

AUGUST 3, 1993 VOL. 167, NO. 30

FOR THE RECORD

Confirmation hearings

Two appointees of President Bill Clinton moved closer to Senate confirmation last week. Ruth Bader Ginsburg was endorsed by a Senate committee to become a justice on the U.S. Supreme Court, and Joycelyn Elders received committee approval for her nomination as U.S. Surgeon General. See page 2.

TV violence

Network-approved warning labels for television violence don't amount to much, several expert observers say. See page 2.

Trip for all ages

Immanuel Baptist Church in Frankfort took members of all ages on a mission trip to Boston. See page 3.

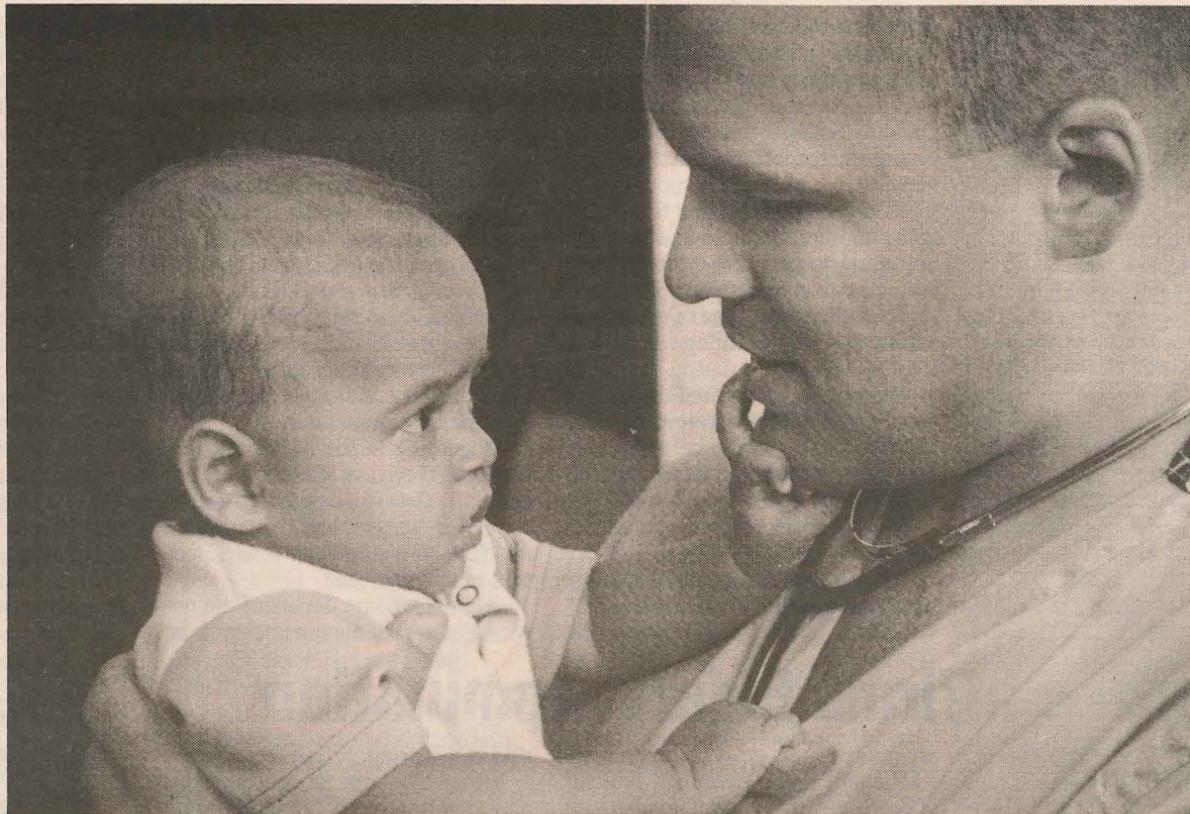
Editorial

Christians should transcend political correctness. See page 5.

Southern Seminary

This issue features a package of stories about the change of administrations at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary:

- The new president's vision. See page 1.
- Impact on enrollment and giving. See page 3.
- Friends describe Mohler as "brilliant" but some see change. See page 6.
- Observations on the changes. See page 7.
- Who is the new administrative team? See page 7.



JESUS LOVES THE LITTLE CHILDREN Brian Mulberry of Lexington holds a patient at a free medical/dental clinic where he and other Southern Baptist volunteers worked with Venezuelan Baptists in a medical crusade. Mulberry screened patients by checking their blood pressure. He is a chemistry major at the University of Kentucky and attends Porter Memorial Baptist Church in Lexington. (BP photo by Jim Burton)

Kentuckians part of medical mission

BARQUISIMETO, Venezuela (BP)—More than 1,500 Venezuelans professed faith in Jesus Christ as a Southern Baptist volunteer medical missions team and Venezuelan Baptists joined forces July 12-17 for medical clinics in northwest Venezuela.

Four Kentucky Baptists participated in the mission: Jeff Golden of Williamsburg, Brian Mulberry of Lexington and Lewis and Connie Graham of Bowling Green.

"Friday the 16th, 104 people accepted Jesus into their hearts," recalled project coordinator Dewey Dunn, a gastroenterologist from Nashville. "I've never been in any place where more than 100 people accepted Jesus in one day."

An estimated 5,000 Venezuelans

received free medical and dental exams as well as pharmaceuticals.

"They have given us a tremendous boost in the association's objectives to have 50 churches by 1995 in the Venezuelan states of Lara and Yaracuy," said Sam Paris, Southern Baptist missionary in Barquisimeto.

The clinics were scheduled in areas that strengthened the work of existing churches or opened doors to starting missions. Venezuelan Baptists provided one-on-one spiritual counseling services, which resulted in the decisions. Each person registering a decision was to be followed up within days, Paris said.

"The combination of medical missions and church planting has been successful in Venezuela for several

years," said Henry Love, executive director of the Baptist Medical/Dental Fellowship, based at the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission. "It's a strategy that could be repeated in countries around the world."

The clinics centered in Barquisimeto, San Felipe, Carora and among a remote Indian tribe southwest of Maracaibo, Venezuela's second-largest city. While most clinics were based in urban areas, one team traveled to remote villages to do vaccinations and exams among Yukpa Indians.

Travel to the Yukpa tribes proved treacherous at times. To reach one village, volunteers crossed a makeshift bridge of long metal strips. At another village, the last leg of the journey included a mule ride across a river.

New president wants to blend academic & practical

By Marv Knox
Editor

Can a seminary polish its reputation for world-class scholarship and keep on loving churches filled with ordinary folks who never heard of "exegesis"?

Al Mohler hopes so. And he took up that challenge Sunday morning, when he became the ninth president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Mohler, 33, succeeded Roy Honeycutt, who retired after more than a decade at the helm of the Southern Baptist Convention's 134-year-old flagship seminary.

In an interview shortly before he assumed the presidency, Mohler described his vision for the Louisville school, where he earned two degrees.

"This institution, if it is to be faithful to the glory of its own heritage and founding, will be the pre-eminent

leadership institution of theological education in the evangelical world," he said. "But it will understand that it

was founded in order to serve the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention. It will aim at a dual focus of unquestioned academic excellence and demonstrated competencies for ministry in local churches.

"We will not allow the academic to be at odds with ministerial training but will combine the two in such a way that Southern Seminary will focus on preparing ministers for service in the churches of the Southern Bap-

tist Convention." These ministers will represent "the highest-quality academic preparation in the study of the

classic theological disciplines and unquestioned professional expertise related to the unique tasks and responsibilities of ministry."

In other words, a seminary must bridge the gap between the theoretical and the practical. "This has always been a delicate balance for theological institutions," he suggested, noting it's even more difficult in the 1990s.

The challenge is compounded by a wide array of models

Woman puts Bible into black slang

By David Winfrey
SBC Home Mission Board

"And that bad ol' serpent told the sister, 'Nah, sister, he's feeding you a line of bull. You won't die. The Almighty just knows that if you eat from the tree you'll be hipped to what's going down.'" — From the *Black Bible Chronicles* by P.K. McCary

ATLANTA (BP)—Don't bother charging P.K. McCary with irreverence. She's heard the criticisms and says they pale in light of her evangelistic mission.

"All I want to do is introduce kids to God," says McCary, a journalist and member of Brentwood Baptist Church in Houston. "It doesn't matter how you get it, just so you get it."

Her *Black Bible Chronicles* is a street slang translation of the Old Testament's first five books. With sections titled "World Up!" and "Cain Wastes Abel," it won't be mistaken for the King James Version.

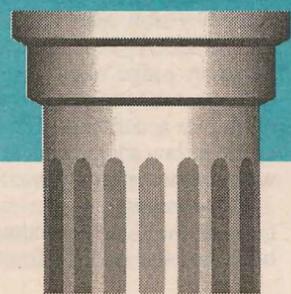
McCary says this kind of book is needed to share the Bible's timeless message with young people who don't think their problems are addressed in the leather-bound pages most people carry to church.

"Sometimes your point is made when you say 'cuz' rather than 'because.' It makes you perk your ears up and listen," she says. "We've got kids who are not listening."

Some research supports her claim. Christian researcher and author George Barna said while the black community reveres and reads the Bible more than the rest of society, "there is a greater

□ See *Woman writes ...*, page 2

THE NEW
SOUTHERN
SEMINARY



■ More on pages 3, 6 & 7

BRIEFS

■ **The final report** of the National Commission on AIDS is a "clarion call to action" for religious groups, said Ben Mitchell of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission. The commission made only two recommendations in the concluding report of its two-year assignment: Leaders at every level should speak out about AIDS, and the federal government must develop a comprehensive national plan to deal with AIDS. "Ultimately, the message of Christ and a lifestyle of discipleship are the only truly effective weapons against the AIDS pandemic," Mitchell said. "Our silence and inactivity indict us because faith without works is dead."

■ **Operation Rescue's** leaders have called their 10-day "Cities of Refuge" campaign a success even though it was quieter than previous efforts. During the July 9-18 blitz in seven cities, 36 children were saved from abortion, according to Operation Rescue founder Randall Terry. "If you add up the participants in all seven cities, this is certainly our biggest event to date. It's the first time we've tried spreading out our forces, and we're pleased with the results."

■ **A plea** from the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America for Southern Baptists to confess a "failure of nerve" in not taking a stand against the bombing of the 16th Avenue Baptist Church in Birmingham during the civil-rights struggles of 1963 has drawn support from the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission. The Peace Fellowship has asked individual Baptists to sign "The Birmingham Confession," which recants a lack of action by the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee in September 1963.

TV violence warnings won't pack a punch, critics say

By Greg Warner
Associated Baptist Press

Don't expect the TV networks' new on-air violence advisories to do much good, informed observers say.

The country's four major networks—ABC, CBS, NBC and Fox—announced in June they will attach warning announcements to heavily violent programs beginning this fall. The voluntary proposal is viewed as a compromise intended to avoid government regulation of TV violence.

But critics are wondering what good the advisories will do, since the networks concede none of their current shows is violent enough to warrant the warning announcement. And only one new program slated for a fall debut is expected to carry the warning—"NYPD Blue" on ABC.

Most observers said the warnings will do little to reduce violence and

offer little practical help for parents. The warnings may in fact only promote viewership of violence by attracting the curious, according to Quentin Schultze, author of several books on the effects of television viewing.

"They are raising a red flag that is going to attract people and they are not going to help the typical parent with day-to-day decision making," said Schultze, professor of communication at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Mich.

Peggy Charren, retired director of Action for Children's Television, said the advisories won't help parents, who don't need help identifying violence but need viewing alternatives.

Two Baptist ethics specialists agreed.

"The guidelines appear to be more window-dressing than substance," said Louis Moore, director of media

for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission in Nashville.

"It's just another small step that won't make much difference at the present time," added Ray Higgins, assistant professor of Christian ethics at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. "But it shows that people are moving toward greater frustration with violence on TV and are more likely to do something about it in the future."

The anti-violence proposal came as time was running out on the networks to take action or face likely government intervention.

According to the National Coalition on Television Violence, 25 percent of prime-time shows in 1992 contained "very violent" material, and the "TV homicide rate" rose 27 percent in that one year.

Although some details of the networks' proposal remain unclear, each

network will be left to decide how much violence is enough to warrant labeling. The voluntary agreement will be in effect for two years.

Both Moore and Schultze said a more helpful proposal would be a ratings system similar to the one used by the movie industry but which would identify the troublesome content of TV shows—such as violence, adult language, adult situations and nudity.

"There has to be some way that we as a society can provide objective information for parents to make decisions," Schultze said.

People on both sides of the TV-violence debate warn against government censorship of television. But, Schultze said, government should play a role in setting standards for content, at least in broadcasting, since TV stations operate with government licensure on a limited number of channels.

Committee affirms Elders' nomination

WASHINGTON—Senate confirmation of Joycelyn Elders as U.S. surgeon general moved a step closer July 30 when the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee voted to recommend her to the full Senate.

The full Senate is expected to vote on her confirmation this week, before the Aug. 6 recess.

The committee vote was 13-4, with Sens. Dan Coats of Indiana, Judd Gregg of New Hampshire, Strom Thurmond of South Carolina and Orrin Hatch of Utah opposing her.

Elders, a pediatric endocrinologist and director of the Arkansas Department of Health, has been awash in controversy since President Bill Clinton nominated her to become the nation's chief physician.

While receiving endorsements from more than 200 groups and former Surgeon General Everett Koop, she has been staunchly opposed by conservative religious groups because of her views on teenage pregnancy and school-based sexuality education.

She advised Americans against abortion to "get over their love affair with the fetus." She has espoused taxpayer funding of abortion, condom distribution in public schools and sex education in all primary and second-

ary grades.

Richard Land, executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, said Elders' nomination is unacceptable. "My prayer is that we will never get over our love affair with unborn babies as well as born babies."

Some committee members said their constituents expressed overwhelming opposition to Elders. Phone calls to his office were 100 to 1 against her, Hatch said. At Elders' July 23 hearing, Sen. Dave Durenberger, R.-Minn., who voted for her, said 2,100 of 2,600 constituents contacting his office opposed her.

Some of her statements are "profoundly disturbing and profoundly offensive to many groups," Coats said.

His biggest concern, however, was her failure to warn the public after potentially defective condoms were distributed by the Arkansas Department of Health in 1992. Food and Drug Administration tests showed the condoms had a defective rate 10 times greater than the agency's limit.

The supplier recalled the condoms still in possession of the department and schools but Elders and her senior staff decided not to issue a warning about the condoms already distributed for the "greater public good," she

said at a hearing.

Her action was "unconscionable" and demonstrated "unexplainable judgment," Coats said.

Others senators didn't see the issue the same way. Since not all the condoms were defective, Elders' actions were "commendable," said Sen. Howard Metzenbaum, D.-Ohio.

Land called on Southern Baptists who oppose Elders' nomination to contact their senators this week "with all due haste."

Meanwhile, those supporting the nomination continued to predict that the Senate will confirm Elders and America will be the better for it.

Sen. Paul Wellstone, D.-Minn., predicted Elders "will be a real healing force."

Committee chairman Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., said Elders "is just what the doctor ordered for this nation at this time in our history, with all the problems we face in public health."

"Her ideological opponents may never relent in their opposition. But I suspect that before long, millions of Americans—especially the 13 million children who live in poverty—will be calling Dr. Elders their doctor too."

Compiled from Baptist Press and Associated Baptist Press reports

Ginsburg nomination headed for Senate vote

WASHINGTON (ABP)—Judge Ruth Bader Ginsburg—the first Democratic nominee to the Supreme Court in a quarter of a century—said she believes abortion is a fundamental right during July 20-23 confirmation hearings.

The Senate Judiciary Committee subsequently approved her nomination, which could be considered by the full Senate this week.

It is essential to a woman's equality that her choice be controlling, Ginsburg told the Senate Judiciary Committee. If the state imposes restraints, she is disadvantaged because of her sex, denying her full autonomy and full equality, Ginsburg said.

Her abortion-rights statement is perhaps the most definitive one made

during recent confirmation hearings in which nominees have avoided disclosure of abortion views.

Ginsburg said her judicial approach is neither liberal nor conservative but is rooted in the place of the judiciary in a democratic society. Quoting former Justice Benjamin Nathan Cardozo, she said, "Justice is not to be taken by storm. She is to be wooed by slow advances."

She added: "A judge is not a politician. A judge rules in accordance with what the judge determines to be right ... in accordance with the application of law and precedent no matter what the home crowd wants."

Responding to a series of questions on the First Amendment, Ginsburg said the right to free speech is

one of the greatest things about America.

Senators also asked her about the First Amendment's establishment clause—specifically, whether or not she supports the Lemon test that requires government neutrality toward religion.

The test used by the high court for more than two decades to decide establishment-clause cases has been under fire in recent years.

She declined to give her view of Lemon because the issue may well come before the Supreme Court in many cases. However, she said she would be the kind of justice who would not discard a time-honored test, such as Lemon, without a better alternative.

Woman writes street-talking Scripture book

Continued from page 1

struggle to make sense of it."

McCary says she hopes the book helps parents teach their children values and morals in today's society. "They have looked at our hypocrisy and our fallibility, and we have nothing to say to them, so they think."

Drawing from her experience as the daughter of a Baptist preacher, McCary says the answer lies in giving children a Christian foundation that will last a lifetime. "Even when I went through periods of rebellion, the foundation was there," she recalls.

Still, McCary expects criticism for her book. She can catalogue her answers faster than you can offer complaints.

Irreverent? "I don't consider slang irreverent. I consider it a gramatic, cultural way of expressing myself."

Doesn't it perpetuate black stereotypes? "As a person who has always spoken pretty much correctly, there are times when I revert to a very colorful form of language," she says. "I find it, actually, rhythmic and cool, which makes it cool to kids."

Can a layperson adequately translate Scripture? "Jesus didn't come to the preachers and the politicians to get them to spread the word. He went to the common man."

Scheduled for a September release, the first printing of Black Bible Chronicles already has sold out to bookstores, said McCary, whose second effort will be on the four Gospels.

"The message in here—and it's here no matter what version—is that you do get more than one shot in this life if you believe in God," she says.

Frankfort church takes intergenerational mission trip

By Dawn Richerson
State Correspondent

FRANKFORT—A team of 27 adults, youth and children from Frankfort's Immanuel Baptist Church led a creative arts day camp at Metropolitan Baptist Church in Cambridge, Mass., June 26-July 5.

Participants in the churchwide mission trip also cleaned, painted and repaired parts of the building, led in outreach and promotion efforts in a nearby housing project and worked in the church's clothing ministry and Saturday meals program to the homeless. A Friday evening youth rally at the church drew teen-agers that might never have come to church otherwise.

To raise funds for the mission venture, the team from Immanuel sponsored churchwide bake sales and yard

sales, a Wednesday evening barbecue supper and a car wash. While they were ministering in Boston, church members at home prayed at specific times throughout the day for their work.

The trip was unique for several reasons, said organizers Gary Forman and Mike Shupert. Shupert, Immanuel's minister to youth, was especially pleased that all age groups were represented in the effort. Another benefit he cited was the first-hand missions experience with a ministry the church previously had supported through its missions budget.

"Immanuel has helped Metropolitan for about five years through financial contributions, but this is the first time we have taken the opportunity to give more than just our financial support," said Forman, who is manager

for Kentucky's Gas & Electric Revenue Requirement Branch and also serves as chairman of the church's mission committee. "You really can't fully support a church without having a first-hand experience in the field, working directly with the church."

To create interest in the day camp, members of the mission team took along an 8-foot inflatable Godzilla, ate picnic lunches on the church lawn and performed songs with creative movement and sign language at a nearby shopping mall. The group called the day camp a success, with children in attendance each day who never had heard about Jesus.

Like several other adults, Steve Dooley, commissioner for the Kentucky Department of Information Systems, took time away from his position to paint and assist with the

day camp's visual arts program. Pharmacist Dana Droz wasn't sure she belonged on a mission trip, but after assisting with meal preparation each evening, she realized that "there is always a place for everyone to use their gifts and talents" on mission together.

Members of Immanuel's mission team gained a special appreciation for the paid and volunteer staff of the Boston church. The project gave them an opportunity to work side-by-side with US-2ers and Mission Service Corps volunteers who, prior to the trip, they had only learned about through mission organizations and publications.

"We learned that we could be an encouragement to local Christian servants who are sometimes discouraged by the lack of results from their tireless efforts," one member said.

Enrollment & donations steady at seminary

By Mark Wingfield
News Director

Two questions stand out among the unknowns about Southern Seminary's future: What will happen to enrollment? What will happen to fund raising?

The people most enthusiastic about the changes have hailed the fall semester as the beginning of a new day that will bring more students, more money and more prestige to Southern.

But even some people favorable to the changes have expressed concern privately about a possible dip in enrollment and giving at least initially. And critics of the new administration have forecast a bleaker future of declining enrollment, decreasing contributions and diminished prestige.

Most knowledgeable sources admit it is far too early to assess the impact the change of directions will have on enrollment or fund raising.

However, the initial outlook for the fall semester is neither dismal nor glamorous. But it does appear to be positive, administrators report.

"We have seen no net effect (in student recruitment) when we look at the broad picture," said Roger Sims, admissions director. "We've had some students to withdraw their applications, yet we've had some to apply on the basis of the changes."

As of late July, the number of applications received from new students

was up 7.5 percent over the previous year, Sims said. And the number of new students already approved for admission in the fall is up 6 percent, added David Dockery, vice president for academic administration.

Further, the number of returning students pre-registered for the fall semester appears steady, Dockery said. "If those pre-registered come back, and the new students who have applied come, we will be up 3 percent to 4 percent," Dockery predicted.

Dockery admitted he has signed several transfer slips for students leaving Southern for other schools. But at the same time, he has talked with students who are coming to Southern because of the new direction.

Although no one knows at this point which students will return and which won't, only a trickle of students appear to be transferring to the schools most-talked-of as alternatives.

The Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond, Va., a new moderate-backed school, has five students transferring in the fall from Southern, said Nell Summerlin, registrar.

Louisville Presbyterian Seminary, located practically across the street from Southern's campus, has had about 20 inquiries from Southern students about transferring, said Jim Hubert, admissions director. Applications for six Southern students currently are in process, he said, and a few more could be incoming.

Lexington Theological Seminary,

a Disciples of Christ school in Lexington, has noticed an increase in inquiries from Baptist students, said Ruth Kitchen, a seminary official. Although Kitchen said she knew of no transfers from Southern, the Lexington school will receive at least one student in the fall who probably would have gone to Southern if not for the changes.

The true test for Southern's enrollment likely will come in the spring semester rather than the fall semester, several seminary administrators believe. A much-larger-than-usual group of students appear poised to graduate in December, meaning a larger number of incoming students will be required to keep enrollment steady.

The forecast for fund raising also is unclear, said Tom Mabe, Southern's vice president for development. "It's too early to tell what the direction's going to be on either side."

The seminary's major donors will continue to stand with the school, Mabe predicted. "We're enjoying two or three major gifts from donors just in the past year. What I would call our major, major donors are still with us."

Among donors of smaller amounts, Mabe said, he has heard both positive and negative comments about the seminary's direction. But the amount of strongly negative or strongly positive mail his office has received is "percentagewise very, very small," he said.

Southern names Marsha Smith to new post

By Mark Wingfield
News Director

LOUISVILLE—Marsha Ellis Smith has been named associate vice president for academic administration at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

President Al Mohler and David Dockery, vice president for academic administration, announced the appointment Aug. 2.

The position is a new alignment of duties previously held by Harold Songer, who retired last year as vice president for academic affairs. Smith will oversee academic scheduling, the

seminary catalogue, academic records, enrollment services and other mechanics of the academic process.

Smith, 42, currently is series acquisitions editor with the Holman division of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville. She has worked with projects such as the "Holman Bible Dictionary," "Holman Bible Handbook," "Holman Student Bible Dictionary" and "The Family Worship Bible."

She holds the doctor of philosophy degree in biblical backgrounds and archaeology and the master of divinity degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth,

Texas. She also earned the bachelor of arts degree in music education from Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, Ark.

Smith is a native of Malvern, Ark., who also has experience directing church music and youth programs as well as missions experiences. She has been an adjunct professor at Southwestern as well as at Texas Christian University and Hardin-Simmons University, a visiting professor at the Baptist Theological Seminary of Zambia, and associate director of the Baptist Student Union of the University of Texas at El Paso.

She is married to William Smith.

BLUEGRASS BURGEO

■ **Child Care Day upcoming.** Baptists and other supporters from across Kentucky are invited to the Child Care Day open house at the Spring Meadows campus of Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children Aug. 7. From 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., the facility will be open for tours, viewing of informational displays and dialogue with staff members. Lunch will be provided. The campus is located at 10801 Shelbyville Road in Middletown.

■ **Alumni banquet set.** Joe Hall, former University of Kentucky basketball coach, will be the featured speaker for Campbellsville College's alumni banquet Oct. 15. The banquet will be one aspect of homecoming festivities slated for Oct. 15-16. Ticket sales for Hall's address will begin at a later date.

■ **Youth Explosion a hit.** More than 1,000 teen-agers attended each session of a "Youth Explosion" conference sponsored by Hardin Baptist Church in Hardin July 26-28. Among those attending, 29 made professions of faith in Jesus Christ and 682 pledged to abstain from sexual relations until marriage as part of the national "True Love Waits" campaign.

■ **GA carnival a success.** More than 100 girls participated in Little Bethel Baptist Association's Girls in Action carnival at Second Baptist Church in Mortons Gap June 12. The event included singing, missions games, food, clowns and puppet skits.

■ **Pennies saved.** The children of New Palestine Baptist Church in Crofton saved their pennies for a year to give to the annual vacation Bible school offering this summer. Their gifts weighed in at 438 pounds, for a total of \$822.75. "Missions giving is not dead; we just need to take a lesson from our children," said Pastor Raymond Aldridge.



HELPING HANDS Lewis Graham (right) performs a dental exam on a Venezuelan with the assistance of his wife, Connie. The Bowling Green couple were members of a volunteer medical team that worked with Venezuelan Baptists in a recent crusade. See story on page 1. (BP photo by Jim Burton)

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

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Crickets & frogs

As I left Boyce Library one night, amid a chorus of crickets, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's campus seemed so peaceful. It reminded me of that night when I first arrived here, joyful with my new purpose. Yet I still wondered whether I belonged. For I had left the church for 23 years and had only recently returned. But Christ had changed me that Sunday in New Jersey. When I had almost given up, Christ gave me his hope and joy. How else could I respond?

I had previously abandoned God so gradually that I didn't realize the danger. They say if you put a live frog into a pan of tap water and slowly heat it up, it will stay and end up being boiled alive. Thousands of other baby boomers left the church and have stayed away. They, too, are horribly deceived and risking spiritual destruction! I know because I was once among them. Are we not God's watchmen (Ezekiel 33)? But all they hear from us is our controversy.

The Holy Spirit often uses the commonplace, like crickets and frogs, to remind us of our blessings or to warn us. I suggest we remember and share our experiences of God's grace, for it is difficult to praise God and argue at the same time. Let's work to bring back the prodigals, and there will be great rejoicing in heaven. But first we must flee controversy. For "the water is almost boiling."

James W. Browning
Louisville

Alternative schools

This is a grandmother's plea for her grandchildren: Our educational system will not improve and, in fact, is worsening. Christians cannot trust government to educate our children. Therefore, to protect and educate these little ones, our churches must take responsibility.

Children are at the mercy of the

"think-tanks" turning out teachers who are trained to mold young minds into politically correct gobble-de-goop. There are no longer absolutes. Two plus two no longer necessarily equals four. As long as the children feel good about themselves, it doesn't matter if they can do math, read, write, spell, etc.

Jesus said, "Give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's (taxes) and give to God the things that are God's." Our children are too precious to lose to a government bent on controlling their minds.

Our children belong to God. We have and always will give to Caesar, but we should not turn over our most precious resource to Caesar.

I plead with the Southern Baptist Convention. Can we come up with an alternative school system? Could we join our Southern Baptist churches together and support Christian schools, making the schools accessible and affordable to all our children? If we lose this generation and give them over to Caesar, we will be in danger of becoming a Marxist state.

Joyce Smith
Edgewood

Gift of tongues

I am responding to the letter about tongues (WR, July 20). The writer claimed he has never heard of a foreign missionary who has spoken in tongues; therefore, the gift of tongues should no longer be considered as a valid gift. I beg to differ on three points that he emphasized.

First, there are numerous instances in which glossolalia has been used to reach people for Christ; it is just that most are not from Southern Baptists. Our new Foreign Mission Board president, Jerry Rankin, a career missionary, has the conviction that glossolalia is a valid gift. So missionaries believe in it.

Second, I doubt he has approached all 3,958 missionaries appointed by the Foreign Mission Board, so his in-

ference that God has not given this gift to any of our missionaries is irresponsible. It is important to note that since there is such a religious prejudice among Southern Baptists against those with this gift, it is unlikely that the missionaries who have experienced it would be willing to share that with just anyone.

Finally, he wrote, "Doesn't it seem logical that if God in his infinite wisdom placed so much emphasis on tongues-speaking that he would save a missionary all the time, study and effort by simply blessing him/her with that ability?" That's possible, but who said that God is always logical? "But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise ..." (1 Corinthians 1:27a).

Robert R. Edwards
Franklin

Humanist alert

The connection between humanism and moral decay in America is beginning to become evident.

Humanist Manifesto Two states, "We find insufficient evidence for belief in a supernatural. ... No deity will save us; we must save ourselves."

Humanism is an advancing world view that sees people as animals, differing from other animals only in degree of intelligence. Humanism declares there is no God, and no life after death.

Humanists want to establish a world government that will transcend all national sovereignty. They use such terms as "global government," "world community," "new world order" and "global village."

Humanism is the most dangerous movement in America today. Humanist Manifesto Two reads, "Alienating forces should be modified or eradicated." Humanists consider biblical Christianity their most alienating force, and they seek to eradicate biblical Christianity from the earth. That's why Christians are beginning to be persecuted in America.

William R. Hagan
Taylorsville

sary to produce the perfect book, in every detail, on every mentioned subject. Of course, none but the Father is omniscient—even Jesus knew not the time of his return.

Look, I'm no authority. Indeed, who is eligible to judge what God has done and how he did it? It satisfies me to think that God must have called his best. He guided their lives into and through experiences to best equip them for their particular writings. Of Paul, our Lord said, "He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel." (Acts 9:15) That applies to what Paul wrote, too.

Why polarize over plenary verbal—inerrancy or such? It is enough that what we have of God's manifold, mighty works in history is recorded in the holy Bible; and that its message of sin's condemnation and God's available forgiveness and redemption in Christ are to be had by us sinners upon repentance and confession, even including you and me. What more lack we?

Franklin Owen, of Lexington, is the retired executive secretary-treasurer of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Why polarize over inspiration theories?

All the Baptists I know believe in the divine inspiration of the holy Scriptures. Yet we dispute over it, and scarcely any of us can give a rational explanation of the mystery. Can a few incomplete words about it from a non-intellectual possibly be helpful to other non-intellectuals?

God inspired the Bible. Human beings wrote it. After inspiring the sacred writers to tell his story, how far did the Almighty trust them with the telling of it?

"The prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (II Peter 1:21).

"Moved by the Spirit." What was moved? Only the writer's hand? His spirit (heart)? His intellect? His human, finite mind? Did his time and place, his personality, experience (especially religious), the general limits of knowledge of the times—did all this enter in?

Or did God bypass the writer's limited intellect and compose it all himself—word for word—just like he wanted it, with man furnishing only penmanship? Were the sacred writers in a state of trance when they wrote? Or did God trust them, whom he had called to convey (human to human) his message of salvation and to record in their own words an account of God's raising up a people for his name?

When we think of God as the composer of the Bible, then the perfect book by the perfect God is the logical conclusion. But when we think of God as the inspirer and man the composer (writer), the letter-by-letter, word-for-word perfect writing becomes harder to assume. Was the production of a perfect book his goal?

God must have especially endowed and equipped those whom he called to write. But did he make them omniscient? This would seem neces-

sary to produce the perfect book, in every detail, on every mentioned subject. Of course, none but the Father is omniscient—even Jesus knew not the time of his return.

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ON MISSION TOGETHER



Franklin Owen



Turning wild

By G. Wade Rowatt

Q. My 13-year-old son is hanging out with kids that I don't like. What can I do?

A. Younger teens frequently find new friends as they reach into different activities and try other ways of looking at life. Perhaps you have reason to be concerned and maybe not.

Before you react too negatively, ask yourself a few questions: What about this new group causes you to worry? Are these fellow youth just different in some way? Are they not your color or from "the other side of the tracks" and involved in a church very unlike yours?

If so, then perhaps getting to know his friends better will lessen your anxiety. Try having them into your home. Their clothes, hair or habits may blind you to their better qualities. However, if these new friends have serious value differences, or are living on the edge of legal rules, or have major habits that are outside of your family's "acceptable limits," then you need to help your son find new friends.

He will not want to give up these friends completely, but he may let them move from the "best friend" category to his circle of "just friends." Here are a few ways to help.

■ Limit his time away from home with them. Explain your concerns and permit them to come to your home under your supervision. He can still see them, but not without limits.

■ Invite the questionable friends to be with him one at a time in a safe context. He can more safely confront differences if he is on his turf.

■ Get him involved with new teens in new activities. New places will mean new teens for friends. You can decide how much of your time to give to this search for a variety of peers.

■ Be his friend whatever else you do. Listen to his stories, hear his dreams and learn to be playful together. As he gets older, your bond with him will lessen, but the memories and values built now will strengthen his ability to say "no" to the wrong crowd. Sooner or later his choosing right over wrong will be all you can count on.

Wade Rowatt is professor of psychology of religion at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

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

Christians should transcend political correctness

"Politically correct." Not long ago, that phrase could have been used to describe folks who voted with the majority in the most recent election. They might not have chosen the best person for the job, but politically (majority rules in a democracy) they were "correct."

Now, however, "politically correct" is one of the buzz-phrases that shapes this age. It prescribes appropriate language for public discourse. In some places, elaborate codes and disciplinary policies define what is politically correct and the punishments for incorrect speech.

The boundaries of politically correct speech developed because of Americans' concern for civil rights. For the most part, rules of political correctness address appropriate speech regarding gender, race and religion, as well as other traits and characteristics that might give people minority status. The idea is to direct speech away from words and phrases that would demean, berate or abuse individuals or groups. It has caught on, especially on college and university campuses and in some government institutions—places where bureaucratic structures could develop, implement and enforce such codes of conduct.

These people weren't the first to recognize the incendiary power of language. The Bible says, "The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell" (James 3:6). Pretty strong language. This Bible writer and others like him knew the power of words to destroy lives and ruin relationships.

So, we should not be surprised that people who are concerned for the rights of minorities would be concerned about the language of majorities. Words can be used to inflame passions, incite hatred, stir up bitterness. Small wonder, then, that conscientious people would want to eradicate the language of hatred.

Today, politically incorrect speech can get a person fired, thrown out of school or fined. Such penalties are supported by practical beliefs: Decent people don't call homosexuals "fags" and African-American women "water buffalo." Civilized people don't laugh in the faces of minority children. Compassionate people don't systematically exclude ethnics from their conversations.

Basketball star's death reveals tragedy of human condition

A somber tone prevailed over the sports pages last week. They reported the death at age 27 of Reggie Lewis—captain of the Boston Celtics, the team's highest scorer the past two years, a devoted husband and father, a generous and compassionate human being, and the kind of guy you'd like to have for a neighbor.

Lewis fell on a basketball court when his heart failed. This wasn't the first time. He stumbled and fell during a playoff game April 29. Six days later, a team of 12 eminent doctors told him he suffered from serious heart disease. They said he would die if he didn't quit basketball. But Lewis kept searching, until one doctor disputed their claims and gave him the thumbs-up sign; go for it.

Romantics will say Reggie Lewis died for love of a game. Cynics will say he died for greed. They both may be right, and yet they oversimplify

Ironically, this politically correct movement, which was built on principles of toleration, has developed its own pattern of intolerance. Some observers of political correctness charge it is on the verge of denying American people their right to free speech. They claim the purveyors of political correctness deprive others of the right to express their own religious and political beliefs without reprisal. They say codes of political correctness have become a gag in the mouths of people who dissent from the politically correct perspective.

And they have a point.

Throughout its history, the United States has stood for the right of free expression. Even when that expression represents a minority position. Even when it sounds mean, or repulsive, or simply stupid. When this nation was still an infant, the French philosopher Voltaire wrote words that expressed the feelings of his American contemporaries, "I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it."

At its best, that statement reflects an altruistic and compassionate ideal. Practically, it also is self-serving. When we protect another's speech, we ultimately protect our right to speak our own mind. When we preserve the hatemonger's right to chant in the park, we preserve our right to preach on the streetcorner.

Political correctness, however, should be of merely theoretical concern for the Christian. Its codes are directed toward language of hate and intolerance. Christian language, even when spoken to an adversary or said about abominable things, should be laced with love and compassion. A Christian's language should be above reproach, even when that Christian's ideals oppose those of the local purveyors of political correctness.

The Apostle Paul, a fellow not known to mince words, offered sound advice: "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice" (Ephesians 4:31). "Speak evil of no man, ... be not brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness to all men" (Titus 3:2).

Marv Knox

the situation, causing us to miss two important points.

First, we blind ourselves to good advice. Lewis ignored the caution of 12 of the best physicians in the land. He believed one doctor who finally told him what he wanted to hear. Just as in days of old, we listen for the soothing words of the false prophets, no matter what objective reality tells us.

And second, American priorities are mixed up. Lewis died, at least in part, because he could not extract his self-worth from his identity as a basketball player. He couldn't imagine living without that identity. That's not a malady just for millionaire basketball players. Most of us find our identities in what we do or what we have, not simply in who we are. We're people of worth, created in the image of God.

Marv Knox

"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice."

Ephesians 4:31

Practical blindness and mixed-up priorities are a fatal combination.

In some of these parts, 'ma'am' happens to be a 4-letter word

The young clerk glared at me as if I just said a four-letter word.

And, come to think of it, I had.

"Will that be all?" she had asked as she placed the last items of my purchase in a paper sack.

"Yes, ma'am," I responded.

"Don't call me that!" she snapped, her eyes flashing with combustible anger. "I'm not old enough."

"Wh-what? 'Ma'am'?" I stammered, struggling to understand, explain and reach the door, all before she got really mad. "'Ma'am' has nothing to do with age. I say that to my daughters, and they're a lot younger than you."

That's the truth, too.

As far back as I can remember, my

Mama and Daddy taught me to use the word "ma'am" when addressing females and the word "sir" when addressing males. Ages never figured into the rules. All people were people, and so they deserved respectful attention and a proper address.

If a woman—aged 5 to 95—says it's hot out today, you say, "Yes, ma'am, it sure is." And if a man—aged 6 to 86—asks if you plan to skip

church and go to the movies, you say, "No, sir, I'd never do a dreadful thing like that."

We're talking about manners.

"Gentlemen know how to treat ladies," I remember hearing, almost from the cradle. Translation: Hold the door when a woman approaches. Stand when a woman enters the room. Say "ma'am." Stuff like that.

Today, life is different. I doubt I hop up every time a female crosses the threshold. But I've gotten fussed out for holding a door for a woman and cussed out for using the word "lady."

That's not to mention the dreadful "ma'am." Seems like most women hear

"geezer" when you say "ma'am."

Which all goes to show that this "politically correct" business is more difficult than it appears. Respect is in the ear of the beholder.

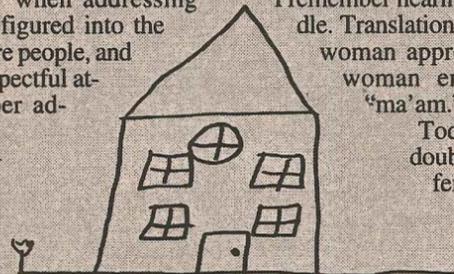
Doesn't matter if you're trying to be polite. If the other person isn't hearing polite, you're a rude dude.

(And, by the way, "dude" can be good or bad, depending on the circumstance. But that's nothing; "bad" also can mean "good" as well as "bad," depending on the neighborhood.)

So, when it comes to answering questions, the biblical injunction applies: "Let your yea be yea and your nay be nay."

No, sir, "ma'am" isn't even in the Bible.

Marv Knox



down home

Mohler called 'brilliant,' but some question views

Mohler says he changed on women's issue

By Mark Wingfield
News Director

Women in ministry is the one theological position on which Al Mohler admits having a change of heart in the past decade.

As president-elect of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Mohler recently stated his opposition to women serving as pastors and in positions of "teaching authority."

But as a doctoral student, Mohler took a differing stance. In 1984, he publicly opposed a resolution passed by the Southern Baptist Convention which stated a position similar to what he now believes.

The 1984 resolution, "On Ordination and the Role of Women in Ministry," says Southern Baptists "encourage the service of women in all aspects of church life and work other than pastoral and leadership roles entailing ordination."

The resolution gained notoriety because it also blamed the woman as being "first in the Edenic fall."

Soon after the Kansas City convention, Mohler apparently took some form of leadership in enlisting 412 people from Louisville-area churches to sign a document opposing the SBC resolution and affirming "equal participation of women and men in the life and work of the church."

The rebuttal resolution was printed as a large display ad in the Louisville Courier-Journal on Aug. 4, 1984. Mohler's name immediately above the name of Roy Honeycutt, who then was seminary president. Mohler was working as an assistant to Honeycutt at the time.

The Aug. 21, 1984, issue of the Western Recorder carried a letter to the editor from Mohler, in which he explained the ad had been published as "an unprecedented move by grassroots Baptists expressing concern about the recent action of the Southern Baptist Convention."

The Louisville resolution states the signers' "disapproval" of the SBC resolution and affirms:

- "The equality of men and women in creation"
- "Equal participation of women and men in the life and work of the church."
- "A responsible interpretation of the biblical message in its totality"
- "Traditional Baptist polity, which recognizes the autonomous character of each local Baptist church, and allows for no institution, individual or convention to speak for Southern Baptists."

Asked to explain his change of position, Mohler said: "I went to the 1984 Southern Baptist Convention ... and did oppose that resolution and joined in a statement encouraging women in ministry. At that time, I had not really considered the issue of women serving as pastors. I saw it as an issue of women serving in other roles in church—minister of education, minister of music, children's minister."

Mohler said his perspective was called into question a few years later and he spent "a considerable amount of time" struggling with the issue.

The position he reached is that women and men "stand equal before God" but have distinct roles within the church. Mohler said he supports women serving on church staffs in some roles but that "the pastorate, as evidenced in the New Testament, is male."

Such a position is not discriminatory, he explained, because "ministry is not a civil right."

Defining Mohler's position beyond the pastorate is complex. He does not uniformly oppose women serving as deacons, but looks to see what role deacons play in a church. When deacons function as elders, that should be a male role, he said. But when deacons function solely as ministry helpers, they may be men or women.

The key, he explained, is a distinction between roles of "teaching authority" which belong exclusively to men and other roles of teaching and leadership which should be available to all.

By Mark Wingfield
News Director

No one who has known Al Mohler for any length of time was surprised when he was named the ninth president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, his friends and former classmates report.

Most who have known and observed him through the years believe he was destined to find such an office. They describe him as "brilliant," "an outstanding scholar" and someone who dearly loves his alma mater.

But some who have known him have been surprised by the stridency with which Mohler recently has identified with the conservative movement within the Southern Baptist Convention.

Some say the Al Mohler taking the reigns of Southern Baptists' oldest seminary this week is not the same Al Mohler they thought they knew previously. Al Mohler the doctoral student appeared to be more sympathetic to Baptist moderates than conservatives, they explain.

For this reason, many moderates on campus who knew Mohler as a student initially were pleased with his election as president. They reasoned that conservative trustees had—for whatever reason—elected someone who would be at least privately sympathetic to their issues.

But those hopes were dashed quickly, as Mohler stated his positions against women serving as pastors, for the conservative movement that has captured the SBC since 1979, and against the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, a group of Baptist moderates.

For his part, Mohler contends his theology has not changed.

"My theological convictions have

not changed, but my understanding of the nature of the crisis in the Southern Baptist Convention has changed," he said in a recent interview.

During the 1980s, Mohler said, he experienced a "dramatically increasing consciousness" of the theological problems facing Southern Baptists.

Conservatives were correct in asserting that some institutions and teachers had gotten out of line and that a course correction was needed, he explained.

And the "complete rejection of inerrancy" by Baptist moderates in the late 1980s—along with formation of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship—moved moderates beyond where he was willing to go, Mohler said.

He identifies himself as an "evangelical conservative and inerrantist."

Although he has loved the seminary dearly, "from the very start I wanted to see change to a more conservative direction," he said. "By the late 1980s, it was clear from the evidence that could be addressed only from the conservative side."

Some who have known Mohler, though, say they have been surprised by some of the positions he has espoused recently.

Rupert Coleman, former pastor of Southside Baptist Church in Lakeland, Fla., has known Mohler since Mohler was 6 years old. Mohler cites Coleman as being an influential person in his life and call to ministry.

It was Coleman who as a pastor counseled Mohler to attend Southern Seminary. And Coleman was one of several people who recommended Mohler to the presidential search committee.

"At that time, my opinion of him was that he was a solid, traditional Southern Baptist and was strong for the denomination," the retired pastor

said.

But Coleman said he has "been surprised at some of his announcements since he was elected."

"I was very much surprised when he announced that he did not favor the privilege that Christ has given all who believe in him," he said. Although an apparent reference to Mohler's position on women's roles in the church, Coleman would not elaborate.

Mohler and his mentor continue to express a great admiration for each other but have taken different tracks on another controversial issue. While Mohler adamantly has denounced the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, Coleman has embraced the Fellowship and even led a prayer during the Fellowship's annual meeting in Birmingham, Ala., last spring.

Mohler and his mentor continue to express a great admiration for each other but have taken different tracks on another controversial issue. While Mohler adamantly has denounced the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, Coleman has embraced the Fellowship and even led a prayer during the Fellowship's annual meeting in Birmingham, Ala., last spring.

Brummett describes Mohler as a friend whose intellect and academic brilliance are "beyond question. He is very, very bright."

However, Brummett draws a distinction between the Mohler he would have classified as an "evangelical conservative" as a doctoral student and the person now serving as seminary president.

There is a difference between an "evangelical conservative" who says, "This is what I believe" and a "fundamentalist" who says, "You must believe," he explained.

"Where he is now, I don't know. I don't know how to label him. And I hate labels," Brummett said. "He's my friend."

□ See Mohler called ..., page 9

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EDUCATION

Opinions vary on what changes mean for seminary

By Marv Knox
Editor

Almost everyone expects Southern Seminary to change under Al Mohler's administration.

After all, "Change!" has been Southern Baptists' battle cry.

As the new president takes office this week, the expected nature of that change is subject to interpretation. The Western Recorder asked representatives of various seminary constituencies to describe the changes they anticipate and the significance of those changes. Here's what they said:

■ **Ron Meredith**, a federal judge from Louisville and seminary trustee: "Dr. Mohler has a tremendous appreciation for the history of the seminary and the historical figures of the seminary. He wants to put a great emphasis on where the seminary came from or the roots of the seminary."

As evidence, Meredith described "prized possessions" in Mohler's library—books formerly owned by E.Y. Mullins, the school's fourth president. "That is a poignant example of how important the roots of the seminary are to him and how closely aligned he feels to the seminary and its history," he said.

As for the significance of that love, "only the good Lord knows," he insisted. "It takes time for any individual to put his stamp on an institution."

■ **John Michael**, a Louisville businessman and seminary trustee: "I expect to see change come from two primary areas. No. 1, I sense an evangelical thrust and commitment. Also, I sense Dr. Mohler intends to channel that through the local churches by preparing leaders for the churches."

"The key is the manner in which we fulfill that vision with a commitment to excellence. We should never engage in intellectual pursuit for its own sake, but it should undergird the mission of the church."

"That's been at least part of the vision for all administrations. I hope Dr. Mohler will be able to breathe fresh life into that vision."

■ **Stephen Anderson**, a real estate executive from Memphis, Tenn., and seminary trustee: "I'm hopeful Southern Seminary's leadership will recognize women do have a place in the church and will not harm that relationship. The women's issue will not go away. It is 'the' issue going into the next century."

Another key issue is finances, Anderson stressed, noting Southern Baptist financial support for seminaries has "not increased dramatically. They're raising fees on students to compensate for loss of revenue, and they're going to have a more difficult time balancing their budget."

On another front, Anderson is concerned about the help Mohler will get. "I'm very optimistic about Dr. Mohler, if he can get hold of his responsibilities

and have the support of a number of good leaders out of the trustees and not radical individuals."

■ **Bill Leonard**, a professor of church history at Southern until he joined the faculty of Samford University in 1992: "There is still a major question concerning who will determine the future of Southern Seminary—the faculty, the administration or the trustees. I see signs the trustees are divided between militant and moderate fundamentalists."

"It will be a question of whether Southern is an evangelical or fundamentalist seminary, and there is a difference. 'Evangelical' will tolerate some diversity on the faculty; 'fundamentalist' will not. The fundamentalist agenda will be to continue to find 'enemies' ... and to press for their removal or recantation. That approach will bring continued stress."

On the other hand, the seminary "always has been evangelical," Leonard asserted. "Dr. Mohler has used the term 'course correction' in reference to the future. It remains to be seen what needs to be corrected."

■ **Wade Rowatt**, professor of psychology of religion who has known Mohler since he served on staff at the president's boyhood church: "It's in the faculty's best interest for Al to reach his goals and our goals."

"It always has been evident Al is a bright, intelligent and gifted individual. I hope he will see his way through this mire we're in. I hope he will continue to strive for academic excellence and support women in ministry as the churches send them."

"He has said he doesn't want the seminary to be a fundamentalist school, but an excellent conservative evangelical school. He has said he will talk to each of us to hear our vision. I hope we will see some common ground."

■ **Gerald Keown**, professor of Old Testament and president of the Faculty Association: "I'm waiting to see what the new president will do or say. I'm not aware of anyone who knows what's going to happen."

"I will do everything I can to make his presidency successful. On the other hand, I hope he will work with the faculty and not create an agenda upon which we constantly will have conflict."

■ **David Dockery**, vice president for academic administration: "This administration will be more theologically focused; it will be more intentionally related to ministries in the local church. It will emphasize the centrality of preaching and proclamation and will seek to relate constructively to the entire SBC."

■ **Tommy Fitzgerald**, president of the seminary's Student Government Association: "Since Dr. Mohler has not had an official forum to spread his ideas, no one has had an opportunity to know what course the seminary



will take."

Fitzgerald forecast a "fairly calm" transition, although he said students have expressed much curiosity about Mohler's administrative structure. Key concerns include consolidation of some top academic administration functions; viability of the deans of the schools; function of a "dean" of the chapel; and rumors of a penchant for "micro-management" of the institution, he said.

A significant change might be a closer connection to the local church, he added: "Church always has been a focus on campus, but perhaps not as central as other things. Many students were drawn to Southern because of its high academic standing. While he (Mohler) agrees with that in part, I believe he will bring Southern Seminary closer to church-based ministry."

■ **Howard Cobble**, pastor of Sevens Valley Baptist Church in Elizabethtown and president-elect of the seminary's national alumni association: "Dr. Mohler's professed love for Southern Seminary seems to be the driving force for his presidential leadership."

"He has promised to maintain a 'world-class' theological institution. I appreciate his insistence that the school will prepare her graduates for ministry in and through the local church."

"My hope is that his sole agenda will be to train Baptist ministers through an unfettered search for the truth revealed in God's word."

■ **Paul Blizard**, pastor of Reidland Baptist Church in Paducah who graduated from the seminary this spring: "We'll be returning to the founders' original intent on the philosophy of theological education."

The seminary "needs a balance," between traditional neo-orthodox perspectives and conservative evangelical perspectives, he said. "I believe Dr. Mohler's administration will bring that on the faculty."

"That will be a refreshing change, a breath of fresh air to students who maybe have held back from coming to Southern because of its reputation. It may be threatening to some because

they believe their academic freedom is being hindered. I do not believe this will be the case."

The change at Southern actually began before Mohler's election, Blizard noted. "As a conservative, I wasn't allowed to express my views because they were considered antiquated. But in the last few years, I've seen an openness to my views. I have no second thoughts for studying at Southern, ... but I wish I were starting now."

NEW TEAM Al Mohler (left), the new president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, talks with Tom Mabe, vice president for development (center) and David Dockery, vice president for academic administration and dean of the school of theology.

Who's on first?

This is the roster of positions and players on the administrative team for the new Southern Seminary as of Aug. 1:

- **President:** Al Mohler
- **Vice president for academic administration & dean of the school of theology:** David Dockery
- **Associate vice president for academic administration:** Marsha Ellis Smith
- **Dean of the school of Christian education:** Vacancy (Acting dean is Robert Hughes)
- **Dean of the school of church music:** Vacancy (Acting dean is Lloyd Mims)
- **Dean of the school of church social work:** Diana Garland
- **Dean of Boyce Bible School:** Bob Johnson
- **Vice president for development:** Tom Mabe
- **Vice president for business:** T.J. McGlothlin
- **Dean of student life:** Vacancy
- **Dean of the chapel:** Vacancy. Discussions were held earlier this summer with Joel Gregory, former pastor of First Baptist Church in Dallas, about assuming this new position. However, seminary sources have confirmed Gregory will not be coming. Whether it will be filled with someone else apparently has not been determined.
- **Chancellor:** Roy Honeycutt (effective Jan. 1, 1994)
- One position from the previous administration has not yet been reassigned. The position of vice president for seminary relations likely will not remain as it was, but no public announcement has been made about where those duties will be reassigned. Seminary sources indicate there has been consideration of creating a director of communications position under the development vice president or a special assistant to the president position.

New president wants to blend academic & practical

"I will expect every course within the life of the institution to have as a necessary focus, 'What does this have to do with preparing ministers for churches?'"

Al Mohler

Continued from page 1
stressed.

As a practical application of that task, seminary courses must give increased attention to church growth, evangelism and church planting, he said.

"It will mean bringing into the life of the institution exposure with some of the leading-edge models of church development within the SBC. It will mean giving attention to managing the transition within the lives of existing congregations. It will mean training persons who have a real vision to build growing, developing, innovative churches."

That doesn't mean every seminary graduate will minister in a megachurch, but it does mean the seminary must graduate ministers able to lead churches of all sizes in all contexts to grow, Mohler said.

"The reality is that ... the majority of our churches are plateaued or declining," he said. "If that is true, it could well sound the death knell of the Southern Baptist Convention as a vital denomination.

"Growing churches, regardless of size and context, share some common characteristics. We need to equip all our students in terms of those common characteristics. We also need to give them the skills and the insight to understand the unique needs of churches in different contexts."

Most of the innovative models of church growth have not been encouraged by seminaries, Mohler said.

"That must change."

And it will change by hiring professors "who will represent these concerns, who will bring background, vision and equipment in order to give these issues visibility and focused attention," he added.

"I will expect every course within the life of the institution to have as a necessary focus, 'What does this have to do with preparing ministers for churches?'"

That answer will be shaped by a faculty comprised of "churchly scholars who are at the forefront of their academic disciplines and have a heart focused upon the local church."

The degree to which current faculty members join in that group is up to them, he said.

"The issue is not so much the ability of the persons to come along, but

the willingness of the persons to come along," Mohler noted. "At this point, I am unwilling to prejudge the willingness of others to join with us. That will be demonstrated by their actions and responses in the months and years to come."

Together with the faculty who join him, Mohler hopes to erect "a stackpole for building a new evangelical theological consensus within the Southern Baptist Convention," he said. "This means a shift from the merely pragmatic and political to face the depth of the theological crisis which now faces this denomination. I will expect Southern Seminary to ar-

ticulate, to represent and to embody a theological posture which is clearly and unquestionably conservative, evangelical and Baptist. ... We will seek in every way to give witness to the 'faith once delivered to the saints.'"

Ultimately, the success of Al Mohler and Southern Seminary will be determined by how the school gives that witness, he predicted: "The issue, put bluntly, is whether what happens in the seminary is relevant to what the churches are doing. I am determined that Southern Seminary be more than relevant, but that it establish a reputation for leadership."



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Hosea: God's Redeeming Love

August 12-13
Campbellsville College

Prepare for the 1994 January Bible Study with Dr. Gerald Keown, Old Testament professor at Southern Seminary. Call Dr. John Hurtgen at (502) 789-5029 for reservations (meals and session charges at no cost with advanced reservations).

Hosted by the Christian Studies Division
Campbellsville College

Balance

This past week I had dinner with a friend whose background is in the social service field. As we talked about the field I became aware of how much more sure I used to be that I had all of the answers. I can recall the challenge of the course work and readings of graduate school. I had been presented the latest thinking about children and families. I was absolutely sure that I had all the answers and that those who had been doing the work had just missed the most obvious points.

As I thought about how I had changed and about how my thinking had become more mature, I realized that in every aspect of life there is a continuum of thought. There are always different ideas about the best way to do almost anything. On any given issue, there may be as broad a range of opinions as there are people in the room.

I am convinced that any organization is a stronger one that has a diversity of viewpoints represented. We need eager idealists who can point out the areas that need change and some specific new directions. We need their excitement to move us to tackle the problems

around us.

We need more seasoned individuals who can temper the idealism with a dose of reality. God asks us to step out in faith at times, but he also expects us to ask him for wisdom and use common sense.

We also need individuals who, working together, can focus on the mission at hand. There are usually more good things to do than there are resources to do them with. It is essential that organizations and individuals have objectives, set goals, and stay focused on those.

HOMES FOR CHILDREN



Curtis C. Mooney

Each style and opinion has value. By absorbing the best from each way of thinking, we have our best shot at reaching useful conclusions and the best solutions to problems. It really is true that two heads (or more) are better than one.

In the end, if each one of us focuses on finding God's will in fulfilling our mission we will recognize the truth of our Lord's words: "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible" (Matthew 19:26).

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

Paid Column

A ministry of healing and hope

This month's guest author is Stuart Collier, a graduate of Southern Seminary and chaplain for Tri-County Baptist Hospital in LaGrange since the hospital joined the Baptist Healthcare System in October 1992.

"We need you in the emergency room," the voice said urgently. I felt a familiar tightening in my stomach. The emergency room didn't call unless they had a disaster. I cleared my mind and spoke a brief prayer as I walked the long halls, knowing I soon would enter someone's darkness.

"We have a very sick baby. It looks really bad. We're breathing for her and" I tried to catch the words and make sense of them as the nurse said quickly. "Would you like to come in and see the baby before you meet the family?"

I entered and saw the team standing around a very small child. Some were observing carefully, one was squeezing a plastic breathing device, another was working with an IV line. Lying there on the table, unmoving, was heaven and earth for two helpless parents in a room 20 feet away.

All this came back to me the next Sunday as I was in church singing about another baby. I was caught off guard by the lines, "... he was little, weak and helpless, tears

and smiles like us he knew." I saw the baby in the emergency room again, with the crowd standing around, and thought of the baby a crowd stood around centuries ago in Bethlehem.

As I reflected on the two images I realized something they both had in common—hope. The birth of Jesus was a scene of hope—the only real hope in this world of powerful destructiveness.

The Baptist Healthcare System is a place of healing and hope because of the vision and commitment of many Christians.

Undergirding this commitment in many ways is the Baptist Healthcare Foundation. The gifts have made it possible for Tri-County Hospital to begin a clinical pastoral education program this summer, which brought two seminary students into the hospital for 10 weeks to minister to patients and families. Your gifts make a difference and support the ministry of healing and hope.

Any questions or comments concerning this article, Baptist Healthcare System or Baptist Healthcare Foundation should be directed to Charles W. Cox Jr., president of Baptist Healthcare Foundation, 4007 Kresge Way, Louisville, Ky. 40207 (502) 896-5003.

Paid Column

Mohler called 'brilliant' but some question views

Continued from page 6

"I recall Al's social conservatism, but this religious conservatism that's being expressed in connection with the convention I did not see," said John Baker, pastor of Druid Hills Baptist Church in Atlanta. Baker was in the doctoral program with Mohler, and their families have considered each other friends.

"His public displays may be a window to who Al really is, or they may

simply be reflecting the change in the denomination which many leaders at this time feel they must follow," Baker said.

Others contacted by the Western Recorder expressed similar confusion about Mohler's positions but declined to be quoted by name for this story.

Even most of those who say they are concerned about the direction Mohler is headed claim to be willing to give him a chance before writing

the seminary off. The real test, they say, will be in how he actually acts.

Others who have known Mohler say they see no change in his positions.

"When you're in academic studies, you don't deal with a lot of practical, ongoing things," said Robert Canoy, another friend from doctoral days. "I never heard Al, frankly, impugn the current movement within the convention. I never heard him speak

favorably about it either.

"I can't say he was this way and now become another way," said Canoy, who now is pastor of Ashworth Road Baptist Church in Des Moines, Iowa.

Nor is it accurate to label Mohler an opportunist, Canoy said. "I believe in his own mind, he's doing what he thinks will be for the genuine good of the seminary."

Some friends believe Mohler has been wrongly caricatured and his positions misunderstood.

"A lot of people who know him very little have gone to great lengths in describing so-called character flaws that I don't think are there," said Michael Duduit, editor of Preaching magazine and a close friend of Mohler's since they worked at the seminary together in the mid-1980s.

Duduit said he has not seen theological change in his friend.

"Theologically he is very much the person I got to know as a graduate student," he said. "He was always a person of strongly held conservative views, but certainly not a knee-jerk react..."

Doug Walker, perhaps one of Mohler's best friends and another of the former Monday lunch group, also contends the president has been misrepresented.

"There's a caricature that's been painted of him. Al is certainly a conservative evangelical. But he's been painted, I think, as a fundamentalist."

That's not fair, said Walker, pastor of Ruhama Baptist Church in Birmingham, Ala. "Al certainly is a thinker; he's open to examining ideas. At the same time, he's confessional. He's willing to say, 'This is what I believe and why.'"

Walker described Mohler as someone with a "positive agenda" who has suffered brutal attacks from critics.

Mohler does have outstanding political instincts, but he is not a political opportunist, Walker added.

"Some people have claimed, 'Here's somebody who has just gotten on the conservative bandwagon.' On some issues he has changed, but his basic commitments to Scripture are the same.

"There's been some theological movement from when I first knew Al," Walker admitted. "But it is not motivated by politics. It is motivated by his study of Scripture and his reading and understanding of historical Christianity."

Also, there is a "warm and personal" side to the 33-year-old president that doesn't come across in public, Walker said. "He's a typical daddy who loves to get in the floor and play with his kids."

And Mohler was a compassionate pastor when he served Union Grove Baptist Church in Bedford, said Jim Ginn, a longtime deacon there.

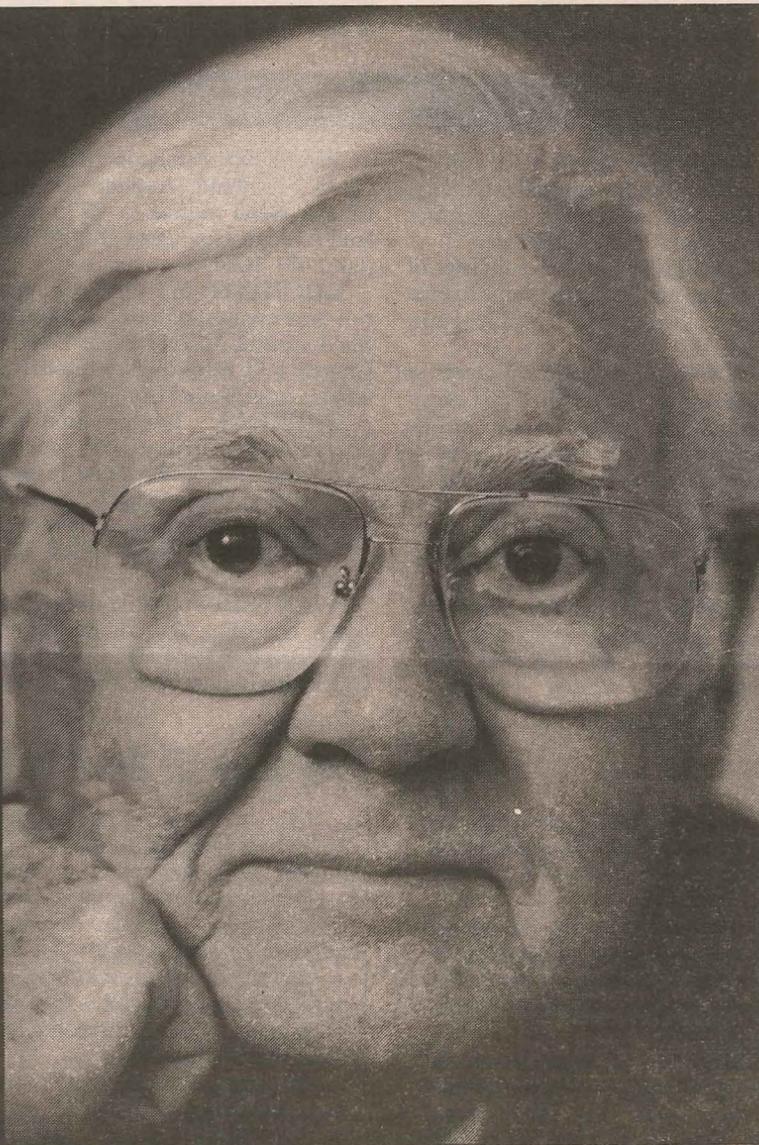
"He was a pastor to everybody in the community," Ginn said. "Anybody that had any trouble, he was always there to visit them."

And for any who want to know the key to Mohler's affection, Walker offers this advice: Give him a Diet Coke. "Al's one vice in this world is Diet Coke," Walker explained.

"My theological convictions have not changed, but my understanding of the nature of the crisis in the Southern Baptist Convention has changed."

Al Mohler

"We Don't Need Just To Think About Helping The Needy, We Need To Help The Needy."



This concerned Baptist layman says this is *A Time to Remember* God's servants who are in need. In the Bluegrass State there are more than 400 retired pastors, Baptist workers, or their widows who receive annuities of less than \$200 per month. Some are in great need.

Taking time to remember the ministry of these faithful soldiers of the cross will inspire others to join in doing something to help.

Contact Richard Carnes, Executive Director of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation (502) 245-4101 or C. Joe McIntosh, Vice President for Endowment at the Annuity Board.

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PEOPLE

KENTUCKY KERNELS

In 1992, for the first time, more U.S. women diagnosed with AIDS were infected through heterosexual contact than those infected with drug use. Last year, 47,095 Americans, including 200 Kentuckians, were diagnosed with AIDS. Source: Cabinet for Human Resources

Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Ann Tatum

- **ERLANGER**—Anchor Church called **Bill Hogan** as youth pastor.
 - **FLORENCE**—Victory Church licensed **Marlin Tester** and **Jack Stowers** to the ministry July 11.
 - **HAZEL**—Hazel Church called **Dwayne Barrow** as youth director.
 - **HENDERSON**—Cash Creek Church sent a volunteer team to Alberta, Canada, for one week, to help construct a sanctuary, fellowship hall and education space for Evansburg Church.
 - **OWENSBORO**—Buena Vista Church called **Jeff McCall** as minister of education and youth.
 - **PINEVILLE**—First Church called Shelbyville native **Jerry Tracy** as pastor. He moves from First Church of Manchester, Tenn.
 - **RICHMOND**—Eastside Bethel Church called **Nick Osborn** as minister of music and youth. Osborn is a recent graduate of Cumberland College.
 - **SCOTTSVILLE**—Scottsville Church called **Floyd Price** of Brandenburg as pastor.
 - **SHELBYVILLE**—Burks Branch Church called **Kent Ulman** as pastor.
 - **SIMPSONVILLE**—Mount Pleasant Church will celebrate its 130th anniversary Aug. 15.
- Clay Sommer** resigned as minister of music at Simpsonville Church to become minister of music and education at First Church in Metter, Ga.

MISSIONARY UPDATE

- **Michael and Michelle Barnett**, missionaries to Japan, have arrived on the field to begin their first term of service at 38-5c Minami-cho, Itabashi-ku, Tokyo 173, Japan. He considers Kevil his hometown.
- **Roy and Diane Brent**, missionaries to Kenya, are on the field at P.O. Box 30405, Nairobi, Kenya. He is a native of Campbellsburg.
- **David and Sonya Coppedge**, mis-

- sionaries to Uruguay, are in the States at First Baptist Church, Box 207, Lawrenceburg, Ky. 40342. She considers Artemus her hometown.
- **Wayne and Mary Emanuel**, missionaries to Japan, are in the States at 133 Belleaire Dr., Knoxville, Tenn. 37922. She is the former Mary Lou Massengill of Middlesboro.
- **Paul and Harriet Lawrence**, Baptist representatives to Gaza, are on the field and receive mail at P.O. Box 44, Ashkelon, Israel. She was born in Hopkinsville.
- **Daniel and Martha McLaughlin**, missionaries to Peru, are in the States at 307 S. Mitchell St., Warrensburg,

- Mo. 64093. She was born in Louisville.
- **Robert and Regina Morgan**, missionaries to Indonesia, are in the States at Jericho Rd., R.R. 1, Box 168, Smithfield, Ky. 40068. She considers Irvine her hometown.
- **Ray and Helen Reynolds**, Baptist representatives to Germany, are in the States at Schiersteiner Strasse 26, 65187 Weisbaden, Germany. He was born in Lexington.
- **Jeffrey and Susan Vann**, Baptist representatives to Jordan, are in the States at Box 7, Hickory, Ky. 42051. He considers Hickory his hometown; she considers Sacramento hers.

CLASSIFIED ADS

WANTED: Urgent need for donated vehicle for migrant ministry. Contact Wayne (Henry County Association) at (502) 897-2280.

WANTED: Full-time minister of youth and music. Send resumé to First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 327, Paris, KY 40361.

WANTED: Full-time minister of youth and activities. Must be conservative theologically and dedicated to outreach and soul winning. Duties include: directing the entire youth program and Christian life center. Send resumé to: Paul Blizard, pastor, Reidland Baptist Church, 5559 Benton Rd., Paducah, KY 42003.

WANTED: Part-time minister of music. Send resumé to Boone's Creek Baptist Church, 197 Cleveland Road, Lexington, KY 40509.

WANTED: Part-time minister of youth. Ashland Avenue Baptist Church. Send resumé to: 2735 Ashland Avenue, Covington, KY 41015. (606) 431-1624.

LOOKING: We are seeking a full-time minister of music and youth. Send resumé to Northside Baptist Church, P.O. Box 463, Princeton, KY 42445; Attn: Search Committee.

SEEKING: Large suburban church in St. Charles, Mo., seeking God's man for pastor. Send resumé and video to Pastor Search Committee, First Baptist Church of Harvester, 4075 Hwy. 94 S, St. Charles, MO 63304.

WANTED: Full-time director of youth, education and administration. Send resumé to Personnel Committee, Oak Ridge Baptist Church, 6056 Tay-

lor Mill Rd., Covington, KY 41015. Resumé should include applicant's experience and/or education in all three position areas.

AVAILABLE: 2-Bedroom, 2-bath condo for vacation rental, Sanibel Island, Florida. Large pool, tennis courts, sauna, bikes, screened porch. Best beach on the island. Call Pat Owen (502) 895-8752.

RETREATS: Bud's Lake, I-65, exit 81, Sonora, Ky. (502) 324-3036. Dormitories, kitchen, gym, swimming and campground. Year-round Christian fun.

FOR SALE: 1991 & 1982 Dodge 15-passenger vans, extra nice, air. Also 3 other 15-passenger vans from \$1,970—\$2,950, no air. Others available. Call Frankfort Chrysler 1-800-289-8223.

Sons in the Lord

David Robinson came to Oneida as an eighth-grader in 1977. Though David had Kentucky roots, he was raised in a very poor section of Cincinnati. His mother had given him away as a small child.

David grew up poor, and at an early age became the youngest member of a street gang. He first smoked pot as a fourth-grade child, and was on hard drugs when he was brought to us four years later. He also was an alcoholic.

David was a scared little boy as he came to us, though he was a tough, big-city street-wise kid. I personally spent hours with him and his family showing him our school and telling him what we expected. Of course, taking him was a high-risk situation. We do not bother with references as most private day or boarding schools do. I knew something about David that he did not know about himself. God made him. David did not understand that, but I did. I assume that God makes no mistakes.

I knew something else. Jesus Christ had known David two thousand years before David was born to a young unwed girl. He knew that David would make many serious mistakes in his troubled childhood. But Jesus died for David anyway.

I did not need or ask for references from any pastor. None knew David anyway. Nor did I ask for references from any of the schools he had attended and been expelled from. He and his gang buddies had no good references to give from the neighborhood. Having been created by God and redeemed by Jesus Christ, David had enough "references" for me.

Immediately an OBI classmate took David under his wing. His name was Oliver Hawkins Jr., whose parents had come to work at Oneida

the year before. For the next two-and-a-half years, Oliver managed to keep David from being expelled for bad behavior. But we knew we were making progress.

Oliver was a Christian witness for David, and one Sunday evening after a sermon preached by one of our senior boys, David made his profession of faith and was baptized. There was a genuine difference in his life.

David and Oliver played together on the Mountaineer basketball team, and made "starting five" their senior year. Oliver helped David grow in the Lord. They both graduated with honors and were Cumberland College roommates for four years. They were very active in BSU, did summer mission work two summers, and made fine records.

David met his wife, Bonita, also active in BSU, and they were married four months after his college graduation. Although I am not a minister, he asked me to speak at his wedding. David returned to OBI as a middle-school teacher and coach for three years and had a record 37-0 season before going to Southern Seminary. After his graduation last December, he returned to Oneida to serve, now an ordained pastor.

Oliver returned to OBI four years ago with a master's degree, taking a cut in pay of \$15,000 a year to assume David's teaching and coaching duties when he left for seminary. Today Oliver is our head cross country and basketball coach and David is his assistant in addition to being Oneida's first full-time assistant principal. They are two of my sons in the Lord.

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

Paid Column

ONEIDA JOURNAL



Barkley Moore

Summer at the Creek

Our students' children enjoy summer at Clear Creek. Family Life Center Director David Dean, third-year student from Memphis, plans an interesting schedule. The summer began with a School's Out Party for all school-age children. A unique basketball game featured teen-agers carrying preschoolers who shot the basketball.

On June 11-13, eight boys and two chaperones camped at Grove Camp Ground, Corbin. The event included fishing and swimming. During one prolonged rain the group roasted marshmallows in a cave. Fourteen children traveled to the Knoxville Zoo. Afterward they stopped at McDonald's and received a tour.

June 19 was "Creek Day" and started with a picnic under the pines followed by two hours of water activity in the shallow areas of the creek. The children tried to build a dam across Clear Creek.

Jerry Smith, manager of the Middlesboro Airport, donated his time and airplane to take children on plane rides above Middlesboro. There are always plenty of adult chaperones for this trip.

Twice during the summer a Family Life Center party features plenty of free time in the gym, swimming,

skating. A trip to Norris Dam includes a tour of the facility and swimming in the state park.

On July 20, 10 children enjoyed riding my wife's quarter horse, Quantum Leap. Rebecca went down early for a ride. She took a package of sliced apples. Whenever a child would get on for a ride, the horse got a piece of apple. By the time the group left, the children were hugging the horse, and he was nuzzling them as they sat on a blanket. It was the first time eight of the children had ridden a horse.

Eight girls enjoyed a sleep-in at the Family Life Center. The evening included pizza, swimming activities and skating.

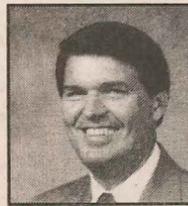
The summer closes with a family trip to the Big South Fork National Recreation Park. It features a train ride to the Blue Heron mining community.

A busy summer like this could certainly use a 15-passenger van, which Campbell's will donate when we secure 1 million Campbell's labels. Involve your church in this project. We will be glad to send you promotional material.

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

Paid Column

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

Hobbs honored for 25 years of commentary writing

By Chip Alford
SBC Sunday School Board

NASHVILLE (BP)—Time and discipline.

Those are two things a good writer can't do without, Herschel Hobbs told a group of editors gathered for an informal dialogue session July 19 at the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville.

Hobbs, pastor emeritus of First Baptist Church of Oklahoma City, should know. Even after writing more than 150 books and a quarter of a century's worth of Sunday school commentaries, the 85-year-old author and speaker still finds time to write.

Two or three times a night he gets out of bed to exercise his legs. But while he's up, he takes 15 to 20 minutes to work on one of the manuscripts always on his desk.

"I think God's given me a gift of writing. It's nothing to brag about. Any quality or gift that you have, God gave it to you," said Hobbs, regarded by many as one of the few remaining Baptist statesmen.

Hobbs was honored July 20 at a special chapel service at the Sunday School Board for completing 25 years as author of "Studying Adult Life and Work Lessons," a quarterly commentary on lessons from the Life and Work curriculum series.

Hobbs began writing the lesson commentaries in 1968 after Sunday school teachers at his church complained other study helps provided by the Sunday School Board were "too simple."

Determined to provide a challenging study help, he gave an expository treatment of each focal passage in the Life and Work lessons. He introduced the materials, examined background material, clarified the central teaching of the passage and discussed applying truths to everyday life—the same format he uses today.

The success of the commentary was phenomenal. Soon other churches in his association got wind of it and began requesting copies, followed by churches across the country.

"Pretty soon we were mimeographing it and sending it to more than 250 churches, including First Baptist, Dallas, and First Baptist, Nashville," Hobbs remembered.

The Sunday School Board, which earlier had granted permission for Hobbs to write the commentary, later suggested the publication might represent a "conflict of interest" and suggested Hobbs cease distribution outside his church. He did so, informing churches on his mailing list of the reasons for his decision.

"I think the Sunday School Board got quite a bit of mean mail," Hobbs

said, laughing. Soon he was asked by the board's president, James Sullivan, to write the commentary as a quarterly board publication.

In the last quarter century, Hobbs has gone through the Bible five times with his commentaries.

"I see something new every time I go through it," he said.

And Southern Baptists apparently aren't tiring of his wisdom. The commentaries are more successful today than ever before, selling about 94,000 copies each quarter.

Hobbs has no plans to stop writing; he's currently working on the lesson commentaries for 1995. He still won't use a word processor, insisting on writing out everything by hand.

"I refuse to use anything that knows more than I do," he said, explaining his aversion to computers.

"Just how much I've written for the Sunday School Board I couldn't begin to tell you," said Hobbs, a frequent contributor to "Open Windows," the board's daily devotional guide, and author of books for Broadman & Holman Publishers and Convention Press. "One thing I can tell you; it's been a joy and a privilege."

"The Sunday School Board is the difference between the Southern Baptist Convention being just a so-so denomination and what I believe is a super denomination," he said.



CONGRATULATIONS Herschel Hobbs (right) acknowledges a standing ovation from employees at the Baptist Sunday School Board, where he was honored recently for completing 25 years as author of "Studying Adult Life and Work Lessons," a commentary on weekly Sunday school lessons. Hobbs is pastor emeritus of First Baptist Church in Oklahoma City. (BP photo by Mike Yarber)

'Footprints' author not unknown but has struggled for credit

COQUITLAM, British Columbia (EP)—Though Margaret Powers' story is hard to believe, she's convinced Hallmark cards and publisher HarperCollins.

Powers, a resident of Coquitlam, British Columbia, says she is the anonymous author of the inspirational poem "Footprints," which has been reprinted on everything from greeting cards to bookmarks, and from coffee cups to posters.

Powers, the well-traveled co-director of Little Peoples Ministry, describes in a just-released book, "Footprints: The True Story Behind the Poem that Inspired Millions," how boxes of her poems—including "Footprints"—were stolen in 1980 from a moving truck carrying her family's belongings to Greater Vancouver from Toronto.

According to the story in the Canadian newspaper Christian Week, Powers was devastated by the loss, but her pain grew deeper when, three years later, traveling through Washington state, she and her husband walked into a Christian bookstore and saw "Footprints" etched on a plaque, credited to another author.

The poem—which portrays God as an invisible friend walking in the sand—began showing up everywhere Powers went. But the sealed, post-office-dated envelope containing "Footprints,"

which would prove she had written it for her wedding in 1964, was long gone.

Powers felt angry and bitter. Being a devout evangelical Baptist, she felt horrible harboring feelings she considered selfish.

"I felt guilty caring about my own needs. I just wanted people to get the message of the poem," Powers said.

For years, she lost her inspiration to write.

Friends tried to convince her in 1987 to go to court to win the copyright to the poem. But Powers decided that there would be no lawsuit.

"A lawsuit could have lasted a lifetime," she noted. "A court case could have taken the poem out of circulation. I would be the winner monetarily, but would I be a real winner?"

Fortunately, within a year, the U.S. headquarters for Hallmark Cards agreed that Powers was the author of "Footprints." She now receives an annual fee from Hallmark, but other publishing companies continue to use "Footprints," attributing it to "Author Unknown."

Despite her own difficult life story, which includes a tragic family accident, Powers says God has blessed her. "After all," she said, "When I'm dead and gone, will it really matter who wrote 'Footprints?'"

Ohio health care ministry sees miracle in beginning

DALLAS (BP)—Later this year, when a small-town Ohio church sets up a free health care clinic for the needy in a million-dollar building bought for \$1, it will be the culmination of a miracle, according to the church's pastor.

"Man can't orchestrate something like this. We can't take any of the credit. It's all God," said Lonnie Riley, pastor of Hillcrest Baptist Church in Carlisle, Ohio.

Several months ago, Riley was invited to a meeting of the local housing commission where he learned that medical care, educational opportunities and available housing were the three primary needs of the poor in Warren County, Ohio.

"The Lord began to lay it on my heart. Since we have about 25 health care professionals in our church, I thought maybe one day a month they could provide free medical examinations," he said.

Riley contacted the director of the housing authority, suggested the once-a-month free clinic and asked if there were any available facilities.

The director told Riley about a publicly owned building in nearby Franklin, Ohio, formerly used as a post office, that could be leased to the church for \$1 a year. After conversations with board commissioners, the building was instead offered for sale to the church for \$1.

The facility—valued at about \$1 million—included built-in safes ideal for storing drugs, about a half-dozen offices and a large open area that could be used as a reception room.

With the location secured, Hill-

crest publicly announced its plan to start the Meridzo (New Testament Greek for "care") Center to provide free medical and dental care for many of the estimated 800 homeless or transient families in Warren County.

As word spread, health care professionals from as far away as Columbus, Ohio—a two-hour drive—called to join their colleagues at Hillcrest in volunteering their services. And officials with the Warren County Transit Authority expressed their willingness to provide needy families transportation to the Meridzo Center.

But the center still needed medical and dental equipment.

Riley is not sure who suggested he contact Texas Baptist Men, but he called the Dallas office asking for help, even though he knew no one there. When TBM Executive Director Bob Dixon returned the phone call, Riley was amazed at the response.

"Just the week before, I had gotten a call from a doctor in Odessa (Texas). He had all the equipment and fixtures of a medical clinic that he wanted to donate," Dixon said.

Through the TBM Medical/Dental Fellowship, Dixon also was able to coordinate the acquisition of dental equipment in Tyler, Texas, and additional supplies in Georgia.

The owner of a trucking company offered to donate the use of an 18-wheel, tractor-trailer to transport the equipment and pay the driver.

"We've just followed the Lord one step at a time," Riley said. "It's exciting to walk in God's plan and to see what he can do as he links up his people."

CLEAR CREEK

Thank You, Constructors for Christ



Al Davis (left), retired director of missions, Coosa and Lookout Valley Baptist Associations, Fort Oglethorpe, Ga., coordinated the efforts of Constructors for Christ who built three student duplexes June 21-July 9 at Clear Creek Baptist Bible College, Pineville.

While minister of religious education for Hamilton Baptist Association in Tennessee in 1960, Davis became interested in pioneer missions.

Davis often asked "Why not send laypeople to do missions work?" It was then that Constructors for Christ was born. Davis conceived of groups of families who could fill missions needs of pioneer areas by helping churches construct buildings.

After contacting the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board for projects, Davis began seeking volunteers to spend as much as three weeks during the summer on construction projects.

Since 1975, Constructors for Christ has sought to move churches from storefront facilities to first units. Members from 10 states have built units in Ohio, Indiana, Missouri, Connecticut, West Virginia, Virginia, Kentucky, Georgia, Mississippi and Pennsylvania.

This year more than 200 Constructors for Christ from 10 states left an enduring testimony of Christian love in the form of beautiful student duplexes. Students for many years to come will be recipients of that love.

