunities for personal evangelism and grief counseling.

And today, as he walks through the base, Curry is greeted warmly by nearly everyone he passes. People call to him by name and pull him to the side of the walkway to talk.

This new opportunity for ministry did not come easily, however. In the hours after the crash, Curry and other

chaplains worked constantly to meet the needs of the victims' families and to counsel others grieving.

The memorial service was put together in less than 24 hours, all with volunteer labor. The flow of people seeking counseling seemed endless—to the point that Curry said he found himself putting his own grief aside repeatedly to help others.

And the family notifications, funeral home visits and hospital visits were traumatic. From the hour he arrived at the base after the crash, Curry was face-to-face with grieving spouses, children and friends.

He also visited the crash site when the bodies were removed and attempted to offer consolation to the families of civilians killed.

At one of the civilian funerals, Curry introduced himself to the victim's father, who angrily told him, "I

hate you guys."

Curry thanked the man for sharing his feelings and then put his arm around him in a hug. The man immediately broke into tears, and both of them cried together.

From moments like these, Curry finds reasons to thank God in the midst of tragedy. "You feel like you've been used of God in a critical time, and you are grateful to God that he used you," he said.

He explained that his life is different because he was able to "see all this compassion, to see the doors of ministry open up."

Chapel services at subsequent drill weekends will be well-attended because so many are still grieving, he predicted: "That will be one of those opportunities when you can say something in the name of the Lord and it will be heard."



Tom Curry

Bills pending on liquor, gambling, suicide & domestic violence

Continued from page 1

■ **House Bill 565** on requiring informed consent and a 24-hour waiting period for a woman seeking an abortion. Passed in the House 62-37 March 3 and sent to the Senate Judiciary Committee.

■ **House Bill 479** on requiring parental or judicial consent for girls under 18 years to obtain abortions except in medical emergencies. Passed in the House 85-8 March 3; sent to the Senate Judiciary Committee.

■ **House Bill 725** on legalizing charitable gambling. This bill would amend the state Constitution to permit churches and other charitable organizations to operate bingo games and other forms of gambling as fund-raisers. It is an attempt to keep church-run bingo games operating in light of a circuit court judge's recent ruling that bingo constitutes a lottery and state law prohibits any lottery not operated by the state. Filed Feb. 27; assigned to the House Elections and Constitution-

al Amendments Committee.

■ **Senate Bill 321** on giving the Kentucky Lottery Corp. supervision of charity bingo games. An earlier bill filed for the same purpose as House Bill 725, although with a different twist. Currently stalled in the Senate Business Organizations and Professions Committee.

■ **House Bill 412** on bingo and charitable gambling. This bill would allow city and county governments to ban bingo and other forms of charitable gambling. A companion bill in the Senate (SB 153) has failed to get out of the Senate Cities Committee. The House bill is in the Business Organizations and Professions Committee.

■ **House Bill 590** on charitable gambling. This bill would enable cities and counties to allow citizens to vote to ban charitable gambling but would restrict such local-option elections to once every five years. Currently in the House Business Organizations and Professions Committee.

■ **House Bill 159** on the granting of liquor licenses. This bill would stipulate that applications for liquor licenses do not have to be granted just because additional licenses are available in a certain area. Passed by both the House and Senate and currently awaiting the governor's signature.

■ **House Bill 67** on banning nude dancing in bars. This bill would grant cities the right to regulate or prohibit nudity in establishments licensed to sell alcoholic beverages. Passed in the House 88-2 March 2 and sent to the Senate Cities Committee.

■ **Senate Bill 66** on charitable annuities. This bill would permit charitable organizations, such as the Kentucky Baptist Foundation, to return periodic payments to individuals who give them bequests. Messengers to last year's Kentucky Baptist Convention passed a resolution supporting this legislation. Passed in the Senate 32-0 Feb. 17 and has been posted for a vote in the House since March 3.

■ **House Bill 550** on assisted suicide. This bill would make it a felony to cause someone to commit suicide or assist in a suicide. The bill does not affect living wills, which authorize the withdrawal of life-sustaining measures. Passed in the House 78-11 March 2 and sent to the Senate Judiciary Committee.

■ **Senate Bill 80** on domestic violence. This bill would require judges to consider evidence of domestic violence when deciding on child custody. Passed in the Senate 37-0 and sent to the House; it has not been assigned a committee.

■ **House Bill 115** on domestic violence. This bill would allow police who witness domestic violence to arrest offenders more easily. It also broadens existing laws to encompass violence that occurs between two people who are living together or previously have lived together, whether married or not. Posted for a vote in the House March 6 or later.

SPEAK OUT

Contact Kentucky legislators by calling (800) 372-7181 or writing to them by name in care of Capitol Annex, Frankfort, Ky. 40601.

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MARV KNOX
Editor

MARK WINGFIELD
News Director

RAY L. HAYES
Business Manager

C. R. DALEY
Editor Emeritus

*Earnestly contend for the
faith which was once for
all delivered to the
saints.—Jude 3*

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God is watching

This letter is in response to Marv Knox's article, "Sexuality stance could hurt churches" (WR, Feb. 25).

We applaud the SBC Executive Committee in their move to keep churches that have and will take pro-homosexual stands from participating in the SBC's annual meetings. How can we as a convention be passive and not take a stand against homosexuality when God's word teaches it is an abomination to him!

Yes, the nation and world are watching to see how God's people respond to homosexuality, but more importantly, God is watching to see how we (as a denomination) respond to this perversion. It is appropriate for the convention to respond to moral issues.

The immoral are to be loved and gently ministered to, but the body of Christ cannot compromise the homosexual (sin) issue.

As to the pastor who is just helping a church member, it is ludicrous for a minister to come before his church family and ask them to sanction a union that Jehovah God has forbidden. How can two men who profess to be Christians "live out a faithful, monogamous commitment" when God will not ordain it?

The issue is not: Who is going to be the moral watchkeeper? But: Is the SBC going to be obedient to God?

Our prayer is that we (the SBC) will never grieve God the Holy Spirit in such a rebellious way.

*John & Jean McRoberts
LaGrange*

Join the Mooses

It is a shame 3-year-olds can't read. They seem to be the group you've targeted with your editorial concerning "exclusion."

It may surprise you, but most Southern Baptists can reason and do know the difference of Christian sinning and being forgiven as opposed to Baptist churches (within our convention) condoning, blessing, giving a seal of approval, to any sin. I, for one, do not intend to be a member of any church or convention that does so.

Forgiveness of sin is one thing; blessing sin is another. Your editorial

has mixed apples with oranges.

Mr. Knox, I think you would be happier in the Moose Club.

*Beverly Riddle
Owensboro*

Apples & oranges

In response to your article and editorial on the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee's attempt to refuse to seat the messengers of Pullen Memorial and Olin T. Binkley Memorial Baptist churches: While mixing apples and oranges makes a good fruit salad, it makes poor theology.

The Executive Committee is justified. The question is not: Does a church have members who are engaged in sinful behavior? The question is: Should the SBC condone flagrant and unrepentant sin by a church or its members?

Autonomy is not the problem. No one is attempting to tell the churches they cannot engage in pro-homosexual activities. But our autonomy allows us to refuse to continue in fellowship with churches clearly engaged in unbiblical activity.

If Southern Baptists do not have a right of autonomy in decisions of fellowship, then the SBC has no legitimate right to exist. We became a denomination because we exercised our right to choose with whom we would fellowship. We chose to break our relationship with Northern Baptists because of perceived discrimination on their part.

I know of no church which would knowingly ordain a man engaged in an unrepented-of adulterous affair. I know of no church which would ordain a known drunk. Why should it be all right to ordain a homosexual? In West Kentucky, I do not know of any association which would hesitate to break fellowship with a church who knowingly ordained a man engaged in any of these activities. Surely the SBC has the same right as an association.

The position of these churches is eternally wrong! If the SBC does not stand for something, it stands for nothing, and God will not honor our feeble efforts at anything.

*Danny R. Zickefoose, pastor
First Baptist Church
Hickman*

BAPTIST FORUM

Stand for Christ

I read "New exclusion proposal will damage the SBC."

It seems that there should be a stand taken, especially when there is so much going on in our society. If Christians don't stand for what is right, who will?

Scripture points out, "We should cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (II Corinthians 7:1).

I Corinthians 6:12-20 deals with the body. And in Titus we are to rebuke deceivers.

If we allow the churches to do anything, then the Spirit of the Lord will be removed. For we are like the world's standards and not of our Lord. Romans 12:1,2 apply.

Then in I Corinthians 9:14 to live the gospel: Would we be living the word if the Southern Baptist Convention condones the acts of the flesh?

There is so much in our society today against Christ's teachings. The church has to decide to make a difference. Therefore, the SBC has to take the stand for Christ. In doing so, expel a church that doesn't teach, preach, live the word of God.

*David R. McEntee
Sturgis*

Judge for yourself

Last year, when the Presbyterians were considering whether to ordain homosexuals, the news greatly agrieved my Christian sensitivity.

Now, I read in the Western Recorder that a Baptist church in Raleigh, N.C., is considering "sanctioning" a "same-gender union" between two homosexual men. When I read this, I was stunned and angry because I know that this is only one of many examples of Baptists being led away from the truth by so-called "enlightened" ministers and teachers. My heart grieves for these Baptists who are frequently subjected to the eternally dangerous theology characterized by patronizing God, minimizing Christ, discrediting the Bible and emphasizing superior intellect of the all-knowing liberal theologians.

Upon reading about this matter I was quickly reminded of the man in I Corinthians 5, who had been cohabiting with his father's wife, and what

Paul told the church to do in this situation. I wondered if the pastor and deacons at this North Carolina church are trying to follow the Bible that I am somewhat familiar with.

But all Southern Baptists use the same Bible and all believe the same basic truths, right? No, wrong! We all do use the same Bible, but the liberals claim complete freedom to interpret the Bible. But judge for yourself: Are these people merely interpreting the Bible, or are they actually repudiating the Bible?

Whether this church adopts this depraved proposal, the cause of Christ and Baptist witness has suffered. What this church is contemplating is shamefully wrong, and it should be upsetting to all Southern Baptists. Pray for the members of this church we should, but until the camel is extricated from the tent, Southern Baptists will continue to suffer these plagues and pestilences.

*Gilbert Sears
Murray*

Praise for Moody

I am a premillennial dispensationalist. Dale Moody was very hostile toward my theology. He was harshly critical of it both privately and even publicly when I happened to be in a congregation where he was preaching. And yet, I loved him dearly.

He was possibly the greatest teacher that I have ever encountered. In later years, he fell into difficulty with both his institution and his denomination because of his views on apostasy. But even here he gave me pause, causing me to rethink the whole issue.

Only a great teacher can be both critical and inspirational.

While I never capitulated to his criticism of my eschatology, I was profoundly influenced by his daring venture into denominational disconformity. While this doctrinal deviation may have cost him, it created a new dimension in my thinking.

I have had three theological crises in my life. One involved the higher critical method—which I came to reject. A second was with premillennial dispensationalism—which I accepted. A third was over the doctrine of apostasy—which I'm still thinking about, thanks to Dale Moody.

*Walter K. Price
Lexington*

Of fathers, sons & chain saws

On a Saturday not long ago, I helped my son trim two of the larger trees in his backyard; one a maple, the other an elm.

While I like working with my chain saw, the big limbs we cut from the trunk had scores of smaller limbs which had to be trimmed. Each of the larger limbs had numerous branches which would yield scores of short pieces, cut into about 24 inch lengths. This would be excellent "starter" wood for him next winter and we piled it near his large stack of fire wood.

However, by the time I was making what was at least the two hundredth cut, my arms and shoulders

were growing weary and I began hurrying—a serious "no-no" when using a chain saw. Steve had been holding the smaller limbs to give them stability while I cut. In a hurried moment, my chain saw cut into his gloved hand. We both feared the worst. Yet somehow, while the teeth had cut through the gloves into two of his fingers, he was spared a disaster. He suffered only two deep cuts which have now almost healed.

He knew how I was feeling and tried to reassure me that he was OK. I was angry at myself for having been so careless and ashamed that it had happened. In a kind of role reversal, he was comforting me!

ON MISSION TOGETHER



William W. Marshall

Worst of all, it made me feel old!

Earlier that morning, I was feeling pretty good that I could handle the chain saw better than he; I had a lot more practice. It especially pleased me that I could jerk-start it much easier than he. Again, more practice.

But as the morning wore on, I wore with it while he seemed to grow stronger. It was he who climbed really high to get at those upper limbs. He went much higher than I would have risked going. The 16-foot ladder extended from the bed of my pickup truck was as high as I would go that day.

After about four hours, we had done what he had asked me to help him do, so I began loading the truck to go home.

I sat on the tailgate talking to him while he finished the clean up and chatted with a neighbor who had come over. Here was this son of mine who has lived in a dozen places dur-

ing his lifetime beginning to feel some permanence. He and Vanessa are making a home here. This was "his" neighbor standing there. These were "his" trees and I was sitting in "his" backyard.

And I experienced some of my own feelings of "belonging"; of having "family"; of having a place to call home and someone to go home to. I celebrated my son's joy by recalling my own.

For so much of our lives, like other ministers, we have moved from place to place. I know the old Negro spiritual says, "This world is not my home, I'm just a passin' through." But it sure feels good to have a "place" to call home and some children nearby.

And I believe the Lord understands if I'm happy about that.

William W. Marshall is executive secretary-treasurer of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

EDITORIALS

Encourage senators to pass 3 abortion bills

A Kentucky Senate committee known for "killing" legislation may strangle three common-sense abortion bills already approved by the House.

The bills are:

■ House Bill 203. This bill would require the state to regulate abortion clinics. It also would require abortion facilities to make written agreements with acute-care hospitals and local ambulance services to ensure adequate care for "patients with unforeseen complications related to an abortion facility procedure."

■ House Bill 479. Known as the "parental-consent" bill, this legislation would require a girl under age 18 to provide "the informed written consent" of one parent or a judge in order to have an abortion.

■ House Bill 565. Also called the "informed-consent" bill, this legislation would require a woman seeking an abortion to receive information about the procedure and the development of her fetus. It then would require her to wait 24 hours before having the abortion.

Everyone knows abortion is an intensely emotional issue. People on both sides use strong language to describe how they feel and to characterize their opponents. Rarely do lawmakers have an opportunity to vote on bills that should be perceived by most citizens as beneficial to women and fetuses. These three bills—passed with strong approval by the House—meet that test.

House Bill 203, which would require regulation of abortion facilities and mandate emergency care, would save lives.

House Bill 479, the parental-consent bill, would prevent a scared teenager from running off to an abortion clinic rather than tell her parents she's pregnant.

House Bill 565, the informed-consent bill, would require a pregnant woman to receive complete information about abortion and her pregnancy. And it then would give her at least one more day to consider

carefully the implications of her decision to have an abortion.

These bills do not involve themselves with the larger issue of the legality of abortion. They do not violate the rights of women, nor do they tread upon the rights of unborn children. They merely require that a decision to have an abortion be thought out carefully and maturely, and that abortions be conducted in an environment that can ensure the safety of the woman.

The bills make sense. They should be passed.

However, Senate President Pro Tem John "Eck" Rose, D-Winchester, has assigned the three abortion bills to the Senate Judiciary Committee. Chairman Kelsey Friend, D-Pikeville, is known for restricting the flow of bills through his committee to a minimum. The bills will die if they never get a reading, much less a vote, in the Judiciary Committee.

Sen. Bob Leeper, D-Paducah, a sponsor of a Senate companion to the parental-consent bill and a member of First Baptist Church of Paducah, has urged Kentuckians concerned about the bills to contact their elected officials. That's especially true for members of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

In addition to Friend, they are Charles Berger, D-Harlan; Jeff Green, D-Mayfield; David Karem, D-Louisville; Joe Meyer, D-Covington; Mike Maloney, D-Lexington; Walter Baker, R-Glasgow; Tim Philpot, R-Lexington; and David Williams, R-Burkesville.

Leeper advises constituents to take a friendly tone when they contact lawmakers, especially about such an emotional issue as abortion.

"A lot of legislators have been alienated during a race by people who took an extreme stance" on abortion, he said. "This has been very detrimental."

To leave a message with your senator about these bills, call (800) 372-7181, toll-free.

Marv Knox

A trio of common-sense abortion bills may die in the Senate Judiciary Committee if lawmakers are not encouraged to bring them out.

Remember your Daddy

One of the saddest chapters of human history is the story of the slave trade that marked the Western world for hundreds of years. John Newton, made famous for penning the hymn "Amazing Grace," once captained a ship that transported human cargo. He writes of the transportation of men and women from the African shores laid, layer upon layer, in the hold of the ship. To his credit, Newton came to Jesus Christ and threw all of his energies into legislation that would treat slaves more humanely.

Out of that history comes a story

of a young man kidnapped from his home in Africa and taken to America on such a ship. After experiencing months of rotten food, disease and the stench of human filth and waste, and seeing the death of many around him, the young man was placed on a platform to be sold. This proud black man stood on the platform with his chin up, his chest out and his eyes fixed straight ahead.

The crowd stirred as they noticed the difference in this young man. But why? The slaver trader explained, "This boy is the son of a king in Africa, ... and he can't forget it."

Christian sister and brother, never forget, as you walk through a world

of moral decay, of death, of sin and of the waste of lives lying in the ship's hold of the Evil One, that you, too, are the child of a King. Remember who your Daddy is (Ephesians 1:3-14)!

Tim Maynard, pastor

Bardstown Junction Baptist Church
Shepherdsville

The daily gift

During her first term in office, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher went to Brighton for government meetings. She checked into her hotel and was involved in her meeting when a bomb exploded that was meant to kill her. She survived the bomb, but four of her closest friends died.

On Sunday, two days later, Prime Minister Thatcher was in church, and the emotional impact of what had happened hit her hard. Partly because of the sadness of losing her friends, and partly because of her gratitude that she was alive, she was moved by the reality that this day of her life was a gift, a gift her enemies had not intended her to have, and tears streamed down her cheeks.

What she realized in that special moment is true of each of us every day, for every day is a gift. We never know when our last day will be, so we must use our gift—life—every day for the Lord and make it count for him.

Jerry Howerton, pastor
Liberty Baptist Church
Russell Springs

MINISTERIALLY SPEAKING

The Lord may 'loveth' a cheerful giver, but this is ridiculous

Of all the presents my dear wife has given me, nothing quite compares to a little something she passed along a week ago Monday.

Actually, she acquired it first, tried it out and then—bless her soul—let me have it.

She could pick hundreds, probably thousands, of things I'd love to get: Sweaters. Tapes. Jackets. Books. Ties. Pictures of our family. A fly rod. A bicycle. Maybe a fountain pen, or even one of those pocket-sized, computerized combination calendar/calculators.

But no—bless her heart—she gave me something she once owned herself: A one-size-fits-all, multi-purpose, wake-you-up-and-make-you-wish-you-could-sell-your-internal-organs stomach virus.

She got it on Monday morning. I thought

she woke up early to make breakfast and get my week off to a hearty start. But when she didn't come out of the bathroom for an hour, I knew we wouldn't be having homemade biscuits.

So, Mr. Mom kicked into action. I got the young 'uns fed, clothed, brushed and off to school. Assured that Joanna could hold her own with a can of 7-Up and a warm bed, I went off to work.

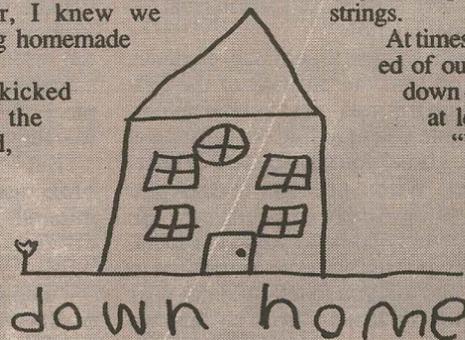
My day at the office ended earlier than usual, when Lindsay got sick in the middle

of Mrs. Harvey's second-grade class. Back home, she joined her mother in bed, and Daddy Do-Right cinched up his apron strings.

At times like these, I'm reminded of our family motto, passed down on my mother's side for at least three generations: "When the going gets tough, the tough disinfect everything."

I threw the towels and washcloths in the washer (On hot. Get those germs.), paid a bedside visit to the

ill and took Molly, a previous survivor of a cousin of this virus, out to eat.



Fortified, Molly headed to the basement to watch TV, and I assaulted the toilet bowls. Lysol has such a virtuous smell. Surely those germs were on the run; they couldn't stand the dreaded cleanliness of this home.

Unfortunately, one of them hid out somewhere. (I'm surprised it didn't come gift-wrapped.) My stomach "rolled" sometime while I folded the cleanest underwear in town, and I struggled upstairs to bed.

To quote an old rock 'n' roll song, "I didn't get to sleep at all" that night. But I did live to see the sun.

That next morning, a perky Joanna brought me 7-Up and took care of the kids. I guess it's true: "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver."

Marv Knox

Seville church could forfeit property without volunteers

SEVILLE, Spain (BP)—Just like Nehemiah in ancient Israel, Seville Baptist Church is working against the clock.

Nehemiah and the Israelites rushed to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem before its enemies descended on it.

The Seville church doesn't face an enemy, but it could lose the property on which its new building stands, plus the congregation's reputation in the community.

When Seville was chosen as host city for an international exposition called "Expo '92," the city's leaders offered Seville Baptist Church a choice piece of land. But there was a condition—a church building had to be completed before the exposition opens in April 1992.

That deadline has left the church in jeopardy.

The Baptist Brotherhood of Alabama entered into a partnership agreement with the church and projected plans for volunteer construction teams

and financial help with materials. Church members in Seville geared up to house and feed the volunteers and work alongside them.

But so far the response of volunteers has not kept up with projections, and construction is behind schedule. Apartments rented to house volunteers stand empty, using church funds they could have directed to the building project.

Now the church faces the possibility of having to hire professional workers to complete the building.

The building project requires experienced bricklayers, plumbers, electricians, tile layers and stucco workers. Meals and housing are available at a daily rate of \$23 per person.

People interested in helping with the Seville project should write Tommy Puckett, Brotherhood director, Alabama Baptist State Convention, Box 11870, Montgomery, Ala. 36111-0870, call him at (205) 288-2460 or send a fax at (205) 288-2461.



10 COMMANDMENTS Teen-agers from Galilea Baptist Church in Managua, Nicaragua, prepare a float depicting the 10 Commandments for a parade held Feb. 16 in Managua honoring the 75th anniversary of the founding of the first Baptist church in Nicaragua. With a population of about 4 million people, Nicaragua has two Baptist conventions with a total of 108 churches combined. (Photo by Charles Ledford)

Five eggs offered as thanks to missionary

MBEYA, Tanzania (BP)—How many four-wheel-drive trucks can be purchased with five eggs? None.

But the symbolic worth of those same eggs was priceless to Jon Lord because of the Tanzanian family who offered them in gratitude.

Lord, a Southern Baptist missionary, was puzzled when a young Tanzanian held out a small plastic bucket of eggs and explained in Swahili: "It's a gift. My wife is alive today because of what you did."

It took a few moments for Lord to make the connection, but then he remembered a trip he had made several months earlier to the rugged, mountainous area where Baptists have some strong churches.

While attending a meeting, Lord received word from a local clinic that a woman was bleeding from a miscarriage. She would die unless she could make it to the Catholic hospital—a trip across a mountain pass and down a winding track.

Thanks to the traction and power of Lord's four-wheel truck, the woman got there in time.

"That mission of mercy was possible because Southern Baptists support their missionaries and want to see we're equipped to do the job," Lord pointed out. "Four-wheel-drive vehicles are expensive to purchase and maintain—but time and again they have proven their worth in countries like Tanzania.

"Five eggs don't go very far toward defraying the expense of my truck," he said. "So let them be a symbol of gratitude to all Southern Baptists who pray and give so the message of life may be carried around the world."

Nine Kentuckians join Fellowship's trip to Ruschlikon

RUSCHLIKON, Switzerland—Nine Kentuckians made up the second-largest delegation from a single state on a fact-finding trip to the Baptist seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland.

A total of 50 people participated in the Feb. 16-21 trip, which was sponsored by the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

North Carolina had the largest number of participants, with 17. Other states represented included Texas, Virginia, Georgia, South Carolina, Tennessee and Missouri.

Kentuckians interviewed on the trip by Associated Baptist Press said they were impressed and moved by what they saw.

"Being here woke up some of the missionary in me," said Don Mantooth, pastor of First Baptist Church in Morehead and former Southern Baptist missionary in Israel.

John Dunaway, pastor of First Baptist Church in Corbin, said he was impressed with the Ruschlikon seminary students who are "sacrificing all they can to be there."

Dunaway warned, "We can't afford to lose this significant group of students."

Other participants said they came away from the visit with a greater appreciation for the embattled seminary, which lost funding from the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in trustee actions taken last fall.

"Baptists back home don't know how crucial and central Ruschlikon is to Baptists in Europe," said Mike Jamison, a pastor from Greensboro, N.C.

John Hewett, moderator of the Fellowship and organizer of the tour, said he had received "a new mission vision" during the trip. "I think we have found direction," he said.

While at Ruschlikon, Hewett delivered a check for \$240,898 and a promise of continued help. The check, representing gifts from churches and

individuals in the United States, was presented to seminary President John David Hopper.

Hopper held back tears as he accepted the check. "We appreciate this commitment to partnership because we need each other," he said. "It represents lives. It represents scholarships, faculty salaries. It represents investment in the kingdom of God."

Hopper told the visiting group the decision of FMB trustees to defund the seminary of its \$365,000 allocation "has brought the biggest crisis perhaps in history" between the FMB and Baptists across the world.

"For us, it's not the money," Hopper said. "The money can be replaced, but not the trust on which everything else is built."

That loss of trust was evident in the words of Ruben Richards of South Africa, Ruschlikon's student body president, who thanked the Fellowship on behalf of students.

"You meet people who want to manipulate your thinking, who want to manipulate your life, and personally, as a black South African, that doesn't go down well," Richards said. "I'm sick and tired of being pushed around, especially by white people. Your presence here today, and your tangible gift, is an expression of your solidarity with us, and affirms that we are one in Christ."

In an address to seminary students, Hewett said the purpose of the Fellowship trip was "not to come and investigate you or to find out what parts of the gospel you have missed or overlooked. We did not come to teach you how to be American Christians. We have simply come to hold your hand, to sing praises with you, and listen to you, and ask you to tell us about your journey in Jesus Christ so that we might learn what God is up to in your midst."

The Ruschlikon seminary is small by Southern Baptist standards, with eight teachers and about 50 students

on campus. Another 150 church leaders receive training each year through one of three institutes.

Over the years, Ruschlikon has trained 1,500 church leaders from 60 countries. The seminary also hosts conferences for European Baptists and serves as a hub for Baptist activity on the continent.

Also during the trip, the U.S. Baptists met with three European Baptist leaders who said they would welcome the Fellowship's help in doing mission work.

"You have the understanding of mission partnership that the Foreign Mission Board had for so many years," said Hans Guderian, secretary of home missions for the Baptist Union of Germany.

"We want to try every way possible to keep the missionaries that we have here and keep the same kind of missionaries coming," said Karl-Heinz Walter, executive director of the European Baptist Federation.

The FMB/Ruschlikon controversy has caused "a great unrest and instability" among missionaries in Europe, said John Merritt, general secretary of the European Baptist Convention, the association of English-speaking churches on the continent.

Walter and Guderian agreed the dispute over Southern Baptist Convention missions in Europe is taking a toll on FMB missionaries. "The missionaries in Europe are just torn up in pieces because they don't know the real future," Walter said.

But Steve Hardy, chairman of the FMB trustee committee that oversees missions work in Europe, offered a different view when contacted by ABP.

"I do not consider that the trustees of the Foreign Mission Board are moving us in a radically new direction in terms of our mission work in Europe," said Hardy, a North Carolina pastor. "The primary emphasis of the Foreign Mission Board is evangelism

that results in churches. If that's a new direction, then I wonder what the old one was."

Hardy would not speculate on suggestions that most missionaries in Europe—perhaps as many as 98 percent—are in sympathy with the Fellowship. "I have heard from more than 2 percent who would not take that approach," he said.

The tour group also met with veteran Southern Baptist missionary Earl Martin, who announced he will retire earlier than planned because of what he calls the FMB's "new direction."

"I just can't work with the direction that is coming, (or) is already here," he said.

Although seminary policy requires that Martin leave his teaching post when he turns 65 in November, he had planned to continue his missionary service in another setting, an FMB administrator said.

Martin served as a missionary for 25 years in several East African countries, opening Southern Baptist mission work in Kenya.

Charles Thomas, who resigned as a missionary in January to protest FMB actions, also spoke to the group. Thomas paid his own expenses to travel to Ruschlikon, where he met with Fellowship officials who are interested in hiring the couple as their first missionaries.

After his brief greeting to the Fellowship group, Thomas received a standing ovation. Four participants later took up an impromptu offering for the Thomases totaling about \$600. Thomas returned \$100 of it as a contribution to the Fellowship's missions efforts.

Other Kentuckians traveling with the group were Geneva Muntz of Paris, Stephen Oliver of Cadiz, Gabe Payne of Cadiz, Floyd Price of Ekron, Harold Skaggs of Cadiz, Jean Stewart of Paris and Jack Weir of Morehead.

Reported by Greg Warner of Associated Baptist Press

Look to family for source of child's stress

By Terri Lackey
SBC Sunday School Board

NASHVILLE (BP)—A child arrives at the day care center or preschool class at church and immediately heads for a corner, where he speaks to no one for the entire day.

Or perhaps, a normally good-natured child becomes irritable and restless. Maybe he even begins hitting other children or constantly crying.

"What you have is a stressed-out child," said Maurice Graham, a pastoral counselor and associate pastor of Bon Air Baptist Church of Richmond, Va. "What we usually try to do, then, is fix the child, and what we should be doing is fixing the parent," he told participants in a seminar sponsored by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

Understanding a child involves understanding at least two family generations above that child, Graham said. Church workers, as opposed to grade-school teachers, have an advantage here because they probably are acquainted with the child's parents and perhaps his grandparents.

When leaders are familiar with a child's background, they usually find it easier to pinpoint the cause of stress, he said.

Graham said adults who see signs of stress in children usually tend to ignore those signals and say, "They are just children, they'll get over it," or "They're too young to know what's going on (in the family)."

But he said: "Children are more traumatized by stressful events than adults. They are deeply affected by life situations."

Most commonly, children experience stress because of the separation or divorce of their parents, Graham said. "Divorce is the most traumatic event a child can experience."

Parents owe it to their children to tell them the truth about what is happening in their marriages, Graham said. Waiting and hiding the truth only delays the child's recovery from the trauma, he said.

Graham advised the children's workers not to adhere to the cliché that "time heals all wounds" when dealing with a child's pain.

"If you don't deal with that child's

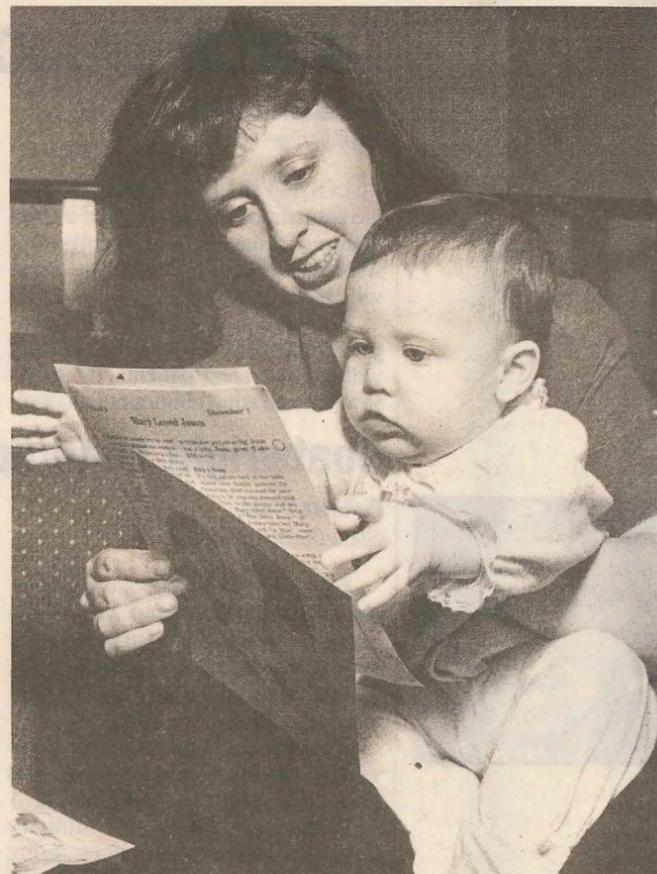
pain in a very short amount of time, they only get a deeper wound," he said. "If you wait too long, it's hard to get them back to experience that original pain."

Some signs of stress in children include irritability, impulsive behavior, restlessness, inability to concentrate, loss of sense of humor or sense of joy, fatigue, excessive sleeping or insomnia, verbal or physical aggressiveness, sudden weight loss or gain and hyperactivity.

When children's workers see little ones behaving differently than usual, don't ignore it, Graham advised. "Spend time unraveling their story."

Children often experience stress because their home life is hectic, Graham said: "We need to be very careful as preschool/children's workers that we don't buy into this urgency. We need to help the child slow down. Our sense of urgency just raises the child's stress level."

"Help children learn the life skill of slowing down. Show them they can take their time and enjoy an activity without feeling like they will be left out of something else."



EARLY LEARNER Leah Solomon, a member of First Baptist Church in Clarksville, Ind., shows her 8-month-old daughter, Ashley, a picture of baby Jesus featured in a recent issue of "Beginning," weekly take-home picture cards produced by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board. (Photo by Jim Veneman)

You're invited ... in seven years

NASHVILLE (BP)—It's still seven years away, but elementary school children across the country will be invited to the largest Southern Baptist youth celebration of the century.

The Southern Baptist inter-agency council recently approved preliminary plans for YouthLink 2000—simultaneous youth celebrations at indoor stadiums and convention centers across the United States Dec. 29-31, 1999. Organizers hope to draw more than 120,000 young people to the three-day event.

"Only once since the birth of Christ have Christians welcomed in a new millennium," said Richard Ross, youth ministry consultant at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board and co-chairman of the YouthLink 2000 steering committee. "Today's children—tomorrow's youth—will have the chance to welcome it together in a series of celebrations that will likely be the launch for a new dream to follow Bold Mission Thrust."

Ross said YouthLink 2000 will offer a variety of activities at each location, including Bible studies, worship experiences, concerts, missions exhibits and a host of workshops and seminars. The event will climax with a celebration service New Year's Eve.

"New Year's Eve 1999 is going to be one of if not the biggest nights of celebration this century," Ross said, explaining the long-term plans. "All kinds of groups are going to be sponsoring parties and events. If we don't go ahead and reserve space this year, we won't have anywhere to go seven years from now."

Isolation traps children today, author says

Continued from page 1

dangerous that they really are. Everybody comes in the house off the streets and nobody is out there, except you know who."

Louv talked to parents about the reality of parenting and to children about what it's like to be a child today. What he discovered from his conversations with parents is that most feel isolated.

"Parents don't talk to each other about how it feels to be a parent," he said. Likewise, many do not see the church as the ideal place to discuss feelings of inadequate parenting skills or possible discord in family life.

"As a consequence of that isolation, parents turn to parenting books," he said, but what they really need is to talk to each other and discover the feelings they experience are similar.

Family time together has dropped 40 percent in the last 10 to 15 years, he said. People are working 164 more hours a year than they were two decades ago.

"You can forget the 40-hour week. We are under enormous pressure to increase our workload," he said. "A 40-hour work week is a thing of the past."

Family time also is sacrificed when both parents work. And the result of two working parents usually is angry children, he said.

"Kids are quite forgiving of their parents," Louv said. "They talk with compassion about their parents and how hard they work. But underneath there is this level of rage, and they're not sure who to be angry at."

Kids are not getting positive adult interaction, Louv said, explaining they need that influence to grow up happy and well-rounded.

Teachers or parents don't have much time to spend with children, Louv said. "The No. 1 issue in education today is not the curriculum but the emotional health of the children, and that is linked to how much positive adult content they get."

Louv suggested parents take a pro-

active role in remedying the breakdown of family ties and closeness.

Start by talking with other parents on a regular basis to eliminate feelings of isolation, he advised. Parents could become a part of a networking system or join parental workshops.

Employees with children might ask their employers to create a family friendly workplace which grants flexible working hours and a benefits plan that includes more time off to be with families.

He said teachers could broaden the discussion in the classroom to family issues, including divorce, remarriage and traditional values.

He encouraged parents to initiate legislation to create family-friendly cities where families might spend time together in city parks, pitching ball, walking or riding bicycles.

Louv said senior adults could be the "winner soldiers" of the new family movement by spending time volunteering in classrooms or community activities.

Computer teaching supplement available soon

By Frank White
SBC Sunday School Board

NASHVILLE (BP)—A computer network supplement for youth Sunday school teachers will be piloted nationwide for six months by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

Also, more timely materials for youth leaders will be available in printed form next month.

The computer supplement, "Youth Life and Work Series: Extra!" will be available March 26 for first use on April 4. That will mark the beginning of a six-month pilot on SBCNet, the Southern Baptist computer network operated by the board on CompuServe, a worldwide service.

The materials for use April 4 will be written by March 24 and posted on

the computer network two days later, said Richard Barnes, design editor for youth Life and Work Series materials.

The computer supplement will be available on the network 10 days before the date of the Bible study session, to allow teachers time to prepare, Barnes said.

The first volume of the printed materials, "StraighTrak: Teen Bible Studies on Current Issues," will be available next month, said Judy Wooldridge, editor of the materials.

She said the goal is to have less than a four-month turn-around from the time writer assignments are made to the issue date.

StraighTrak volumes will be released at the beginning of each quarter and will include materials for 10 Bible study sessions. Each volume

will appear on dated curriculum order forms for the first quarter and then will remain on undated order forms for the next seven quarters.

The first volume will include three studies on alcohol, three on friendship, three on sex and one on world events. The study will provide materials for teachers in a brief two-page format for each session.

The electronic materials will be available to any church subscribing to SBCNet at no charge other than the CompuServe usage fee.

An SBCNet kit providing access to CompuServe and all SBCNet materials is available for \$20 from the board's customer service center.

For further information about SBCNet, contact David Haywood at (615) 251-2895.

By accessing a computer network, youth teachers can obtain information that relates each lesson to current events.

Church preaches by listening through support groups

By Melanie Childers
Staff Writer

LOUISVILLE—Listening to people sometimes makes a bigger impact than preaching to them, members of Beechland Baptist Church in Louisville have discovered.

The church has formed four support groups to speak to people dealing with cancer, heart patients, the grief-stricken and adult children of alcohol-

ics.

The weekly support groups are designed as loosely structured and discussion-oriented meetings to provide an open, confidential forum where feelings can be shared freely. Facilitators often listen more than they talk.

Wanda Burkhardt, a registered nurse and administrative supervisor in the oncology unit at Methodist Hospital, serves as co-leader of the cancer support group.

"As we looked at the congregation, we saw many needs, some of which were not being met," she explained.

Support groups seemed to be the natural setting for the church to provide a holistic approach to healing for people who have no other means of support, she added.

Pastor Kenneth Hollis is trained in support groups and counseling and has been instrumental in helping the program get off the ground.

Each group is led by a team: one member who has professional skills in the area and one who has personal experience with the circumstances. Hollis said it is important that both the professional and personal facets of group leadership are emphasized.

Hollis is optimistic about the results so far. "The groups have been very well received and have gotten off to a good start," he said.

As a ministry of the church, the support groups provide a sense of community. "It's easy for persons to

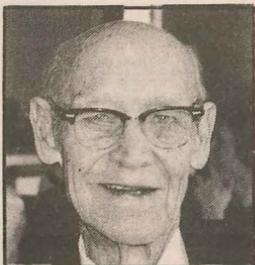
develop closer relationships in similar situations," Hollis explained.

The groups also facilitate outreach by the church. Already, the groups have elicited participation from beyond the church walls.

"Every church has families with problems. This is another way of supporting, of saying, 'If there's anything I can do to help, I'm here,'" said Lucille Willoughby, grief support group co-leader.

Boatwright honored upon retirement

By Marc Whitt
State Correspondent



FRANKFORT—About 200 people gathered in Frankfort March 1 to honor 64 years of Christian ministry and the retirement of Roy Boatwright, director of missions for Franklin Baptist Association since 1980.

The retirement reception for Boatwright and his wife, Ella Faye, was held at Crestwood Baptist Church.

Boatwright's life and ministry have revolved around encouraging others, said Larry Cook, minister of music at Frankfort's First Baptist Church.

Bob Jones of the Kentucky Baptist Convention staff compared Boatwright to E.F. Hutton: "When Roy Boatwright speaks, everybody listens."

Jones said Boatwright "has always had a wonderful ability to change with the times while working with people." He cited Boatwright's accomplish-

ments in starting churches, preaching, teaching and generating enthusiasm for ministry.

Malcolm Lunceford, interim pastor at Georgetown Baptist Church, said Boatwright's life could be summed up in three words: inspiration, encouraging and teaching.

After several speakers praised Boatwright's life and ministry, he rose to offer his own comments.

"When I walk into every church in this association, the people are smiling, praying and singing," he said. "There is a good sense of love here."

"No one can be successful without someone putting his faith in you. I am grateful for the amount of faith illustrated by the Franklin Association to me. I love you very, very much."

In honor of his retirement, the association presented Boatwright with two checks amounting to \$5,000. In addition, Boatwright received a letter of commendation from Gov. Brereton Jones.

Reaching out to love

Have you ever gotten so comfortable with your life that you lose sight of what a blessing each day is? Often it seems those who have the least are the first to realize the simple things they do have that add up to so much.

Sometimes it takes moving out of our comfort zone to discover the gifts that truly are ours—and the gifts that can be ours when we reach beyond the bounds of our cozy homes into the world that Jesus loves and saves.

In fact, following the example of our Lord would mean moving into situations that may even make us uncomfortable. But ultimately the reward is ours. Each time we reach beyond ourselves, we grow.

Recently, Bradley Cottage on our Spring Meadows campus decided they wanted to do something for those outside their own circle of comfort.

A group of seven girls and their teaching parents chose to reach out to a group of senior citizens living at a local nursing home. They took homemade gifts and food. But what meant the most to the seniors was their youthful joy and spirit of caring.

Since their first trip, Bradley Cottage has returned to the nursing home again. Victoria Dawodu, one of the cottage teaching parents, says the group of girls hasn't stopped talking about the experience yet. And the residents of the nursing home can't wait until the girls come for another visit.

That's really what sharing is all about. Sharing our time and our lives with each other benefits everyone in the long run. We learn more about others and more about ourselves. And most importantly, we learn more about being made

alive in Christ.

If you'd like to hear more about the Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children story, call our speaker's bureau at (800) 456-1386. We would be honored to share our message of love with your fellowship.

Following in the footsteps of our Lord and learning from the example set by these children who have so little, I hope you'll consider what you can do today to move out of your comfort zone and minister to another.

Even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

HOMES FOR CHILDREN



Curtis Mooney is president of Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children, 10801 Shelbyville Rd., Middletown, Ky. 40243.

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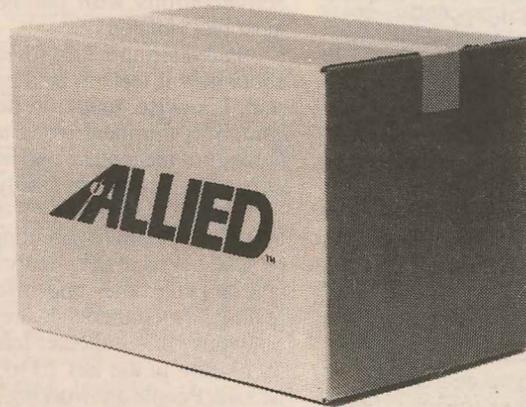


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CHURCHES

German churches had informants

BERLIN (EP)—As many as 3,000 Protestant church officials acted as informants for the East German secret service, "Stasi," according to Berlin church historian Gerhard Besier.

Since Stasi files were opened to the public, 150 informants have been exposed, and church leaders are concerned about the possible effects of exposing more of them.

Besier, who has written a book on the subject, said Stasi not only monitored churches but also tried to influence decisions and harassed dissident groups meeting in the churches.

Blaze guts Owensboro's Walnut Street

OWENSBORO—More than 100 years of church history went up in flames March 1, when fire destroyed the sanctuary of Walnut Street Baptist Church in Owensboro.

Church council members first smelled smoke about 5:30 p.m. Soon, a fireball ripped through the 113-year-old building, sending church members, fire fighters and neighboring homeowners scurrying for safety.

Nobody was hurt, but the worship building was destroyed.

The building's construction—with heavy timber trusses and unsupported masonry walls—was "made to burn," said Owensboro Fire Marshal Steve Leonard. "When the trusses come down, they usually push the walls out. We're lucky the pillar supports on the

end kept that from happening."

Firefighters contained the blaze to the sanctuary building, protecting an attached educational building and nearby homes. Water and smoke damaged the educational building. Heat broke windows and buckled siding on the houses.

However, a "flashover" blast—fueled by trapped 2,000-degree heat—blew out the top of the building and showered ash and embers as far as five blocks away.

Fire inspectors said last week they do not suspect arson, but they were uncertain what started the fire.

Looking at the ruins of their sanctuary, church members grieved.

"It hurts," said Louis Hammack, a deacon and member since 1955. "You

get used to a certain worship area. Those windows had old family names on them. They had doves, anchors, crosses. They're irreplaceable."

Nan Davis started coming to the church in 1932. "My grandmother and aunt had come before that," she said. "It's like losing one of your own."

The church's interim pastor, Denzil Probus, was ordained in the church almost 49 years ago.

Church services were held at the Daviess-McLean Baptist Association's building last Wednesday night and Sunday. The congregation will meet there Wednesday, March 11, to decide where to meet later.

Information on this story was gathered from articles reported by the Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer.

Baptists give 52 cents per person for hunger

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (ABP)—Southern Baptists gave an average of 52 cents per person to meet worldwide hunger needs in 1991, according to figures from the Southern Baptist Convention's foreign and home mission boards.

The 15 million Southern Baptists, who comprise the nation's largest Protestant denomination, gave \$7.8 million in 1991 through their national mission boards, which are responsible for hunger ministries.

"We gave individually for an entire year the cost of one can of soda to feed the hungry," said Robert Parham, who heads the Nashville-based Baptist Center for Ethics. "For a wealthy denomination like ours, that amount is a far cry even from the biblical imperative of giving a cup of water in Jesus' name. It's more like an eyedropper."

The 1991 figure was an increase of less than 1 percent over 1990. Total hunger gifts in the Southern Baptist Convention have declined since 1985, when Southern Baptists recorded their largest-ever annual contribution of \$11.8 million.

The Home Mission Board, which handles contributions for stateside hunger needs, received \$1.33 million in 1991, compared to \$1.3 million in 1990.

Receipts for hunger abroad through the Foreign Mission Board were \$6.5 million, a slight increase from the \$6.48 million received in 1990.

Pastors staying longer at churches, 1991 statistics reveal

Continued from page 1

tend to stay longer at churches than music ministers.

Figures released by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board in 1986 indicate ministers of music average 3.2 years in each church. Wesley Forbis, director of the board's church music department, said he believes if such data were gathered today, average tenure would be shorter.

Meanwhile, the tenure of youth ministers is increasing. The most recent study on youth ministers showed an average tenure of 3.2 years.

Youth ministers also are staying in the field longer, contends Richard

Ross, youth ministry consultant with the Sunday School Board.

"I have seen a dramatic difference in the ages of the youth ministers coming for training in the last five years," Ross said. "We are getting a lot of folks now in their 40s, and a few, usually two or three at each conference, in their 50s. That is something you would never have seen a few years ago."

Ross said many youth ministers now are viewing their ministry as a career calling instead of a stepping-stone to other church staff positions.

Still, the average tenure of pastors is perhaps the most-watched statistic

related to church staffs nationwide. The short tenures reported in recent years are cited as contributors to church instability and conflict.

Sunday School Board statistician Lowry and consultant Norris Smith cited six possible explanations for the increase in pastoral tenure:

■ Larger churches. The number of large churches in the SBC is increasing, and pastors tend to remain longer at larger churches.

■ Supply and demand. The supply of available pastors in the SBC exceeds the demand, so pastors are less likely to leave a stable position.

■ Finances. Some pastors are more reluctant to leave their churches because they are making a good salary or they own their own home.

■ Educational needs. When moving from one community to the next there is no guarantee of a good school system for the children.

■ Health problems. Some pastors can't leave because they or someone in their family is suffering from poor

health and needs to be near a certain health center or hospital.

■ Other family jobs. Many pastors' wives work. If they have good insurance or are in line for a promotion, that could impact the pastor.

Although all the factors may encourage pastors to stay longer, Smith said some congregations don't give their pastors a choice.

Recent statistics on forced terminations showed 116 Southern Baptist pastors were being fired each month.

"I don't see any sign of those numbers decreasing," Smith said. "Sometimes those terminations are justified, as in cases of moral failure. But sometimes either the pastor or the church members just aren't willing to sit down and try to work things out."

Some congregations, Smith said, also have a "cultural agenda" against long pastoral tenure. "They have kind of a family situation, and they are only going to let the pastor do so much."

Reported by Chip Alford and Charles Willis of the SBC Sunday School Board

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PEOPLE

KENTUCKY KERNELS

Severns Valley Baptist Church in Elizabethtown is considered the first church established in Kentucky. The church was founded June 18, 1781, and took its name from the valley where it was located. John Gerrard, the first pastor, was captured by an Indian tribe 11 months later and never heard from again.

Mountains to the Mississippi

■ **BEAVER DAM**—Beaver Dam Church ordained **John Cashion** and **Doug King** to the ministry.
 ■ **BENTON**—**Tim Cole** is serving South Marshall Church as pastor.
 Zion's Cause Church ordained **Larry Davis, Dennis Foust** and **Bob Little** as deacons.
 ■ **BOND**—Bond Church called **Roger Williams** as pastor. He previously served at Corinth Church in London.
 ■ **CARRIE**—Montgomery Church called **Kenneth Salmons** as pastor. He previously served First Church in Garrett.
 ■ **CATLETTSBURG**—Oakland Av-

enue Church called **David Riggs** as pastor.
 ■ **COALGOOD**—**Clarence Hensley** is serving Lenarue Church as pastor.
 ■ **EVARTS**—Red Bud Missionary Church called **David Napier** as pastor.
 ■ **GARRETT**—First Church called **Randy Osborne** as interim pastor.
 ■ **GRAY**—Grays Church called **Coy Brewer** as interim pastor.
 ■ **GRAYSON**—**Lee Gore** is serving Barretts Creek Church as pastor.
 ■ **HARTFORD**—Adaburg Church called **Bill Holladay** as interim.

27 churches sing in youth festival

LOUISVILLE—A group of 372 junior and senior high school singers from 27 Kentucky churches gathered in Louisville for the annual State Youth Choir Festival Feb. 28-29.

Hurstbourne Baptist Church hosted the weekend event of concerts, mass rehearsals, worship and adjudication.

Serving as guest conductor was Beth Mears, choral director at Eastern High School and a member at Crescent Hill Baptist Church in Louisville. Phil Christopher, pastor of Highland Baptist Church in Louisville, was worship leader.

The event was sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention's church music department. Department Director Jim Cordell said a com-

mon repertoire was preselected and then rehearsed by the individual choirs before they arrived for the festival.

"We try to select a variety of music for the festival," he said. "We want to choose practical numbers they can use in their own churches, but we also like to have one full festival piece to challenge them and help them grow."

One of the benefits of the choir festival, Cordell said, is that even if only half of a church's youth choir is able to come, they can still receive a satisfying and enjoyable musical experience.

The festival concluded Saturday afternoon with a worship service that incorporated all the music from the weekend.

■ **HENDERSON**—**L.M. Huff**, director of missions for Green Valley Association, requests prayers for his wife, Peggy, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
 ■ **JEFFERSONVILLE**—Jeffersonville Church called **John Ryder** as associate pastor.
 ■ **LONDON**—Robinson Creek Church called **Geral Wells** as pastor. Corinth Church called **Kevin Roach** as interim pastor.
 ■ **LOUISVILLE**—**Gerald Keown**, associate professor of Old Testament interpretation at Southern Seminary, has been elected president of the school's Faculty Association.
 ■ **MARTIN**—First Church called **Tony Peffer** as interim pastor.
 ■ **MIDDLETOWN**—**Kris Magner** is the new Northern Kentucky representative for Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children.
 ■ **PADUCAH**—Baptist Tabernacle called **Frank Queen** as pastor.
Don Presley, pastor of Trinity Church, was ordained to the ministry

by Lone Oak First Church.
 ■ **PINEVILLE**—Old Straight Creek Church called **Wallace Good** as pastor.
 ■ **ROCKPORT**—Rockport Church ordained **Bobby Sublett** and **Lloyd Allen** as deacons.
 ■ **SHEPHERDSVILLE**—Shepherdsville Baptist Chapel observed a note-burning ceremony.
 ■ **SOMERSET**—Immanuel Church called **Jeff Whitis** as minister of youth.
 ■ **WINCHESTER**—Emmanuel Church called **Dan Newton** as pastor. He had been serving the church as interim.

MISSIONARY UPDATE:

■ **Thomas and Phyllis Baker**, missionaries to Spain, are on the field at Apartado 3, 28180 Alcobendas, Madrid, Spain. She is a Kentucky native.

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Former Oneida students recall love for school

One of our students who came to us in the '70s, now married with a daughter and son and a college graduate, recently wrote: "The fact that you took time out of your obviously full schedule to write me is a testament of the level of caring that has identified Oneida for so many years. I do feel that Oneida will always be a home to me. The excitement I felt talking to members of your staff when I visited, people that I grew to know and love as a student, is something I find very difficult to replace."

"I makes me proud to know that the school has so much more to offer since I attended. To think that I believed it could not improve upon itself seems quite ludicrous to me now. My years there were the best of my life. It makes me wish I could go back and attend the school again. Please know that the endeavors of the school are kept in my prayers and dear in my heart."

"I have striven throughout the years to maintain the values that were planted in me as a student. Through even the toughest parts of my life these values have supported me in maintaining my faith in God and the abilities he has blessed me with. I owe a great deal to Oneida and her staff. I can only hope that someday I can repay my debt, though what has been given me has value immeasurable. May God bless you in future projects."

One of our '91 graduates wrote from Marine basic training: "I miss the comforting feelings of Oneida although I never thought I would say it. I remember the long talks we had to keep me from leaving OBI and the mistake I made of leaving. But luckily I came back and graduated. I'd like to thank you personally for all the time you've

invested in me. I know others feel the same, although we don't show it well. I got to participate in things there that we wouldn't get to do at our old school."

From one of our girls we had to expel a year ago who's been working full-time since: "I hope things are going well at Oneida. I can't believe at times how much I miss being there. I'd like to come back and graduate. I know what I did was wrong and stupid and I'd like to think I'm a lot smarter now."

ONEIDA JOURNAL



Barkley Moore

"In my work over a thousand miles from Oneida, I meet a lot of people who have heard of the school. It is always nice to talk to them. I don't tell them I was kicked out. I'm always too ashamed. I apologize for what I did and the trouble I caused the school. I would really appreciate it if you would let me come back and finish."

Yes, we are doing just that. Please pray that this story may have a happy conclusion. A penitent heart is a prerequisite to forgiveness.

Parents writing: "My wife and I thank all of you at Oneida for everything you have allowed the Lord to do through you in helping our son to grow and develop in every way, including spiritually. Thanks to all who have reached out in such love."

If you don't get our four-page bi-monthly publication, the Mountaineer, we will be glad to send it to you at no cost. It is printed in our own print shop. The advantage of the paper over this column is that we are able to publish many pictures of events and people I write about in this column. If you enjoy this column, you will like our paper.

Barkley Moore is president of Oneida Baptist Institute, Oneida, Ky. 40972

Paid Column

An answer to prayer

Longtime Clear Creek friend and 1955 graduate W.B. Bingham II is recovering from surgery. The Middlesboro pastor and former Kentucky Pastors' Conference officer had a unique prayer experience prior to his hospitalization. Binghamtown Baptist Church member Rod Mason described it: "They came ... from their houses, from the mall, from the grocery, from their shopping, from the workplaces."

"If you drove by Binghamtown at 2 p.m. Jan. 4, you might have thought there was a funeral or a wedding. The parking lot was filled."

"They came to pray. They did not come to hear a speaker or a singer. They did not come to eat. There was no entertainment or program or schedule. Only prayer."

"They came to pray for their pastor—a man who has shepherded the same flock for over 40 years; a man who has baptized us, married us, buried us, carried us and given us his youngest son. It is our turn to minister to him."

"He spoke to us, haltingly, with tears. He expressed his concern for others, several who were present, themselves battling diseases and weary from sickness. He said he did not want reward. He said he

already had been blessed beyond anything he could imagine or think. He said he was willing to go on or stay—whatever the Lord wanted to do with him. Then he spoke glowingly of the Savior's love.

"W.B. and Mae sat beneath the pulpit cross while they came. Families knelt to pray for them. Couples, individuals, old, young, rich, poor. They came to pray and nothing else mattered. None wanted to leave. Everyone felt a change, a transfiguration, if you will. Surely, the Lord was in this place. We were one with him. The ground was holy."

"Whatever the outcome, God heard those prayers. There was such an outpouring of love for W.B. and all

his family. I'm expecting a miracle. Nothing would surprise me! He is able. He is on the throne. His arm is not short. He is touched by our infirmities. Glory to God in the highest. Praise his holy name!

"They came. 'And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand' (Rev. 8:4)."

Bill Whittaker is president of Clear Creek Baptist Bible College, Pineville, Ky. 40977

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill D. Whittaker

Paid Column

LEARNING

Board looks to future in electronics

By Charles Willis
SBC Sunday School Board

NASHVILLE (BP)—The future of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board will be to put computer technology within the reach of every Southern Baptist church, the agency's trustees were told last month.

The Sunday School Board has begun a strategic initiative to become the electronic communications center for the 15.2-million member denomination, said Charles Wilson, assistant vice president for business.

He urged trustees to think of the board's Church Information System as a "technological link between the Sunday School Board and churches. We want to put computer technology within the reach of every church in the Southern Baptist Convention."

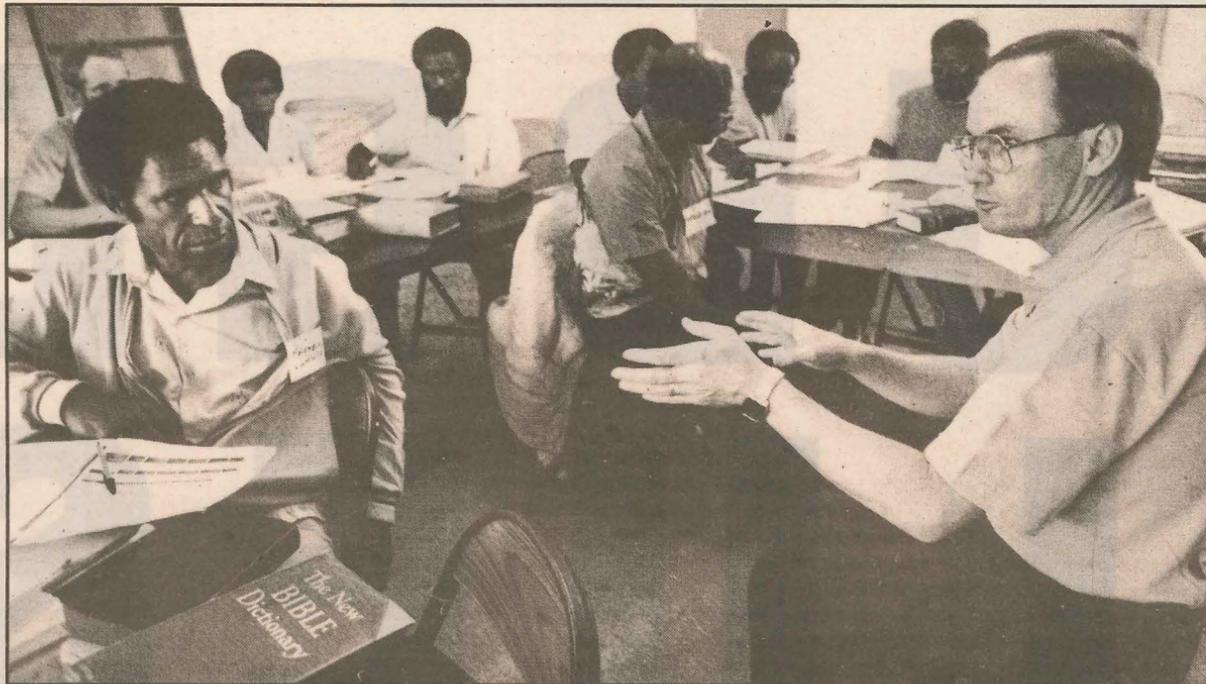
He said he hopes the system will "help link together resources the Sunday School Board has with resources of other Baptist entities to make those available to a broader base of people. There is the possibility we could tie in every church and entity in the SBC as equal participants in the process. The Sunday School Board's role would be coordinator for the volume of information on the system."

The potential to provide demographic information for effective ministry and up-to-the-minute applications for Sunday school lesson materials will enable churches to be more effective in ministry, he said.

SBCNet, begun in April 1991, already provides computer networking primarily among SBC agencies, state conventions and associations.

David Haywood, SBCNet system operator in the board's office of communications, told trustees SBCNet has the capability to provide the latest teaching helps for any age group as well as data on communities.

At least 8,000 Southern Baptist churches already have computer capabilities, said Bill Peter, specialist in customer research and applications. Last year, half of those churches sent their reports to the Sunday School Board on computer disk.



SUNDAY SCHOOL ELSEWHERE Richard Barnes (right), youth curriculum editor at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, leads a session on developing curriculum for Baptists from throughout Papua New Guinea during a recent conference sponsored by the Baptist World Alliance. In addition to focusing on Bible study in the United States, the Sunday School Board provides assistance to areas of mission work. The Sunday School Board may soon begin marketing its materials in Chile. (BP photo by Jim Veneman)

'Mentors' needed for potential ministers

By Chip Alford
SBC Sunday School Board

NASHVILLE (BP)—It's an all-too-familiar story.

Johnny comes forward during the invitation to tell the pastor he feels called into Christian ministry. The pastor prays with him and encourages the congregation to do the same. And then the matter is dropped and, not surprisingly, so are Johnny's plans to enter the ministry.

"Too many young people are slipping through the cracks because people aren't taking the time to nurture and encourage them," said Donna Gandy, a church staff support consultant for the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board. "They need that because without it we will lose a lot of them along the way."

A key to successful vocational guidance is to develop a one-on-one "mentor" relationship with people who have expressed interest in Christian ministries, Gandy said.

"When I talk with people in ministry vocations about their calling, they all say there was some key person

who really helped and encouraged them, someone who served as their mentor," she said.

However, a recent study conducted by Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville showed "mentor" relationships may be declining.

Few of the people identified as "quality pastors" in the study said they were taking intentional measures to nurture people toward ministry.

The study also showed few of the pastors were issuing special invitations for young people to respond to a call to ministry, although many of them said they made their ministry commitment, in response to such an invitation.

One of Gandy's jobs at the Sunday School Board is to help make ministers and others aware of the need to make vocational guidance a priority. Toward that end, she helped organize a Southern Baptist vocational guidance workgroup.

One of the workgroup's first projects has been to develop a new "Guide to Southern Baptist Vocations," set for release in November. It will include explanatory articles on

about 30 ministerial vocations from the following categories: church staff, missions/denominational work, education, business administration/finance, communication, technical/support and counseling/social ministry.

The guide, to be updated every other year, also will include an employment outlook for each vocation and a list of information resources.

In addition to working on the new vocational guide, Gandy also maintains the board's vocational guidance registry, with more than 12,000 names.

The names of people who write the board for more information about ministry vocations are entered into the registry, and then they are sent brochures with information about their areas of interest. The board also writes the pastors of those who write to encourage them to nurture the potential ministers or Christian workers.

In April, Southern Baptists observe Life Commitment Month. The last Sunday of the month, April 26, is Life Commitment Sunday. The 1992 theme is "Finding Your Place in Ministry: Preparation."

Innovation cited as key to growth

NASHVILLE (BP)—The largest Sunday school enrollment growth since 1976 is the result of innovative approaches to Bible study while maintaining the basics, according to the leader of Southern Baptist Sunday school work.

Statistics from 1991 indicate Southern Baptist Sunday school enrollment increased 174,303, for a total enrollment of 8.18 million. That's a 2.2 percent increase from 1990—the best gain in 15 years.

Harry Piland, director of the Sunday school division at the Sunday School Board, said more churches are relying on mission Bible studies, Saturday night Bible study and schools at times and locations other than the traditional church setting to reach people who would not attend traditional

Sunday morning Bible study.

Figures for people enrolled in ongoing Bible study away from the church or at times other than Sunday morning are now included in Sunday school enrollment totals.

"There is a proliferation of multiple Sunday schools and alternate Bible study times. The more times you offer for people to come, the more you will get," Piland said.

As many as 1,500 Southern Baptist churches are offering multiple Sunday schools or ongoing Bible studies at times other than Sunday morning, he estimated.

Holding on to the base of a strong, age-graded Sunday morning Bible study "is absolutely essential. The strength is in Sunday morning, and that provides the base to branch out."

Video use increasing, librarians say

NASHVILLE (BP)—Southern Baptists are asking church media librarians for video tapes, cassette tapes and compact discs in increasing numbers, a random sampling of churches indicates. "In the past decade, many church libraries have become full-fledged media libraries," observed Mancil Ezell, director of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's church media library department.

An informal survey conducted by the Sunday School Board found church media librarians mourning a loss of readers but scrambling to keep up with requests for videos and cassettes. While commentaries and other Bible study-related materials are as popular as ever with teachers, leisure reading has taken a back seat to leisure viewing.

The librarians said preschoolers and children continue to be interested in books about firemen, policemen, the seasons and animals. But finding books of interest to teen-agers is more of a problem, they added.

Among adults, books on family life, rearing children, marriage and finances seem to be popular.

Two additions made to cassette series

NASHVILLE—The success of an audio cassette witnessing tool for teen-agers has prompted the development of two similar products for college students and adults.

"Gospel Tract: College Edition" and "Gospel Tract: Adult Edition" are two new modules in the 24-Hour Counselor audio cassette series produced by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

The original "Gospel Tract"—an audio-drama presentation of the plan of salvation—was designed for teen-agers. The tape features contemporary music and characters ranging from a "surfer dude" to an "urban youth" in explaining how fulfillment and eternal security can only be found through a personal

relationship with Jesus Christ.

All three "Gospel Tract" editions were written by Robert Don Hughes, associate professor of communications and mass media at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

The college edition is built around a "spring break" theme with six teen-agers headed to the beach for a week's vacation from school.

The adult "Gospel Tract" was written with Baby Boomers in mind. Gathered for a high school reunion, the characters search for meaning by watching a historical video on the assassination of John F. Kennedy, the Vietnam War, and Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech.

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