

JUNE 8, 1993 VOL. 167, NO. 23

FOR THE RECORD

Change proposed
Lloyd Edler and Herschel Hobbs have invited leaders of state Baptist conventions to a dialogue session prior to next week's Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting, where they say proposals to put more SBC governance in the hands of the "grass-roots" will be introduced. See page 2.

Tongues tied
Questions have been raised from some quarters about the position Foreign Mission Board presidential nominee Jerry Rankin has taken on speaking in tongues. See page 2.

A pastoral tune
Music ought to accompany pastoral care done by churches, the new keyboard consultant for the Kentucky Baptist Convention believes. See page 3.

Check up
Before firing up the church van or bus for summer trips, make sure to check the vehicle for safety. See page 3.

Editorial
We must help teens understand that True Love Waits. See page 5.

Men meet
Christian men were called upon to unite for the sake of world evangelization during the Sixth World Conference of Baptist Men. See page 6.

Public confidence
A new poll finds Americans have more confidence in the military than in the church. See page 7.

Singer Ricky Skaggs likes to talk about God

By Terri Lackey
SBC Sunday School Board

NASHVILLE (BP)—Country music entertainer Ricky Skaggs enjoys talking about God. A lot.

Matter of fact, he sometimes has to lasso his tongue on the subject because his country music cronies don't care much for his enthusiasm.

"What's hard is not running your mouth about it all the time. That's the challenge for me," Skaggs said when asked if being a Christian and an entertainer is difficult.

"Ricky's a zealot when he gets a hold of something," said Skaggs' wife, Sharon White, who also is a country music entertainer. "He just wants to take a ball bat and hit everybody over the head with it."

Said Skaggs: "A lot of my colleagues in the music world won't come to me with a problem 'cause they know I'm just going to lead them to Jesus."

But talking about his love for

God and his family won't be a problem for Skaggs at the annual Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Houston next week.

Skaggs will be singing the cut, "My Father's Son," from his new release by the same name during the Sunday School Board's agency report June 15.

He also will be at the Baptist Book Store exhibit to sign autographs during the SBC meeting.

Skaggs agreed to volunteer his time for the board's report so he could let other Christians know what God has done for him.

"The Lord has spoken very clearly for me to leave the 99 and go to the one, and that one is my family," said Skaggs, winner of four Grammys and the Country Music Association's Entertainer of the Year and Instrumentalist of the Year awards.

With Sharon White by his side in a recent interview, Skaggs acknowledged his family now takes priority over his career. For Skaggs, putting his family before his work is as much an edict from God as a personal conviction.



COUNTRY CHRISTIAN Country music entertainer Ricky Skaggs will participate in the Sunday School Board's report during the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting next week.

"I think a man needs to put God first and then his family. I see that as healthy," Skaggs said.

"I believe the family is where God's heart is. You know my family and my home life are the deepest wells in my life besides the spiritual life of the Lord. Sharon and the kids keep a balance in my life like nothing else can do. How I relate to my family is how I see my relationship to the Lord."

Volunteers are stars deep in the heart of Texas

By Sarah Zimmerman
SBC Home Mission Board

HOUSTON (BP)—The stars at night may be big and bright in Texas, but deep in the heart of Houston, the stars are volunteers.

From stuffing envelopes to teaching people to read and organizing food pantries, volunteers are instrumental in every aspect of Southern Baptist life in this year's convention city.

Spiritual and physical needs among 3.9 million people can be overwhelming, but volunteers offer

hope that the job will get done, said Lori Hill, volunteer coordinator for Union Baptist Association. "With more people working, we can meet more needs," she said.

Every month volunteers work 1,000 hours in the associational office, but that does not include hours donated to Houston's four mission centers or hundreds of multi-housing ministries. Six people on the associational staff, including Hill, are volunteers.

Houston leaders intentionally recruit, train and give volunteers rewarding jobs. For example, volun-

teer Myrtle Tolley became interim director of Houston's four mission centers when home missionary Mildred McWhorter retired in December.

Doris Meyer has been a Mission Service Corps volunteer in Houston since 1985. A former school teacher who now coordinates grants for the Aldine Independent School District, Meyer said she always loved to read.

She was motivated for literacy missions, however, because her brother could not read. He was her

Opportunities abound for prison ministries

By Melanie Childers
Staff Writer

WEST LIBERTY—Looking for a chance to preach in a setting where revival is the norm, people almost always respond by making professions of faith in Christ and you never leave without feeling like you've done something worthwhile?

It may seem inconceivable, but John Ramsey said he has found a place where that happens: the Eastern Kentucky Correctional Complex in West Liberty.

"Some of the most spiritual services I've been in have been here," said Ramsey, staff chaplain at the 3-year-old prison. "We have inmates saved probably every week."

Ramsey estimated that about 200 of the 1,600 inmates in the minimum- and medium-security prison are Christians. "We have about 60-70 faithful Christian inmates who are

saved, baptized and growing in the Lord," he added.

With the help of one assistant chaplain and more than 50 volunteers, Ramsey coordinates worship, evangelistic services or Bible studies seven nights a week at the prison.

But the chaplain said needs at the prison far outweigh available help.

While Ramsey depends on the faithful assistance of chapel volunteers to lead services and help counsel inmates, the overwhelming need is for volunteer chaplains—a separate program for ordained men and women who commit several hours each week to work in the prison.

Once these chaplains complete the training requirements, they have most of the same privileges as Ramsey—access to the "yard," dorms and recreation area—as well as on-call duties for emergencies.

Almost every church group—from Mennonites to Presbyterians—is rep-

resented by the chapel volunteers and volunteer chaplains. But Ramsey said he is concerned that one important group is missing.

"We've got every denomination you can imagine—except Southern Baptists," he said.

While some Southern Baptist churches and associations throughout the state have adopted prison ministry to some extent, Ramsey said Kentucky Baptists have not committed to it on a large scale.

"As Southern Baptists, we've neglected the opportunity of prison ministry, but also the responsibility of prison ministry," Ramsey continued. "We need good Southern Baptists here."

Ramsey, who currently is interim pastor at First Baptist Church in West Liberty, said he understands the Christian responsibility to prison ministry from a biblical perspective: "In

Religious commitment affects view on abortion

PRINCETON, N.J. (RNS)—Data from a new Gallup poll contradicts the stereotype that all conservative Christians oppose abortion in all circumstances.

It is true that conservative Christians are far more likely to embrace the anti-abortion cause than those of a more liberal persuasion, the poll found.

But the statistics indicate it is intensity of religious belief rather than church affiliation that has the greatest impact on attitudes about abortion.

Further, the Gallup Poll found, even a majority of those with the most intense religious commitments believe abortion should be legal under certain circumstances.

The majority of Americans (51 percent) take the middle position on this controversial issue—that abortion is justified in some circumstances.

Among the remainder of the population, 32 percent believe abortion should be legal in all circumstances, 13 percent believe abortion should be illegal in all circumstances and 4 percent have no opinion.

Opposition to abortion is significantly higher among those who say religion is very important in their lives. This factor holds true across denominational lines and among those saying they are born-again Christians.

Those who say religion is very important in their lives more often are Protestants (66 percent) than Catholics (52 percent). Within the Protestant ranks, the very committed are more likely to be Southern Baptists (82 percent), other types of Baptists (73 percent) or Pentecostals (72 percent).

On the question, "Do you believe abortion should be legal under any circumstances, legal under certain circumstances or illegal in all circumstances?" the following patterns are found:

■ "Legal under any circumstances" is the position taken by 22 percent of the very religious, 41 percent of those for whom religion is fairly important and 60 percent of those who say religion is not very important.

■ "Legal in certain circumstances" is the position taken by about 55 percent of the very religious, 50 percent of the fairly religious and 32 percent of those who are not very religious.

■ "Illegal in all circumstances" is the position taken by 19 percent of the very religious, about 5 percent of the fairly religious and about 2 percent of those who are not very religious.

Anti-abortion sentiments seem to be stronger in the South, where religious preference is dominated by Baptists and Pentecostals. In the South, only 25 percent of the population say abortion should be legal under any circumstances, compared to about 30 percent elsewhere in the nation.

BAPTISTS

BAPTIST BITS

■ **Gene Lovelace**, minister of Christian education and church administration at Bayshore Baptist Church in Tampa, Fla., has been elected associate director of the Baptist Center for Ethics. Lovelace is the second professional staff member hired by the 21-month-old network of moderate Baptist ethicists. He will assist Executive Director Robert Parham specifically in providing resources to local congregations.

■ **Church Information System**, the church management software service of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, has announced a strategic partnership with a major competitor, Automated Church System of Florence, S.C. The non-denominational company will provide product development, marketing and sales to Southern Baptist churches on a preferred vendor basis.

■ **The Baptist Theological Seminary** at Richmond (Va.) graduated its first students May 28 when nine students—all transfers from other seminaries—received the master of divinity degree.

■ **The Baptist Theological Seminary** at Ruschlikon may sell its Switzerland campus and relocate—perhaps in a merger with a German Baptist seminary that would move both schools to Berlin. The Ruschlikon seminary became the focus of controversy in the Southern Baptist Convention last year when the SBC Foreign Mission Board cut its funding of the international school. Seminary trustees are considering several options related to relocation, which has been suggested as a means of strengthening the school's financial position.

Elder & Hobbs call state reps to pre-SBC meeting

By Mark Wingfield
News Director

NASHVILLE—Lloyd Elder and Herschel Hobbs have called a conference of state convention leaders on the eve of the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting for what they say is a last-ditch effort to save the SBC from splitting or dwindling away.

In a telephone conference call with Baptist news media June 3, the two men indicated they believe constitutional amendments will be proposed at the June 15-17 SBC meeting to put control of the denomination in the hands of "grass-roots" Baptists.

These motions likely will arise out of response to a 16-page research report on SBC trends Elder released in May. Elder, former president of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, contends the SBC must be energized by a "modern-day missionary movement" to survive.

Hobbs, pastor emeritus of First Baptist Church in Oklahoma City and a former SBC president, issued a public plea in February for reconciliation in the SBC. He called for shared governance between conservatives, who have captured control of the 15-million-member SBC, and disenfranchised moderates, who have formed their own missions organization.

Hobbs and Elder mailed invitations to all state convention presidents, state convention board chairmen and state convention executive directors to a dialogue session June 14 in Houston. The meeting will be held just before the SBC convenes its annual meeting June 15.

Elder's research highlights what he calls "critical" statistical trends in SBC membership and contributions that could force the SBC to lay off missionaries and close down agencies, possibly by the year 2000.

As a result of Elder's research on SBC trends, he and Hobbs are suggesting amending the SBC constitution and bylaws to create shared governance between state and national leaders.

Their proposals would:

■ Involve state conventions in the nomination of half the people to serve on SBC boards, commissions and committees.

■ Change how messengers qualify for the SBC annual meeting.

■ Increase the maximum messengers from a church from 10 to 20.

■ Have the SBC's president and first vice president be elected for two years and alternate between laypeople and ordained ministers.

■ Have the convention be held every two years and include simultaneous regional conventions through television hookups.

In the conference call, Elder and Hobbs said they do not intend to propose these changes as motions, but they believe such motions will be made by other messengers—perhaps the state leaders.

They admitted they would be surprised if the conservatives who have assumed leadership in the SBC would

relinquish some of that control, as their plan would require.

However, change is sometimes necessary for survival, Hobbs said. "The seven last words of the dying church are 'We never did it that way before.' The same applies to a convention as well."

However, the suggestion to involve state conventions in nominating people to national positions amounts to connectionalism, something foreign to Baptist polity, argued Morris Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee.

"For state conventions to have authority to select any officials for the Southern Baptist Convention or its agencies implies that the SBC should have authority to select some officials for state conventions," he said. "Either application of that concept, commonly called connectionalism, has been strongly rejected from the beginning."

The argument against connectionalism is that each Baptist body—local church, association, state convention and national convention—is autonomous and not dependent on the other.

Despite Chapman's protestations, Elder said he has received overwhelmingly positive response to his report and recommendations, with only two or three negative letters.

For this plan to succeed, it must be embraced by thousands of average Baptists, Elder and Hobbs said.

"If there's not a will on the part of Southern Baptist people to stop the controversy, then it will not be done," Elder explained.

Elder said he had received a cordial phone call from the Fellowship's leader, Cecil Sherman, after his report went out. He has not heard from Chapman, he said.

Hobbs said he received a phone call from Chapman moments before the conference call with reporters was to begin. Chapman told Hobbs what he and Elder were doing was "divisive," Hobbs said.

After the June 3 conference call, Chapman issued a statement calling Elder's plan "unworkable" and "a total departure from time-honored, historic Southern Baptist practice."

While Elder's research pinpoints "some unhappy trends" among Baptists, Chapman said, it ignores other signs of progress, such as growth in membership, church starts, overseas baptisms and contributions to home missions.

The Fellowship's Sherman said he sees some merit in the proposal but is skeptical the SBC's leaders would surrender the power necessary to make it work.

However, it's not wise to say never, Sherman added. "God has ways of working that are beyond our understanding." But while Fellowship members want to be open to God's leading, they "ought not be gullible," given their experience in the SBC since 1979, he said.

Additional reporting by Greg Warner and Toby Druin through Associated Baptist Press and Art Toalston through Baptist Press

Rankin faces tongues issue

RICHMOND, Va. (ABP)—In one of the most unusual ironies of Southern Baptist autonomy, the man likely to be elected president of the Foreign Mission Board next week holds views that would prevent him from serving as a missionary of the denomination's Home Mission Board.

Jerry Rankin, who will be presented to FMB trustees June 14 for election as head of the world's largest Protestant missionary force, acknowledges "praying in the Spirit" during private devotions and on one occasion interpreting a message spoken in tongues during a public worship service.



Jerry Rankin

That affirmation of tongues-speaking, known as "glossolalia," would automatically disqualify him for consideration as even an entry-level home missionary. Home Mission Board trustees passed a policy in 1987 that prohibits anyone who is "actively participating in or promoting glossolalia" from serving as a home missionary.

Rankin has said he believes all the spiritual gifts listed in the New Testament are valid today, including tongues—ecstatic, unintelligible "languages" considered by charismatics to be a demonstration of the Holy Spirit's presence in a person's life.

However, Rankin said he is not a charismatic and those who try to label him one misunderstand his beliefs or the nature of spiritual gifts.

Rankin said his openness to spiritual gifts comes from his observations on the mission field. "From

a missiological perspective, the abundance of God is moving in manifestations of power, particularly overseas and in Third World countries."

Rankin was nominated to become FMB president by a committee of conservative trustees who are

theologically and politically in line with the HMB trustees who adopted the 1987 policy for home missionaries. However, Joel Gregory, chairman of the 15-member search committee, said a thorough investigation convinced committee members Rankin "does not practice, teach or advocate glossolalia and has held

true to Baptist doctrine."

Yet Rankin almost lost his job two years ago because of his charismatic leanings. Some colleagues say Rankin condoned or even practiced some of the so-called "charismatic gifts" as a missionary in Singapore and as a missionary administrator.

The controversy over Rankin's beliefs produced a showdown two years ago among FMB administrators. Rankin, area director for the FMB's 480 missionaries in Southern Asia and the Pacific, was questioned about his beliefs and practices in 1991 by his vice president, Bill Wakefield.

Wakefield, vice president for Asia and the Pacific, considered firing Rankin, according to several FMB administrators.

The person who apparently intervened and saved Rankin's job is the man he is being hired to replace as president, Keith Parks.

Baptists needed in prison work

Continued from page 1

Matthew 25:36, Jesus said to do it; I took him at his word."

Ramsey served as a volunteer chaplain for two years while he was pastor of Frenchburg Baptist Church in Frenchburg.

Southern Baptists' failure to get involved in ministry to inmates at Kentucky's largest prison has left voids, Ramsey said, especially in the area of discipleship.

He suggested that Southern Baptist discipleship programs, such as MasterLife and DiscipleLife, offer more intense, in-depth training than programs of many other denominations.

Volunteers are stars in Houston

Continued from page 1

first adult student and the first person Meyer saw make a profession of faith in Jesus Christ as the result of literacy missions.

Currently Meyer trains adults to teach others to read. She also frequently spends her lunch hour at an elementary school, helping children improve their reading skills.

Elsie Cosgrove, another Mission

"But I can't do those things now," he confessed.

"My time is spent in administration, counseling and handling emergencies."

Other needs the chaplain mentioned were hymnals, other books and tapes, and commentaries. "We rely on contributions for our religious programming," he said.

For information about how to volunteer services at the Eastern Kentucky Correctional Complex in West Liberty, contact Ramsey at (606) 743-2800, ext. 301. For other opportunities in prison ministry, contact the staff chaplain at the institution nearest you.

Service Corps volunteer, organizes distribution of \$1,400 to \$1,600 of food each month. Cosgrove mails a list of needs to 32 mission coordinators from Sunday school classes at First Baptist Church of Houston and classes respond with food donations.

The food is distributed through Westview Baptist Church, one of First Baptist Church's mission congregations.

Check church vans & buses before trips

By Melanie Childers
Staff Writer

FRANKFORT—Failure to maintain vehicles and have them properly inspected could put the brakes on churches' summer ministry plans, a state transportation official has warned.

While church vans and buses may sit in the parking lot more than most Baptists like to admit during cold winter months, spring and summer offer more opportunities for traveling.

For that reason, William De-bord, assistant director of the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet's division of motor carriers, suggested that churches gearing up for many miles of summer mission trips and other outings first should take time to have their automobiles checked for safety.

"Many churches don't want to think about a church vehicle just sitting; we all want to keep our buses moving," said De-bord, a member of Central Baptist Church in Frankfort.

"But in reality, many times buses sit for long periods of time and are used mainly for special occasions," he added. "Churches need to be aware of this—don't neglect the upkeep."

Even for vehicles that have not been idle, Kentucky law requires an annual bus inspection.

Any vehicle designed to carry more than nine passengers, including the driver, must be "inspected annually by Transportation Cabinet personnel for compliance with the minimum vehicle safety equipment standards ..." the law reads.

But a once-a-year inspection alone isn't enough precaution to take, De-bord added.

"The most important thing for churches is to check their vehicle regularly and before each use to make sure it is safe," he said. "Attention should be given to emergency exit doors, steering mechanisms, fuel tanks, lights and tires."

Churches may call David Herald at (502) 564-3276 to find the highway safety inspection points nearest them and to make arrangements for the mandatory inspection.

Also, church members are reminded of the commercial driver's license required to drive any vehicle designed to transport 16 people or more, including the driver. More information about the requirements and procedure for obtaining this license is available at circuit clerk offices across the state.

Music & pastoral care mix, Berger says

By Mark Wingfield
News Director

Music should accompany pastoral care in churches, the Kentucky Baptist Convention's new keyboard consultant believes.

"I'm a firm believer that music reaches the soul," said Joy Berger, who recently succeeded Angela Harrington in the part-time position of assisting churches statewide with keyboard training. "We as musicians have been doing pastoral care for a long time."

Although few people would automatically associate music and pastoral care, Berger believes they are a natural mix. She recently completed a doctoral degree at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, drawing upon the guidance of both the music faculty and pastoral care faculty.

Her dissertation topic: "Music as a Catalyst for Pastoral Care within the Remembering Tasks of Grief."

Put in language even the tone-deaf can understand, Berger sought to show how people draw upon music as a source of both comfort and pain during the grieving process. Because music evokes memories of comfort and pain, it can be an important key to pastoral care, she contended.

She identified at least six things music helps people do: express feelings, activate memories, encourage community, facilitate sustaining worship, explore meanings, and foster personal and spiritual wholeness.

"Music can capsuleize a deep meaning from within. It can cut through and open up the soul," Berger said.

That's why some people are

drawn to church during grief and others can't bear to attend at all, she continued.

"When people are going through loss and grief, often going to church is more painful than not going—standing in the same pew where you've stood with your spouse for 40 years and suddenly he or she isn't there."

On the other hand, sometimes hearing and singing familiar tunes of faith can comfort grieving Christians, she added.

Berger does not speak about the relationship between grief and music from an academic standpoint only. An unexpected turn of events during her doctoral studies gave her a deeply personal perspective on the issue.

Berger is an accomplished pianist and organist, having played keyboard instruments since she was a child.

In May 1991, she was serving as organist at Highland Baptist Church in Louisville and had just completed significant portions of her doctoral degree requirements. Without warning, she began to lose use of her hands due to debilitating pain.

The condition, a variation on carpal tunnel disease, worsened to the point doctors offered little hope for improvement. Today she can play the piano or organ for only five to 10 minutes at a time.

She had to quit her job as church organist, and she had to redirect her career dreams and plans. Music, which had been the focus and love of her life, suddenly became a painful reminder of her affliction.



Joy Berger

Two years later, Berger has worked through most of the grief process and is finding ways to "reinvest" herself through ministries of music and pastoral care.

But the one thing she doesn't want is to be known as the keyboard instructor who can't play.

Drawing from her years of experience as a keyboard player and teacher, Berger said, she feels well prepared to teach others.

Her major responsibilities with the KBC involve organizing keyboard clinics for church accompanists and keyboard festivals for children and youth. She also is available to consult with churches about their specific needs.

From her own experience, Berger paints a picture of the grief process as a symphony of four seasons.

Fall is when the loss first breaks off in a person's life. Winter is when the "dark coldness that will never end" sets in. Spring is the time of planting new seeds in faith. And summer is the time for bringing those seeds to fruition, to reinvest oneself in new aspects of life.

Although the distance from grief to joy seems immeasurable to a person who has suffered loss, there is hope, Berger advised. She points out that the words "mourning" and "morning" come from the same Latin root, meaning "from darkest midnight up through the break of day."

The healing power of the Christian faith found in that transition is a song Berger hopes to teach more Baptists to sing—and play.

VBS a hit with nursing home young at heart

By Melanie Childers
Staff Writer

OWENTON—Vacation Bible school became the choice of an older generation May 24-28 at Owenton Manner nursing center.

Each morning from 10-11:30 a.m., Pastor Ryan Wagers assembled nursing home residents into the lobby of Owenton Manner for a revised version of VBS—designed specifically for senior adults.

Instead of marching into joint worship, they processed informally, many in wheelchairs. Rather than singing children's choruses, they sang old familiar hymns. And while they continued to recite the pledges, learn Scripture and make crafts to take home, the games they played required no running or jumping.

Wagers, pastor of Poplar Grove Baptist Church in Glencoe, said nursing home residents need to know the church has not forgotten them.

"Many churches are selective about the type of members they want," he said, lamenting that some churches have neglected even their own members who are in nursing facilities. "The church still has the responsibility to care for those people."

The pastor said the theme he chose for the week conveys the main message of hope he wanted to share with

the men and women at Owenton Manner: "Jesus cares for you."

"I want them to know they have someone with them 24 hours a day who shares their loneliness," he said. "They're not in this boat alone."

Wagers and his wife, Donna, lead VBS training workshops in Ten Mile Baptist Association. He said it was while at a state training meeting that the idea to try VBS in a nursing home came to him.

Since he knew of no one who had tried such a ministry before, he studied several years of VBS material and homebound Sunday school literature, adapting them to fit the need.

After a modified version of joint worship each morning, Wagers led the group in a brief Bible study and a game which required little physical activity, he said. One of their favorites was Bible Jeopardy.

"They love each other, but they also love to compete," he said. "It gives them the feeling 'I know something—I'm not someone who sits in a corner and doesn't know anything.'"

Cathy Jansen, a member of Poplar Grove and one of Wagers' assistants during the week, planned simple crafts for the residents to complete. They were encouraged to use the crafts to brighten their rooms.

"The key word, if you want to reach people, is flexibility," Wagers

said. For example, it is important to keep in constant contact with the health care staff, so residents' medication schedules aren't disrupted. And, leaders need to be sensitive to residents' physical limitations, he explained.

However, with some adaptations, VBS can be an effective tool for young and old alike, Wagers added.

Kentucky CP & budget update

This is the report of contributions to the Kentucky Baptist Convention and Cooperative Program unified budget as of May 31, 1993:

May 1993 CP receipts	\$ 1,023,419
Compared to May last year	\$ 1,146,882
Percentage decrease	11%
1992-93 year-to-date CP receipts	\$12,760,677
Year-to-date CP budget requirement	\$13,003,432
Percent under CP budget to date	1.9%
Year-to-date CP staying in Kentucky	\$8,000,434
Year-to-date "Kentucky Only"*	\$250,758
Combined total available for KBC use	\$8,251,192
KBC funds required to date	\$8,350,648
Percent under budget to date	1.2%

* Funds designated for use in Kentucky only that bypass the traditional Cooperative Program split between the KBC and Southern Baptist Convention.

BLUEGRASS BURGEO

■ William Mason has been named associate professor in general education at Mid-Continent Baptist Bible College in Mayfield. He holds the doctor of philosophy degree in education from the University of Mississippi, the master of divinity degree from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, the master of education degree from the University of Mississippi, and the bachelor of arts degree from Blue Mountain Baptist College. His wife, Martha Mason, has been named director of financial aid at Mid-Continent. A graduate of Blue Mountain Baptist College in Mississippi, she has been a schoolteacher since 1970.

■ Lennis Thompson II has been named director of budgets, contracts and financial planning in the information services area for Baptist Healthcare System. He previously was director of accounting at Western Baptist Hospital in Paducah.

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

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We need revival

If there was ever a time in which we need a great moving of the Spirit of God, it is today. The voice of God is not often heard because man is so involved in the affairs of the world. Only God can give and renew life.

We need a spiritual revival in our churches, communities and government. Greed, corruption, disregard for God and the Bible are prevalent all over America. The moral condition of our nation is disgusting and sickening.

We need a revival or soon the church, the home and the nation will crumble. A genuine revival will halt the tide of immorality and unbelief that has become accepted in society.

However, every true revival has had its origin in prayer: Jonathan Edwards in the eighteenth century, David Brainerd among the American Indians, Charles G. Finney and the great revivals of the 1830s, Dwight L. Moody's revivals in America, English, Scotland and Ireland. American people once again seem to be turning to God in prayer. Here and there God is laying a burden of prayer on a layperson or some minister. Churches and groups often are meeting at late-night hours or early-morning hours to cry to God.

It is not necessary that the whole church begin to pray. Great revivals have always begun with a few men and women whom God arouses by his Spirit to believe in him.

James E. Casey Jr.
Greensburg

Presbygationalism

Your editorial on "presbygationalism" (WR, April 13) may be even more timely than you realized.

In addition to the problems you noted, a recent mailing from Lloyd Elder to many convention leaders raises another alarming possibility. Dr. Elder's "Calling the Family Back Together" contains much information, much opinion and some proposals to "solve the controversy."

Before summer is gone

The following story appeared in a publication titled "Reflections," provided by the Alliant department of pastoral care, located in Louisville.

"There once were two sisters named Eunice and Bessie. When their father died, they came into several hundred thousand dollars. The younger of the two, Bessie, let her sister know that she would like to do some traveling and see more of the world. But Eunice said, 'No, Dad was a saver, and he would roll over in his grave if he knew we were spending his hard-earned money foolishly.' So the two sisters purchased a small store. Over the next few years they built it into the most successful store in the area.

"One day Bessie suggested: 'Let's close the store for a couple of months next winter and visit some resorts. It might be fun using some of the cosmetics we sell.' But Eunice vetoed the

While several of these proposals have merit, at least six are explicitly "presbygational." By "sharing" Southern Baptist Convention appointments with state conventions, an idea rejected a few years ago, a specific hierarchy would be established.

While we say that each church relates directly to an association, its state-type convention and the SBC, and may be part of

BAPTIST FORUM

three, in practice we are already developing a hierarchical system "for convenience" in the area of finance. Church monies are now divided by state conventions, rather than by churches, for mission activities. To grant even more authority to state conventions "to solve the controversy" is hardly to move toward more congregational autonomy. It seems "to reflect a change in one of Baptists' distinctive doctrines—a pulling away from the priesthood of the believer and the autonomy of the local church."

To further quote, "Wouldn't it be ironic if Presbyterians became more Baptist while Baptists became more Presbyterian?"

R. Charles Blair
Clinton

Free at last

I am one Baptist who is now free. I recently attended my first Cooperative Baptist Fellowship meeting.

The CBF is on the cutting edge of missions and is moving forward to tell others about the gospel of Jesus Christ. The positive atmosphere and sense of excitement about missions brought me to tears of joy.

My tears were also tears of sadness that the CBF is even necessary. But I have finally come to see that the Southern Baptist Convention that I loved for so long is now dead and buried. I must move on from grief to a new sense of hope. I found this hope in Birmingham. I will never be the same again.

I encourage all Kentucky Baptists to experience for themselves the ex-

perience of this creative work of God. Come to Lexington Avenue Baptist Church in Danville Aug. 21 to experience the Fellowship among Kentuckians. Come to Greensboro, N.C., May 5-7, 1994, and see for yourself what the CBF is all about.

Paul Frick
Richmond

Church & state

It is not my intention to prolong running commentaries concerning church-state arguments, but a couple of statements by Dr. Crisp in "Viewpoint" (WR, April 20) cry out for some response.

It is true that many colonies had established churches, and the people were taxed to support them whether one believed what the churches taught or not. If George Washington proposed that state taxes be distributed to the churches in ratio to their membership, his proposal was rejected.

When Baptists fought for the right to perform marriages, it was not to become a part of state, but to have the right to minister without having to obtain a license. I consider the ceremonies I conduct as worship.

At least three proposals were presented to the framers of our Constitution which would have expressly allowed government to promote religion on a non-preferential basis. All were rejected and, instead, they adopted the present First Amendment language that keeps government from passing laws even "respecting an establishment" of religion.

It is interesting that where the government supports religion with taxes and preference the vitality and the faith seem to diminish. When Jesus gave the Great Commission, he was not addressing the government, just disciples. We need to beg forgiveness for trying to get the government, public school or city hall to do what we were instructed to do. It is our lethargy—not government obstruction—which keeps us from reaching people with the message of Christ.

Malcolm Lunceford
Georgetown

into seclusion.

"Several months later, Eunice asked permission to move Bessie's body to Mexico. When it was granted she had the coffin moved to Mexico and went along to supervise reburial. She herself moved to a resort cottage not far from the cemetery. The next year she obtained another disinterment permit and had the body flown to Bermuda. Eunice and Bessie finally took the trips they had always planned some day to make.

"George Merideth wrote: 'If I drink the oblivion of a day, so shorten I the stature of my soul.'"

With summer fast upon us, there are some intentions in our lives awaiting fulfillment. It is "too late" to do some things with some people; it is "too late" to go back to childhood, or high school, or college. It is "too late" to visit my mother and daddy; grandmom or granddad.

It is not "too late" to do some things that need doing. Let's do it, while we can, before summer is gone.

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



Time passes

By John Lepper

Q. Where has all the time gone?

A. This question was asked by an 81-year-old retired school teacher. It was a question asked in passing, almost rhetorical in nature, but a question that deserves reflection.

She answered her own question by telling of the years raising children, the years in college and as a school teacher and the four decades since her husband had died. She further answered her question by saying, "The time has just flown by." Like most of us, her years had gone into life, and they seemed ever so swift.

Job expresses similar feelings as he compares the swiftness of time to the fast ships and to an eagle that hastens to its prey (Job 9:26). He says his days flee away, and he sees no good. Even people in ancient times reflected on the speed with which life passes.

As we age, it is easy to focus on our memories of the past. That's not altogether bad because we can remember both the good times and the bad times. When we concentrate on the bad, our memories can haunt us. On the other hand, we can look so fondly on the past that we become nostalgic. This homesick kind of reflection on the past can have a bittersweet flavor, adversely seasoning life in the present. The danger is to get so caught up in remembering we fail to live fully in the present.

The prophet Isaiah says God wishes to do a new thing in our lives (42:9 and 48:6). Don't dwell on past failures or past successes to the extent that you fail to see God today. God wishes to do new and wonderful things in our lives, no matter our age. We are alive, so sing a joyous song all our days because God gives us purpose for living.

The issue beneath the question is not how fast the days have gone by but what we are doing with the days we have. All of us are aging, but are we growing as we age? A sign on the wall of a senior adult men's Sunday school class offers a challenge: "You don't grow old, you get old by not growing."

John Lepper is director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's family ministry department.

Send your questions about children, teens, marriage, singles or aging to "Family Forum," Western Recorder, Box 43969, Louisville, Ky. 40253.

ON MISSION TOGETHER



William W. Marshall

idea, explaining that customers would take their business elsewhere.

"Years later the sisters had made enough money to put them on easy street. 'Come on,' said Bessie, 'let's

sell the store and start enjoying life. Let's visit Mexico and Bermuda. We might even run into some men we like and get married.' But Eunice resisted: 'We can't sell now. Nobody would pay us what the store is worth.'

"Soon a competitor opened a store down the street and the sisters had to rise to the challenge and work even harder. Then the war came along, and Eunice insisted they would be fools not to stay and take advantage of the new business a nearby Army base would bring.

"One day Bessie had a stroke. That night she died. Eunice never entered the store again. She gave Bessie the most elaborate funeral ever seen in that town. She sold the store and went

We must help teens understand True Love Waits

What would you do if several teens from your church were playing Russian roulette? Stop them, of course.

Millions of American teen-agers—a large number from our churches—are playing sexual roulette, and America's adults aren't doing enough to save them from themselves.

A recent Time magazine poll revealed that a quarter of the nation's 15-year-old girls and a third of its 15-year-old boys are sexually active. By age 17, 55 percent of American teens already have engaged in sexual intercourse. The Centers for Disease Control reported 72 percent of American high school seniors have had sex. And although their numbers are lower, Christian teens are not immune. Ninety-five percent of the participants in a 1992 survey conducted at the Youth Winter Celebrations at Ridgecrest, N.C., said they were Christian. Still, 20 percent reported they already had sexual intercourse. And of those who already had sex, 41 percent said they remained sexually active.

Such information prompted a candidly plaintive plea at the beginning of a recent Time cover story on teen sex: "How should we teach our children about sex? Bombarded by mixed messages about values, students are more sexually active than ever, and more confused."

Small wonder. Even occasional observation of television and radio programming targeted at teens reveals a central theme: Sex. The closest most of these messages get to a moral is, "Be responsible; use a condom." More confusing is the message many teens hear directly from adults, "Don't have sex, but be sure to use a condom." Think back to your teen years and the logic you would have used if an adult sent you a message like that. Which message is stronger, the words, "Don't have sex," or the vision of an adult distributing condoms?

Baptists are beginning to get into the sexual battle in a big way with True Love Waits, an abstinence-based program developed by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board. The campaign is built on four purposes: To communicate the spiritual, emotional and physical value of remaining sexually pure. To urge families to address biblical standards of sexual behavior. To help churches support teens and their parents as they commit themselves to sexual purity. To express an improved alternative to the world's "safe sex" message.

True Love Waits is based on motivating young people with a positive message: True love—something valued and needed by teen-agers—is a strong reason for delaying sexual expression until marriage. The message helps teens focus on five objects of love that deserve purity: True love for God, true love for your future mate, true love for your current date, true love for your future child and true love for yourself.

The True Love Waits campaign goal is to receive 100,000 signed covenant cards from Southern Baptist teens by the summer of 1994. The covenant states: "Believing that true love waits, I make a commitment to God, myself, my family, those I date, my future mate and my future children to be sexually pure until the day I enter a covenant marriage relationship."

A strong feature of the campaign is peer pressure. The Time survey showed 58 percent of teens had sex because they wanted to "be more popular or impress their friends." In addition, 65 percent of girls and 35

percent of boys said they had sex because they "were under pressure from those they were dating." But a teen who completes one of those cards and then hears the worn-out seduction, "Everyone else is doing it," can reply, "I know 999,999 other people who aren't."

In addition to the abstinence-commitment program, True Love Waits is buttressing its efforts with education. The Sunday School Board has developed Christian Sex Education, a new Bible-based series for children of various ages, as well as parents and church leaders.

Education is a major key to sexual purity. The Time survey revealed curiosity was the No. 1 reason teens had sex—for 80 percent of the girls and 76 percent of the boys who had sexual experience. If we as Christians want to help our children remain pure, we had better make sure they are the best-educated members of their generation. They should know the biological facts about sex, but also the moral, spiritual, social and emotional details of sexuality and faithful marital intimacy. They can't afford to be ignorant.

The Kentucky Baptist Convention is participating in the True Love Waits campaign. For more information, contact John Lepper, director of the KBC family ministry department and chair of the True Love Waits task force, at: Kentucky Baptist Convention, Box 43433, Louisville, Ky. 40253-0433.

Helping our children develop a healthy Christian view of sexuality and preserve themselves for marriage will be one of the best gifts we can give them.

Marv Knox

Stubborn rumor won't die

Another rumor keeps making its way around Kentucky.

A flier labeled "Could the federal government close down your church?" has circulated among Baptists all across the state. It claims companion bills—H.R. 1430 and S. 574—are "currently before the House and Senate" and would "make homosexuality a constitutionally protected civil right." The flier insists the bills would force churches "to hire, marry, ordain or serve" openly homosexual people. "If this bill passes," it warns, "churches across the country will find themselves in civil rights violation suits simply because they believe the biblical ethic of right and wrong."

The flier and the rumors it has created are false. H.R. 1430 and S. 574 died in the last session of Congress. They never even made it out of committee. As of last week, two gay-rights bills—H.R. 423 and H.R. 431—had been filed in the House, but both had shown no signs of surviving committee inspection.

Legal experts report that even if such bills were to come alive in Congress, exemptions for churches and religious institutions are almost certain to be attached. Furthermore, the U.S. Supreme Court consistently has ruled that government does not have the power to regulate the employment of ministers. Those facts are stronger than rumors fueled by scare-mongers.

Marv Knox

A commitment campaign—however positive—is not enough by itself. Christian parents and church leaders must teach teens the biblical view of human sexuality.

Rumors about the government's intention to force churches to hire gay ministers are out-dated and false.

You've got to pay attention if you expect to avoid most of life's crashes

Brake lights aren't supposed to be that big, but the lights on the burgundy Camry in front of us seemed huge.

"Seemed" is the operative word. The lights were the normal size. But they seemed humongous because we were so close to them. Uncomfortably close.

We saw them up close a few weekends ago, when our friends Cate and Rowan joined Lindsay, Molly and me for a ride.

We'd been on an outing and were heading home. To help the time pass, Rowan was regaling us with tales of his family's rich past. They're from near Franklin, and the stories were rich with Civil War heroics and late-night horse-and-buggy rides.

The girls liked Rowan's stories. Family history—especially vibrant, exotic old-time

stories—fascinates youngsters who live in this automobile-and-air-conditioning age. Besides all that, Rowan's a good storyteller. He had the girls spellbound.

Unfortunately, he had me spellbound, too. And I was driving.

For just a second, I looked over to hear him deliver the punchline of a particularly monumental tale. And as I turned back, those big, bright brake lights were staring me in the face.

I slammed on my own brakes. For a second there, things got pretty scary.

You've heard how people say their lives passed before their eyes when they thought they were about to die. Well, I never got that far. But when it looked like we were going to lock bumpers, most of the really stupid things I've done in this lifetime passed before my eyes.

I'll spare you the tedium and me the embarrassment of a list of those "special" moments. Most of them, like this near-miss, had to do with not paying attention.

Not that I haven't had proper admonishment. "Pay attention, son," seemed to be a

constant adage around the home of my youth.

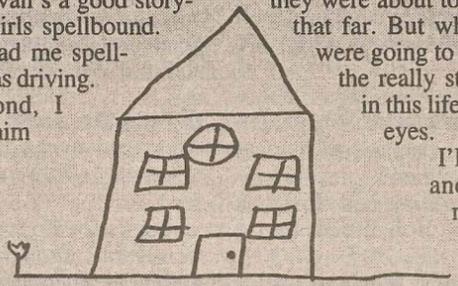
"Pay attention."

That's pretty good advice, whether you're driving a car filled with loved ones or painting the garage. During such obvious moments, we don't have to remind ourselves (too much, at least) to pay attention.

But what about the less-obvious times? When your spouse is telling you about what happened that morning. When your child is practicing the piano. When your neighbor is telling you about her mother's bypass surgery. Whenever.

Paying attention. It makes the difference between a safe journey and a crash you'll regret forever.

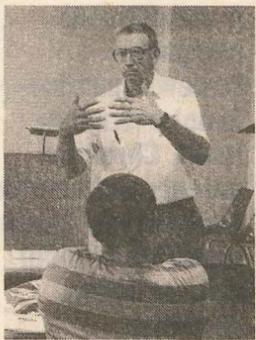
Marv Knox



down home

Baptist men called to unite for world evangelization

By Lonnie Wilkey
Tennessee Baptist & Reflector



HANDS ON Larry Pursiful of Louisville leads a workshop on sports evangelism during the Sixth World Conference for Baptist Men. (BP photo by Bryan Smith)

NASHVILLE (BP)—Christian men across the world unite in a common mission of sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ if the world is to be saved, the president of the nation's largest African American Baptist denomination told an international gathering of Baptist men.

"If this world is going to be saved, it is going to be saved by men of all races, classes and creeds. We've got to learn to love one another," said Theodore Jemison.

Jemison, a Baton Rouge, La., pastor and president of the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc., was keynote speaker for the opening session of the Sixth World Conference for Baptist Men May 27-30 in Nashville.

About 600 people from 17 countries attended the conference sponsored by the Baptist World Alliance men's department. It ran concurrently with Baptist Men's University, a training conference of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission.

Two intense days of conferences, interspersed with evening plenary sessions, were capped off with a neighborhood evangelistic rally at Nashville's Pearl-Cohn High School featuring Southern Baptist layman and country entertainer Jerry Clower, along with Jack Stanton, a Southern Baptist evangelist from Bolivar, Mo.

Before the rally, Stanton led a group of internationals to canvass the area, sharing the gospel and inviting residents to the rally and a free meal provided by the Tennessee Baptist Convention Brotherhood department's mobile disaster relief unit. The team fed more than 300 meals, report-

ed Cameron Byler, Tennessee Brotherhood director.

Stanton reported several professions of faith in Jesus Christ were made during the afternoon visitation effort.

After musical presentations from various countries, humorist Jerry Clower told the crowd that "Christianity works." He underscored the point by describing God's provision to his family during his Great Depression childhood in rural Mississippi.

Clower emphasized to the international crowd that his achievements in country music, while enjoyable, have not been the most important things in his life. "The greatest thing that ever happened to me was when I became a Christian, and the greatest thing in my life is to tell others that Jesus is the answer," he said.

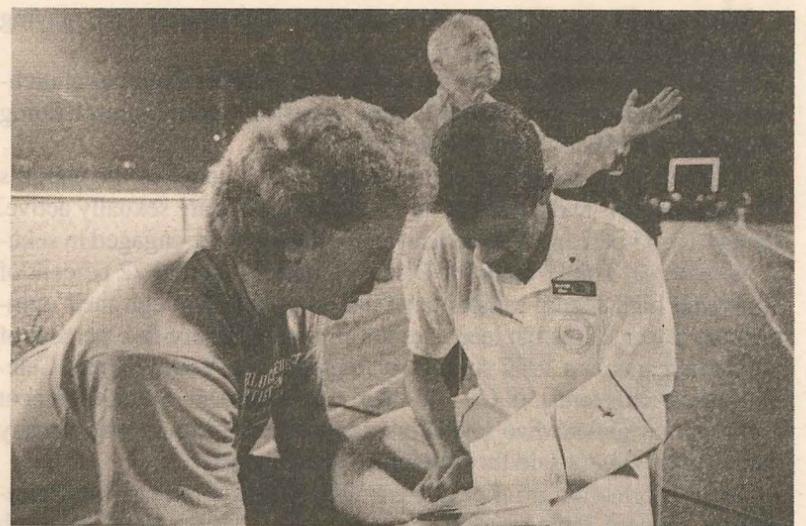
Stanton also shared how his life had been changed by accepting Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior.

Although he was raised in a single-parent home in East St. Louis, Ill., Stanton now is director of the institute of evangelism at Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Mo., and has visited 79 countries and preached in the largest church in the world, Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul, Korea.

"I believe that if you'd come to my home, and sit at our table, and hear my wife and me talk, you'd sense a joy and a love and a trust. Our home's happy. That doesn't mean we don't owe money, that we don't hurt, that we don't cry.

"But in the midst of the problems, God is real, and joy is there, and peace is ours," Stanton said.

While the service was geared to evangelism, Costa Marcio of Brazil was moved to make a decision to be a



DECISION TIME Southern Baptist layman Ken Easterling from Rogers, Ark., counsels with Marcio Costa from Sao Paulo, Brazil, after Costa responded to the call to missionary service. Paul Belcher, a layman from Providence, R.I., prays in the background. These men attended an evangelistic rally during the Sixth World Conference of Baptist Men. (BP photo by Bill Bangham)

missionary.

"I was moved by the Holy Spirit to do this," Marcio said. "I feel everybody around the world ought to know about Jesus Christ, and I made a hard decision to be a missionary."

A government clerk in Brazil, Marcio said he plans to begin making preparations to become a missionary upon his return home.

A European Baptist leader also addressed the conference. Rea Grant, executive director of the Baptist Union of Ireland, observed the task of reaching men for Christ is basic, difficult, strategic and urgent.

He noted churches must do a better job of reaching men for Christ. He observed that in almost all Baptist congregations worldwide women

outnumber the men. "Doesn't that prove the fact we need to reach men?" he asked?

Grant cited the problems of reaching men who do not know the Lord. "It is difficult even to get the men in the church to invite other men to men's groups. Yet Christian men are the key to reaching other men," he said.

Brotherhood Commission President James Williams, in the closing message, challenged Baptist men to "hunger and thirst for the word of God" and to develop "roots deep in Christ."

Besides the plenary speakers, 46 conferences on a myriad of subjects were offered to help Baptist men in various areas of ministry.

WORKSHOP HIGHLIGHTS

■ **Talk it over.** Black and white Baptists need to talk with each other in formal and informal ways to overcome the barriers that divide them, a multi-ethnic group agreed during the Sixth World Congress of Baptist Men.

"We have to create dialogue situations wherever we are—where we work, where we live, where we shop, where we go to church, everywhere," said Eddie Pettit, director of Baptist Men for the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission, during a dialogue on white-black missions relationships.

Much of the discussion focused on the personal and cultural gulf that divides most white Baptists and most black Baptists.

"Will we ever be able to deal with all the baggage each of us is carrying?" asked an African American participant, Millard Jackson of Long Beach, Calif. He said members of both groups have deep-seated negative stereotypes and misperceptions of each other.

■ **Don't leave God out.** The secular world's call for men to "express their emotions and feelings" more fully is a challenge to the church to "turn them toward God," according to an Alabama public relations executive who leads a church-based ministry to men.

Paul Till said today's men—Christian and non-Christian—are "miserable" be-

cause their lives are full of "garbage" that includes festering physical and emotional wounds from their growing-up years. One outgrowth, Till said, is the current popularity of the book "Iron John" by Robert Bly, viewed as the leader of today's "men's movement."

"We are told in James 5 to confess our sins and be healed. But how can we get help from the body of Christ if no one knows our pain?" Till asked. "We can weep, but (the world tells us) we can't do it in public. It's serious not to allow your feelings to be released. We've followed too much secular advice, like 'big boys don't cry,' and not enough biblical advice."

A counseling ministry can help men deal with old wounds that must be "cleaned and treated before they are bandaged," allowing them to finally heal properly, Till said.

■ **Pray for children's sake.** Most men know far more about fishing and hunting than teaching their children to pray, to hear from God through the Bible and "to get on mission with God," Bob Dixon told a prayer workshop.

Dixon, Texas Baptist Men's executive director, said the last verse in the Old Testament and some of the first words concerning Jesus' ministry reflect strong spiritual expectations of men.

"God is looking for men again to show

that he is the Most High God," Dixon said, and it begins with prayer and hearing from God through the Scriptures.

"Nothing in the kingdom comes except by prayer," Dixon said.

■ **There's work for retirees.** Christians are called to be active in God's work until the day they die, so they should plan for an active retirement, said David Petty, professor of sociology and gerontology at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas.

Retirees gain more than 2,340 hours a year by not going to work each day, Petty said. "What will you do with the time?"

Opportunities for volunteer service abound, he noted. "Every community has needs." For Southern Baptists, doors are open for retiree mission volunteers at home and overseas.

■ **Feed the world.** The way to feed the world is to involve churches in agricultural missions projects, a retired agricultural professor said.

Baptists will give money cooperatively to missions through the Cooperative Program, but when they get involved, even if just to raise money for a project, they learn, pray and get personally involved, said Don Blasingame of Starkville, Miss.

He is the former coordinator of the National Fellowship of Baptist Agricultural-

ists, which is sponsored by the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission.

In a world where 15 million people die each year from malnutrition, missionaries have physical needs, Blasingame said. But to meet the world's physical needs, Southern Baptists support about 50 agricultural foreign missionaries. Only 50 additional agricultural missionaries are supported by other denominations.

They need help, he reported from his 25 years of missions experience, in the form of volunteers such as veterinarians or well-diggers and materials such as seed.

■ **Military ministries needed.** Practically every local church has a military connection that, if pursued for ministry purposes, could reach more than 3 million military personnel and their dependents, according to Don Hadley, a North Carolina pastor and author of "Ministry With the Military."

Hadley noted Baptists have soldiers who are "being sent around the world at government expense."

Hadley, who has led First Baptist Church in Havelock, N.C., near Cherry Point Marine Corps Air Station, for 20 years, said even churches with no geographic connection to a base should commission members entering the military as missionaries and maintain contact with them during their service.

Surgeon general nominee alarms CLC on abortion

WASHINGTON (BP)—President Clinton's nominee to become surgeon general has drawn criticism from the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission for remarks she has made in support of abortion rights.

Joycelyn Elders, who currently is director of the Arkansas health department, spoke in May at a conference of the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights. In her address she said her primary task as surgeon general would be to make sure every child given birth in the United States is a wanted child.

Planned Parenthood and other abortion rights advocates commonly have used the "every child a wanted child" terminology in the last two decades.

Also in her speech, Elders endorsed Medicaid funding for abortion, the French abortion pill RU-486 and the Freedom of Choice Act, abortion-rights legislation pending in Congress. She criticized Americans who oppose abortion, especially those who oppose sex education and clinics in public schools.

There are "organizations out there that love little children as long as they're in somebody else's uterus," Elders said. "They're against everything that's going to help children, but they have this wonderful infatuation with the fetus that's been going on for years. So we need them to get over their love affair with the fetus and start doing something to make a difference for children."

Journal & Baptist ethicist disagree on 'futile care'

NASHVILLE (BP)—To what extent should health care reform attempt to eliminate "futile care" of patients that often becomes very expensive?

An ethicist with the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission says a model proposed in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* is not the best answer to that question.

Health care reform must not victimize the most vulnerable people in society, said Ben Mitchell, the CLC's director of biomedical and life issues, in response to the May 19 *JAMA* editorial.

The editorial says, "... major savings can be realized by eliminating futile care and limiting unneeded care or medicine at the margins." Futility is defined in the editorial as "serving no useful purpose; completely ineffective; occupied with trifles."

George Lundberg, a medical doctor and editor of *JAMA*, writes, "... the medical staff of every hospital in America should define futile care in their environment and develop guidelines or parameters about how to identify it and eliminate it. These guidelines should take into consideration the wishes of patients, as well as the family and religious advisers, whenever appropriate."

"Some form of medical care reform is clearly needed," Mitchell re-

sponded. "But that reform must protect the most vulnerable and not make them double victims—victims of their disease or disability and victims of a compassionless system."

"The unborn, the disabled and the dying must not be sacrificed on the altars of arbitrary 'quality of life' judgments and/or claims of 'financial savings.'"

"On the other hand, Christians must be involved in discussions of curbing medical costs in a sane and intelligent fashion. We have as much responsibility to suggest ways of cutting costs and assisting in the management of our own care as any other Americans," he said.

In a May 19 press release, Burke Balch, legal counsel for the National Right to Life Committee, said, "Futility must be defined very carefully. Only care that is ineffective in preserving life or aiding health can properly be labeled futile, if the patient desires the care—or else denial of 'futile care' will become a means to involuntary euthanasia."

"But too many so-called ethicists and doctors are calling care 'futile' that would preserve a life the patient wants, but with 'quality of life' which the provider—or some government bureaucrat—thinks is too poor," he claimed.

Elders made a similar comment about the "love affair with the fetus" in a January 1992 speech to an abortion rights rally in Little Rock. Her latest comments drew a sharp response from James Smith, director of government relations for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

"Joycelyn Elders is for more than abortion rights; she's for abortion," Smith said. "She seems to actually think it is a good thing. That the next surgeon general of the United States would have such an attitude about a practice which kills 1.6 million children each year is troubling, to say the least."

"The intemperate remarks of Ms. Elders about pro-lifers reveal an open hostility to a vast number of Americans and their values," Smith continued.

"The fact that President Clinton chose her in light of her controversial and combative personality demonstrates that she will have a great deal of influence in this administration. Issues and agendas like abortion, abortion funding, condoms in schools and safe-sex education will have a champion in Joycelyn Elders."

Elders' confirmation hearing before the Senate labor and human resources committee is expected to be this summer but has not been scheduled, a committee spokesman said. If approved, she would replace Antonia Novello, who reportedly will serve until the end of June.

Americans more confident in military than church

PRINCETON, N.J. (RNS)—Americans have more confidence in the military than in churches, a new Gallup poll finds.

More than a fourth (29 percent) of Americans say they have a great deal of confidence in religious institutions, and another 24 percent say they have quite a lot of confidence in religious institutions.

However, that 53 percent positive rating is 14 points lower than the 67 percent positive rating Americans give their military forces.

Opinions about the church and the military have flip-flopped in the past decade. A 1983 Gallup poll found 62 percent of Americans thought favorably of the church over all other institutions. The military ranked second in that poll, inspiring confidence in 53 percent of the population.

In the latest poll, only one other institution besides the church and the military was found to

inspire confidence in a majority of Americans. The police registered a 52 percent positive rating.

Institutions least favored by Americans are the criminal justice system (17 percent) and the U.S. Congress (19 percent).

Meanwhile, another Gallup poll finds 63 percent of Americans saying religion is losing influence on their country. Another 27 percent see a rise in religion's influence. The remaining 10 percent have no opinion or believe religion's influence has remained about the same.

Religion's perceived influence on American life is at its lowest level since 1969-70, when 75 percent of the population believed religion was losing influence.

The highest level of religion's perceived influence was recorded in 1957, when 69 percent of the population thought it was increasing and only 14 percent saw decline.

Clergy think media influences more than church

NASHVILLE (BP)—A majority of ministers and priests believe "the news media have a greater influence on the way people think and act than religion does."

Nearly 80 percent of clergy agreed with this statement in a recent study conducted by Vanderbilt University's Freedom Forum First Amendment Center.

Some 100 religion writers and a sampling of newspaper editors, however, disagreed on the influence of the news media by a 5-to-3 margin.

John Dart, Los Angeles Times religion editor and visiting scholar at the center, presented a preliminary report of a survey on religion and the news media to the annual meeting of the Historical Commission and Southern Baptist Historical Society in Nashville.

The survey included more than 500 clergy from different denominations, including many Southern Baptists.

Of the respondents, 26 percent said they were Catholic, 43 percent "mainline Protestant,"

26 percent "evangelical Christian," 5 percent "fundamentalist Christian" and a few answered "other religion." Combining the "evangelical Christians" and the "fundamentalist Christians," a total of 31 percent of the respondents could be considered "conservative Protestant clergy," Dart said.

"Conservative clergy tended to be the most pessimistic about the influence of religion in personal lives and in public affairs," Dart reported.

The "conservative clergy" also believed overwhelmingly that news reporting was biased against ministers and organized religion. Journalists disagreed by considerable margins, Dart noted.

Dart countered the notion that this discrepancy results from differences in outlook of the conservative clergy versus the liberal news media. Instead, Dart claimed, "a secular press is reporting on religion in the context of a secularized society."

Church can call Bible 'inerrant'

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. (EP)—St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Minneapolis has won the right to describe the Bible as "inerrant" and "infallible," despite a warning from Minneapolis-area Bishop David Olson of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America that insisting on such wording could place the church "on the margin or outside the ELCA Lutheran family."

Late last year the Minneapolis-Area Synod Constitution Review Committee notified Olson that St. Paul's had retained in its constitution language from a confession of faith predating the 1988 merger that formed the ELCA.

Olson notified congregation president Harold Biel that while the ELCA allows some variation in congregational constitutions, it "has determined that certain sections be identical so that we are one church." The model for ELCA constitutions describes the Bible as "the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith and life."

Eric Madson, who chaired the Congregational Constitution Committee, said the dispute was over more

than wording.

"My understanding of the choice not to use those words is that to a layperson they convey a very specific, rigid meaning, which I think is one that would take a very literal reading of the Bible. In this part of the Lutheran church that literal reading has not been the prevailing understanding of how Scriptures are interpreted," he said.

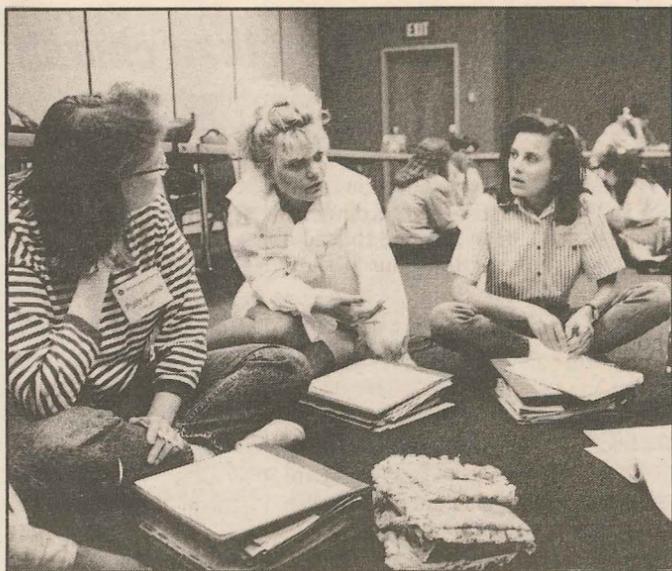
But, he added, "There ought to be room for a variety of views within the denomination."

Roland Wells, pastor at St. Paul's, says he likes the ELCA statement of faith, and "the fact that it says the Bible is the word of God."

But he said the new phrasing did not provide the assurance his congregation sought.

"It can be interpreted a lot of different ways. It's a more broad statement whose words aren't tried and true," he said. "Our founders put 'inerrant' and 'infallible' in and made those parts of our constitution unalterable. We know what the words mean, and it's a strong statement. We didn't want to have something pushed down our throats which we didn't approve of."

PEOPLE



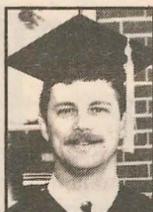
STUDENT TRAINING Jessica Snyder (second from left) from the Baptist Student Union at Hopkinsville Community College in Hopkinsville makes a point during a small-group discussion on leadership at a May 17-21 conference at the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville. Snyder was among 100 students attending the training program for BSU presidents and leaders. (Photo by Jim Veneman)



Perkins



Methvin



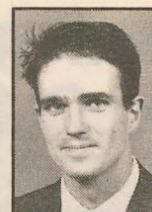
Miller



Faulks



Summer



Vest



Hodges

7 Kentuckians graduate from SBC seminaries

Seven Kentuckians earned degrees this spring from Southern Baptist seminaries outside Kentucky.

Jeffrey Perkins of Kentucky earned the master of divinity degree from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C.

Greg Methvin of Lexington earned the master of divinity degree

from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Tim Miller, former pastor of Buffalo Lick Baptist Church in Cadiz, earned the doctor of ministry degree from New Orleans Seminary. He is married to the former Lane Ann Richards of Adairville.

Three Kentuckians earned the

master of divinity degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas: Gregory Faulks of Bowling Green, Scotty Summer of Manchester, and Joseph Vest of Danville.

Marion Hodges of Benton earned the master of divinity degree from Southwestern Seminary.

Campbellsville gets Pennebaker fund

CAMPBELLSVILLE—Jean Pennebaker of Campbellsville, along with her sons Kirt, John and Mark, has established an endowed scholarship fund at Campbellsville College.

The fund honors Pennebaker's husband, William, who died in 1992. He was professor of education at Campbellsville.

An unspecified number of \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded annually to students working toward the

master's degree in teacher education at Campbellsville.

Scholarship recipients must exemplify Christian values in their lifestyle and commitment and have a meaningful Christian affiliation, the donors have stipulated.

Recipients must be Kentucky residents with a demonstrated financial need who are committed to teaching in the state for at least two years immediately after graduation.

A Tribute to the Southern Seminary We Remember

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- A place where scholarship was not incompatible with the life of faith.
- A place where there was always freedom to question and to explore.
- A place where men and women of integrity, character and commitment taught and counseled and inspired in the spirit of Christ.
- A place where the gospel became larger, not smaller.
- A place where we found that faith had greater dimensions than we had ever dreamed of.
- A place where faith was strengthened, affirmed and appropriately challenged.
- A place where education was not packaged or canned but where we were taught how to become life-long learners.
- A place where the written word became the living word.
- A place where we encountered the whole gospel for the whole person.
- A place where the great issues of life and faith were freely addressed in a spirit of free inquiry and openness.
- A place where the freedom of the Spirit encouraged the kind of risk-taking which is a part of genuine growth, development and education.
- A place where a rich tradition of sound biblical scholarship and a heritage of profound Christian commitment created an atmosphere of stability, continuity and openness to the challenges of the present and the future.

This we remember and for this we are grateful.

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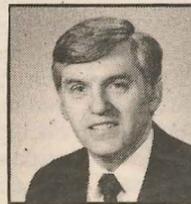
Soaring to success

"Soaring to Success" was the theme of this year's annual Independent Living banquet which was held this past week. During the banquet we honor our graduates from both high school and college, and those students who have completed the Independent Living course taught through our Center for Independence. The juniors also are invited each year to encourage them to begin thinking about their future as well.

This year we had five students completing high school, three completing college or other post high school training, and 28 graduates from the Independent Living training course.

The major speaker for the evening was Commissioner Peggy Wallace, who leads the Kentucky Department of Social Services. Wallace used examples from her own life to challenge the young people. She urged them to set a course for their lives, listen to advice, develop relationships with mentors who will take an active interest in their lives, and to leave the Lord for his help and support. Commissioner Wallace is a member of Trinity Baptist Church in Lexington and a native of Barbourville.

HOMES FOR CHILDREN



Curtis C. Mooney

Nann Vance, a former Glen Dale resident and a graduate this year from Western Kentucky University, also spoke to the students. She encouraged them not to look on their problems from the past as hindrances, but to look ahead and realize that they can achieve their dreams and goals. She shared how important friends had been to her and how important her relationship with Jesus Christ is. Nann will be going on to graduate school at Western, where she will pursue a master's in French and education.

Kim Endsley, a Glen Dale graduate and junior at Sullivan College in Louisville, brought a beautiful message in song.

As we shared the evening, I realized anew what a great ministry we have. Yes there are some tough days, but they pale in comparison to seeing young people succeed and have a future. I wish all Kentucky Baptists could have been there and experienced in person the tremendous difference you make in the lives of children.

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

Paid Column

PEOPLE

Baptists plan Walk for Christ in Ashland

ASHLAND—Christians in the Ashland area will have an opportunity to "walk the talk" this summer by participating in Walk for Christ Day.

The all-day event, scheduled for July 24, is to be highlighted by a 10 a.m. parade through downtown Ashland. Other activities include an 8 a.m. prayer service and a musical celebration in Central Park during the afternoon.

Ernie Eskew and Jeff Ferguson are co-founders of the event. Eskew serves as deacon and pianist at Second Baptist Church in Ashland, while Ferguson is minister of music there.

Eskew said all Christians are invited to join in the interdenomina-

tional affirmation of Christianity and its beliefs.

"We're hoping we can unite Christians together so we can break down barriers between denominations and clasp hands together," Eskew said. "It's time to show the community that Christians are alive and well."

Gov. Brereton Jones has proclaimed July 24 "Walk for Christ Day" in Kentucky, and has been invited to serve as keynote speaker during the day's events, Eskew said.

The parade is to begin at Central Park and follow a 2-mile route through the downtown area. Churches and church groups are being encouraged to design banners and floats for the parade.

In addition, instrumentalists and vocalists are being enlisted for the parade and the afternoon celebration. Among those already confirmed are Heart Song, Ed Crawford and a choir from Huntington, W. Va.

Supervised Christian entertainment for children, such as puppet shows and clowns, also will be provided.

Eskew said he expects the event to include a strong evangelistic thrust during the afternoon at the park. More than 300 New Testaments will be available for distribution, as well as tracts to aid witnessing teams, he said.

"We hope this will be a good soul-winning day," Eskew said. "We're hoping to fill the park."

Kentuckians to coordinate AIDS study

LOUISVILLE—Two Kentucky Baptists have been selected to lead a national study of the church's response to AIDS.

James Hyde and Nancy Miller, both of Louisville, will co-chair a 1994 consultation on AIDS and the Church, sponsored by the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship's ethics and public policy ministry group.

Hyde is associate professor of ethics and pastoral counseling at the University of Louisville and an adjunct professor of psychology of religion at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

He teaches the course "AIDS and the Church" at Southern Seminary and is a member of the AIDS National Interfaith Network's board of directors. He also was co-founder of AIDS Interfaith Ministries in Louisville.

Besides writing and lecturing extensively on AIDS, Hyde developed and led a program for starting an AIDS interfaith ministry.

Hyde earned a doctorate in pastoral care from Southern Seminary and is a member of Crescent Hill Baptist Church.

Miller is a medical technologist who encountered AIDS personally in 1987, when her son Stephen was diagnosed with the syndrome.

Since Stephen's death in 1989, she and her husband, Chip, director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Sunday school department, have helped train churches in how to minister to AIDS patients and their families.

"We can offer our experience that God has never let us down, that he is dependable when all else is gone," she said.

Miller is working on a master of social work degree from Southern Seminary. She is a member of Hurstbourne Baptist Church.

Miller and Hyde will enlist experts to address questions AIDS poses in ethics, public policy and in the practical ministry of the local church, said Carolyn Dipboye of Oak Ridge, Tenn., chair of the panel that selected them for the post.

They will complete their study before May 1994, when the ethics and public policy ministry group will sponsor a seminar based on their findings.

The study also is expected to produce two printed resources, a condensed piece for broad distribution and a set of lengthy background papers for ministers and group leaders, Dipboye said.

Duduit returns to Kentucky

LOUISVILLE (BP)—Michael Duduit, director of development and church relations at Samford University in Birmingham, Ala., is returning to Kentucky as executive director of the American Academy of Ministry.

In addition to serving the academy—an interdenominational professional association and society for ministers—Duduit will continue as editor of *Preaching*, a professional journal for ministers. He also will serve as visiting professor of preaching at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, teaching one class per semester during the 1993-94 academic year.

Duduit, a member of the administrative staff at Samford since 1987, previously was director of communications at Southern Seminary. As editor of *Preaching*, Duduit was instrumental in launching the American Academy of Ministry in May 1992. The organization has since grown to approximately 1,000 members, representing more than 20 denominational groups. His wife, Laura, is a Louisville native.

Graves County Association pairs with Utah groups

MAYFIELD—Graves County Baptist Association in Kentucky has launched a missions partnership with Baptists from two district associations in Utah.

Graves County Association will team up with the Gideon and Utah Baptist associations in Utah. The primary purpose will be to strengthen Baptist ministry in Utah, which is heavily influenced by Mormonism.

"The possibilities for ministry be-

yond our association are unlimited," said Jack Studie, moderator of Graves County Association and pastor of Sharon Baptist Church near Mayfield. "We can offer prayer support, pulpit exchanges, vacation Bible school help, assist with people search and offer encouragement."

The partnership will begin this summer, when four Graves County teams of four members each will travel to Utah, Studie reported. The teams

will lead vacation Bible schools and conduct door-to-door visitation in the daytime and lead evangelistic services at night.

Graves County Association kicked off the partnership with a link-up rally in late May. John McClung, director of missions for the Utah associations, and Tony Harrell, a pastor from the area, were keynote speakers for the rally, held at First Baptist Church in Mayfield.

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WANTED: Handbells, any condition. Write Bethel Baptist Church, HC-82 Box 630, Pine Knot, KY 42635, or call Donna Strunk, (606) 376-5031.

WANTED: Minister of music and youth. Send resumé to Personnel Committee, Masonville Baptist Church, 6601 U.S. 231, Utica, KY 42376.

WANTED: Part-time minister of youth. Gethsemane Baptist Church. Send resumé to 10400 Blue Lick Road, Louisville, KY 40229. (502) 969-3191.

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KENTUCKY KERNELS

The Kentucky Baptist Foundation was authorized by the Kentucky Baptist Convention Executive Board in 1943 and began operation in 1946. From that beginning, assets under management of the Foundation have grown to \$3.77 million in 1965, \$5 million in 1972 and \$33 million in 1993.

Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Ann Tatum

■ **BANDANA**—Bandana Church ordained **Bill Abel** and **Jerry Owsley** as deacons May 23.

■ **BEDFORD**—Bedford Church called **Jay Austin** as youth minister.

■ **CADIZ**—Cadiz Church called **Phillip Salmon** as pastor. He previously served as pastor of Wing Avenue Church in Owensboro for seven years.

■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Campbellsville Church called **Wally Vinson** as interim youth minister.

South Campbellsville Church called **Kevin Byrd** as youth director.

■ **DAYTON**—East Dayton Church licensed **John Carrell Sr.** to the ministry.

■ **FALMOUTH**—**Mark Allison** resigned as pastor of Park Hills Church in Spartanburg, S.C. Allison is a recent graduate of Southern Seminary in Louisville.

■ **LAGRANGE**—DeHaven Memorial Church ordained **Doug Crisp** to the ministry. He currently serves as youth minister at Bagdad Church.

■ **LAWRENCEBURG**—**Bob Jones** will retire Aug. 31. He has served as pastor of First Church for 27 years. His ministry includes 42 years of service.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Ormsby Heights

Church has called **Wayne Eastham** as minister of music/senior adults.

■ **OAK GROVE**—First Church has called **Ron Wells** as pastor. He comes from Oak Grove Church in Paducah.

■ **OWENSBORO**—**Leisha Morgan**, of Philpot, is serving as interim youth director at Seven Hill Church. She is a recent graduate of Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green.

■ **PADUCAH**—Baptist Tabernacle Church called **Mary McGuire** as minister of music.

■ **WHITESBURG**—First Church called **Gordon Christian** as director of youth and education. He attended Clear Creek Baptist Bible College in Pineville and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C.

MISSIONARY UPDATE

■ **Kenneth and Tammy Cummins**, missionaries to Honduras, have completed language study and arrived on their field at Apartado 2, La Ceiba, Atlantida, Honduras, C.A. Both are natives of Kentucky. He is from Princeton, and she is the former Tammy Girtten of Morganfield. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1992.

Richland marks centennial

FALMOUTH—Richland Baptist Church is something for new pastors to sink their teeth into.

Since the 1940s, the small church near Falmouth has found a ministry through calling to its pastors and students from Georgetown College and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

According to the church's history, many of these men were first-time pastors at Richland, and "cut their teeth" on the ministry there, with the support of a loving congregation.

The church now is gearing up to celebrate the centennial of its 1893 location on Antioch-Richland road.

Nelah Clifford, member of Richland since 1924 and church clerk for 40 years, said the church actually dates back to 1817, when it began as a mission of Beaver Baptist Church in Cynthiana.

Richland's historic building has become a landmark and is registered with the historical society in Frankfort, she added.

But Clifford noted some concern about whether the church would be able to survive the tremendous change occurring in the community much longer.

"Richland is a rural church," she said. "It's beginning to go like the country store—it's dwindling pretty fast."

Although the church has been larg-

er in the past, membership now stands at only about 60, she explained.

Nevertheless, the centennial on June 27 will be a celebrative time for renewing old friendships and hearing from former pastors, she said.

Ron Cook, a former pastor now serving in Hereford, Texas, will speak during the 11 a.m. worship service.

A noon meal and 2 p.m. service also are scheduled. About six former pastors are expected to return for the event.

"We're proud to have reached 100 years," Clifford said.

While acknowledging that in a declining community Richland Church may not have a lot of opportunities for growth, Clifford noted the church's ministry continues in a vibrant way through the pastors who got their start at Richland while they were students.

An example is Mark Allison, who recently resigned from the church after completing his doctorate at Southern Seminary. He now serves in Spartanburg, S.C.

Others included in the line of 24 students who served Richland during the past 50 years are Brent Walker, who now serves with the Baptist Joint Committee in Washington, D.C., and Stephen Shoemaker, a former pastor of Crescent Hill Baptist Church in Louisville now serving at Broadway Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas.

A young Marine on leave

Nick is a U.S. Marine and has been since a few days after his graduation from Oneida a year ago. During the past year he has been in many places, including Somalia. But every "leave" time he has come to Oneida. In his mind and heart, OBI is home. In recent months, has been stationed in North Carolina.

Being closer, his visits have been more frequent. Often he can only be here for a day and will arrive at 2 or 3 a.m. Even so, by 8 a.m. he is at work in the shop where he did his daily chores while a student here. If he has a week off, it is the same. He keeps some work clothes in the room he stayed in most of the time he was here in school. Though different boys have come and gone in that room since his graduation, Nick is still a part of it. Often I will not even know he is here until I run into him on the sidewalk coming from work or the dining room.

Nick often looks as if he has come from a coal mine. But for Sunday worship he is in his dress blues and looks like a Marine recruiting poster.

He became a Christian three years ago, just a few days before newfound campus friends brought him to our campus. He had been heavily into drug usage for several years before that life-changing confession of faith. A month after he arrived, I took him back to the church where he had accepted Christ for his baptism. What a joy it was to watch him grow as a Christian for two years, becoming an honor student academically and in conduct. He never had to be disciplined for anything. What an inspiration he has been to many students and staff alike, and continues to be.

On full scholarship while he was a student, this is Nick's way to say "thank you." He does it in physical labor on campus. For him it is a labor of love. He is "family."

In the past two weeks, 18 others have worked here nearly a week as volunteers. Most were here

for the first time, and they came from a variety of places. The largest single group was the pastor and six men from Temple Baptist Church in Owensboro. Others were couples in their campers from "Campers on Mission." Three were professional painters, one a 1978 graduate who was here three years, donating two full days of their painting skills.

Major accomplishments of these volunteers include the wiring in conduit and installation of intercom systems in two dorms. Last year electricians from Severns Valley Baptist Church, Elizabethtown, installed similar systems in two other dorms.

A large storage wall was built and smaller carpentry tasks accomplished. A retired medical doctor from northern Kentucky was among those helping to paint. Three classrooms and two hallways got fresh coats of white paint. Also, the basement of one of our staff houses got two coats of paint in preparation for new staff moving in. One of our large barns required the labor of the three professional painters one full day as they rolled a thick layer of paint on a rather steep roof.

Some of our volunteer helped work on the farm, while their wives sewed and did other work in our ongoing crafts program.

Three sites now have been prepared for the construction of large new buildings. Each new building project presents its own set of challenges. In the meantime, beautiful new kitchen cabinets built in our own carpentry shop were installed in two new three-bedroom, two-bath townhouse apartments, and these were carpeted during the past week. Cabinets are now being built for two additional townhouses which will be completed within the month.

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

ONEIDA JOURNAL



Barkley Moore

Paid Column

Graduate's biggest challenge

Clear Creek added 30 members to its growing alumni organization May 7 when commencement exercises were held at Binghamtown Baptist Church in Middlesboro. One of the four couples among the 1993 graduates who received the bachelor of arts in ministry was Rose and Rick Frazer of Ohio. They are grateful for this "life-changing experience that ministered to our needs and enabled us to know and understand ourselves so we could help others more effectively."

As a child, Rose remembers "... going to church every time the doors were open. My parents never went, but as soon as my brother and I could walk, my parents sent us." She recalls seeing other parents at church with their children and realizing that was what the Lord intended for families.

At age 14 Rose gave her life to the Lord. She states, "Every time the preacher preached, I felt as though he was directing his message toward me. At the time I sat near the front of the church. I thought if I moved to the back it might help the way I felt. It didn't. I knew I needed to go forward."

Rose was 18 when she met Rick. After dating for a year Rick also made a profession of faith. They married the following year. She recalls how inquisitive Rick was about the Bible.

One evening they hosted an evangelist, a Clear Creek graduate, for dinner. Rick had been contemplating ministry training when the evangelist told them about Clear Creek.

Once they arrived, Rose thought she might take some classes but never dreamed she would graduate with a bachelor's degree. Lexington pastoral counselor Bob Humphreys encouraged her to pursue her goal of becoming a Christian counselor. "He gave me encouragement. He was more than a professor. He was more than a friend. My biggest challenge wasn't systematic theology or Greek, but finding out who I am and what God wants to do through me."

Rick will pursue a master's degree at Dallas Theological Seminary in the fall. He has been serving as youth director and outreach leader at Lynn Camp Baptist Church in Corbin. Rose is expecting their first child in July but hopes to enroll in the counseling program at Dallas Baptist University.

The Frazers feel Clear Creek's unique ministry helps the highly encouraged as well as the highly discouraged fit in and nurture their call from God. They are convinced this institution is ordained by God.

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

Paid Column

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Rick & Rose Frazer

PEOPLE

Hospitality House fosters reconciliation amid death

By Ken Camp
Texas Baptist Convention

HUNTSVILLE, Texas (BP)—In the anxious hours surrounding an execution, an estranged family began to feel God's healing touch, thanks to the ministry of reconciliation offered at the Texas Baptist Hospitality House.

On May 3, 11 members of Death Row inmate Darryl Elroy Stewart's family and the Central Texas couple who led Stewart to faith in Jesus Christ came to the Hospitality House in Huntsville, Texas.

The Hospitality House is a temporary shelter for the visiting families of Texas Department of Corrections inmates. Texas Baptists support the ministries of the Hospitality House through their state missions offering.

About 32,000 people from 45 states and 32 countries have passed through the doors of the Hospitality House since it opened in 1986, including 20 families who gathered there while their loved ones were executed by lethal injection.

Stewart, 37, had grown up with six siblings in a Christian home. His brothers and sisters included a bank vice president, an insurance executive and other community leaders.

But Darryl Stewart went a different direction. First he was sentenced to six years in prison for robbery but was paroled after serving four months of his term.

Then in February 1980, he entered the apartment of a 22-year-old woman who lived in the same Houston housing complex he did, shot and killed the woman when she refused to have sex with him, then left the apartment with \$50.

Even before his conviction, Stewart's lifestyle was a point of contention within his family, pitting brothers and sisters against each other.

"He had split with his family. They had turned against him and he against them," said Bob Norris, director of the Hospitality House.

About six years ago, a couple began visiting Stewart monthly. After some time, the white couple's genuine expression of Christian love for

the black inmate resulted in his praying to receive God's forgiveness and profess Jesus as Lord and Savior.

When the couple and the condemned man's family first came into the house on the night of the execution, "It was a tense situation," Norris said. "They all resented each other."

But at 11:30 p.m., the Hospitality House phone rang. As expected, Stewart wanted to use his final telephone call to speak with the couple who had led him to faith.

"But then he switched from talking to the support couple and asked to speak to each member of his family," Norris recalled.

"One by one, the family members would say, 'Well, he won't want to talk to me.' But without exception, he asked to speak to each one, even his ex-wife."

Finally, he asked to talk to his son, whom Norris initially saw as a confused and belligerent 13-year-old. Stewart told the boy he loved him and then asked him to take care of his mother and grandmother.

The boy was "transformed," ac-

ording to Norris.

"This isn't a down-going. It's an uprising," the young man told his family. "My father's rising up to a better place. And I'm rising up to become a man."

At midnight—the appointed hour of execution—members of the family joined Norris in a circle of prayer, asking God for a healing of grief and bitterness. At 12:25 a.m., May 4, Stewart was pronounced dead.

Within about 30 minutes, chaplain Carroll Pickett came to the Hospitality House to console the family.

As Norris continued to talk with the family until about 2:30 a.m., he saw a pronounced change. While the reconciliation was neither complete nor instantaneous, it was a clear beginning, he said.

Although some family members continued to harbor ill feelings, brothers and sisters whose relationships had been strained wept and embraced each other.

"It was a time of death, but it became an occasion for new life and the healing in that family," Norris said.

"It was a time of death, but it became an occasion for new life and the healing in that family."

Bob Norris, director of Texas Baptists' Hospitality House

Buechner's simple advice: 'Pay attention to your life'

HOBE SOUND, Fla. (ABP)—Frederick Buechner has written 27 books, taught, lectured and preached for years. But he really has only one thing to say: "Pay attention."

"If I were called upon to state in a few words the essence of everything I was trying to say both as a novelist and as a preacher," Buechner writes, "it would be something like this: Listen to your life. See it for the fathomless mystery that it is. In the boredom and pain of it, no less than in the excitement and gladness, touch, taste, smell your way to the holy and hidden heart of it, because in the last analysis all moments are key moments, and life itself is grace."

"Pay attention to what happens to you," the 66-year-old Presbyterian minister added in a recent interview with the Louisiana Baptist Message.

"Keep your eyes open. Keep your ears open to people. Listen to them when they speak and listen to them when they don't speak. Listen to yourself, the innermost truth of yourself. Pay attention to events and things. Where are events trying to lead us?"

And what is God saying in all this?

"I would beware very much of trying to capsule it in some easy way," Buechner says. "But he's at us. Ultimately, what he is in our lives to do is to save us, to lead us back to himself and to each other as brothers and sisters. That would be the bedrock reality of what I think God is trying to do."

Listen for "holy" moments, Buechner advises, for what he calls "whispers from the wings."

Buechner's non-fiction books—including "Wishful Thinking," "A Room Called Remember," "Whistling in the Dark," "The Clown in the Belfry"—are full of holy moments he has experienced. And his works of fiction—"The Book of Bebb," "Go-

dric," "The Wizard's Tide" among others—are full of glimpses at the sometimes hidden side of events, happenings too often passed by without enough thought.

"I think an awful lot of people, certainly including myself, go through life on automatic pilot, where you pay very little attention to where you are or what you are actually doing," Buechner says.

"You're thinking about what you have to do next. You're worrying about the future. You're playing over old recordings out of the past about things you did yesterday or wished you had done or something like that. It's an internal dialogue which makes it very hard to focus on what is really going on around us."

Unfortunately, Buechner says, many people allow the everydayness of life to prevent them from focusing on what goes on around them—"the clouds in the sky, the child playing hula hoop on the sidewalk, the sound of the rain on the windshield of the car."

In so doing, they run the risk of missing the voice of God, he suggests.

"God speaks to us graciously, undeservedly as far as we are concerned. But then we always have the freedom to listen or not to listen, to pay attention or not to pay attention."

No one can make every moment a key moment, Buechner concedes, but most people can take the matter more seriously than they do. And busy-ness is not an excuse Buechner accepts.

"Think of all the stupid things we do in our lives, dumb things like turning on the television set and so on," he explains. "Why not take five minutes, 10 minutes, 20 minutes a day just to listen, to be aware of where you are and what's going on and what happened this morning and what so-and-so said?"

Interceding pastor became an answer to his prayers

NEW YORK (BP)—Scott Stearman offers one piece of advice to people with intercessory prayer ministries: Get ready to be an answer to prayer.

As pastor of First Baptist Church in Carney, Okla., Stearman habitually called the toll-free Southern Baptist Home Mission Board prayer line and read "Prayer-Gram," the HMB's prayer request list, to update the church's intercessory prayer ministry.

Last year Stearman was planning to attend Princeton University in New Jersey when he noticed a prayer request for a volunteer at Graffiti Baptist Center on the Lower East Side of Manhattan.

After visiting the university and meeting a home missionary at Graffiti, Stearman decided to combine education and minis-

try. He now works on a master's degree Monday through Friday and volunteers in a government-owned housing project on weekends.

Stearman primarily visits people who attend one of Graffiti's outreach events, perhaps the free lunch in the park or after-school program for children.

Most of the people Stearman sees live in apartment high rises where windows on the first three floors are covered with bars and outside doors are locked at all times. An estimated 90,000 people live in the housing project that is a block wide and several blocks long.

Stearman was to finish the Princeton program in May. Again he is turning to prayer to discern God's leadership for the future.



ANSWER TO PRAYER Scott Stearman used to lead his Oklahoma church to pray for home missions needs. When he moved to the New York City area to attend Princeton University, he found himself becoming an answer to one of those prayers as a volunteer at the Graffiti Baptist Church. (BP photo by Sarah Zimmerman)

Woman thanks police with cards

TOPEKA, Kan. (BP)—Ethel Herrick is building a large collection of pen pals within the Topeka, Kan., police department.

About a year ago, Herrick decided to start sending Topeka police officers birthday cards and a note to show her appreciation for their services.

And it has kept her busy. In the past three months, the retiree estimated she has mailed 150 cards to Topeka officers.

On a recent Sunday, the police gave Herrick a sign of their appreciation. At Trinity Baptist Church, which Herrick attends, she was presented with a Distinguished Service Award by John Sams, president of the Topeka Fraternal Order of Police.

"Ethel's brought a lot of sunshine to all the officers and me," Sams said. "You often hear people talking bad about the police. It's nice to hear from

someone that appreciates what we do."

Herrick said she gets more enjoyment from sending the cards than the officers who receive them.

"I'm not a person who can sit all day and fold my hands," Herrick said. "I need to be doing something. Life's fairly short and you have to appreciate the chances you get to help other people."

In addition to the certificate, Herrick was presented with a small box. She unwrapped it to find a roll of postage stamps.

As her pastor Carl Steele pointed out, it is likely those stamps will come in handy.

"The other day Ethel asked me, 'Now why don't we do this for the fire department?'" he said.

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Coming Soon to a Church Near You!

State Missions Week of Prayer Materials

In July, every Kentucky Baptist Convention church will receive a sample packet of State Missions materials from Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union. It will include a poster, bulletin insert, Eliza Broadus Envelope, and copies of all age-level programs. A card for ordering extras of all materials will also be included. If there is WMU in a church, the packet will be sent to the WMU director; if there is not WMU, the packet will be sent to the church/pastor.

State Missions work across Kentucky depends strongly on the Eliza Broadus Offering. This year, the goal is \$700,000. Only about one half of KBC churches contribute to this offering. Just think what would happen if all KBC churches gave to the offering. Over a million dollars could be given for mission work in Kentucky! The study materials support the offering because they inform people about needs in Kentucky.

*As we know, we feel
As we feel, we do*

Through study, Kentucky Baptists will learn about needs; as they learn, they will begin to feel the pain of others; as they feel the pain, they will begin to do something to alleviate the pain—pray, give and get personally involved in some ministry.

Writers for 1993 State Missions Week of Prayer Materials



Lucy Stewart (preschoolers and children), Louanne Mathis, Suzanne Darland (adults), Eileen Campbell-Reed (youth).