



WESTERN RECORDER

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FOR THE RECORD

Marriages last with commitment, festival crowd told

By Mark Wingfield
News Director

LOUISVILLE—Couples actually tie the knot somewhere in the middle of a wedding ceremony rather than with the final pronouncement, Dan Griffin told participants in the Fall Festival of Marriage Sept. 23-25.

Griffin said the key phrase in a wedding ceremony often is the ministerial response to the wedding vows: "Then are you each given to the other?"

"Look for more than friendship or love" in a marriage, he urged. "Look for commitment."

Griffin, pastor of Christ Fellowship Church in Arlington, Texas, was keynote speaker for the Fall Festival of Marriage, held on the campus of Southern Baptist Theological Semi-

nary in Louisville. This was one of 33 fall marriage festivals sponsored by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board nationwide. It was co-sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention's family ministry department.

The Louisville event drew 492 people, an excellent turnout according to John Lepper, KBC family ministry director.

In his opening address, Griffin outlined the basic vows of a marriage ceremony, urging festival participants to remember and recommit:

■ For richer or for poorer. "Money is the No. 1 killer of marriages," Griffin said. "When you say 'for

richer or for poorer,' you're saying money is not going to determine your marriage."

■ In sickness and in health. Young couples seldom realize the heavy weight of these words, Griffin noted, but this depth of commitment is essential to a lasting marriage.

■ For better or for worse. Most couples don't stop to envision what "worse" means, he continued. "But if you can't imagine 'worse,' you're sure not going to adjust to it when it comes."

■ 'Til death shall part us. Griffin emphasized that marriage vows are intended to be for life, and

that the way couples stay together that long is by having relationships based on commitment rather than some fuzzy vision of romantic love.

In a later address, Griffin quoted theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who once advised: "Love sustains the marriage so that later the marriage can sustain the love."

Griffin talked about two kinds of love found in a marriage.

The first, need love, usually is found at weddings and is exemplified by the statement, "I love you because of how you make me feel."

The second, gift love, is more lasting and is exemplified by the statement, "I love you because of who you are."

A mature marriage will be rooted in gift love more than need love, Griffin said.



■ More on page 6

Revenue down
Year-end revenue is projected to be well below budget for the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board this year, but funds should rebound next year, officials said. See page 2.

Miss Kentucky
Laura Sue Humphress, a member of Elhorn Baptist Church near Campbellsville, is advocating literacy in her reign as Miss Kentucky. See page 3.

Family Forum
Questions to ask when choosing curriculum for children. See page 4.

Editorial
Congratulations are in order to three Southern Baptist Convention groups or individuals for taking important steps toward civility and understanding in recent days. See page 5.

Against killing
A panel of Southern Baptists has produced a document outlining their opposition to the killing of abortion doctors as part of the "pro-life" movement. See page 7.

Concrete or abstract?
The three living presidents of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary discuss their different perspectives on the seminary's confessional statement, the Abstract of Principles. See pages 8 & 9.

Ivory Coast missionaries credit prayer

ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast (BP)—Prayer made a visible impact on Southern Baptist mission work in Ivory Coast Aug. 28, according to missionaries there.

About 675 Southern Baptist churches received a request off the Foreign Mission Board's prayer line two days earlier regarding the Aug. 28 premiere of a French-language evangelistic film.

Prominent personalities, government leaders and leading Muslims had been invited to the premiere in Ivory Coast's capital, Abidjan.

Abidjan is between four and eight hours ahead of U.S. time zones. So just before the scheduled 3 p.m. film premiere got under way, Baptists along the U.S. east coast were gathering for worship.

As the premiere and events following it progressed, other U.S. Baptists were waking up and heading to church services.

"That prayer request went with them to churches on Sunday for sharing in Sunday schools and prayer groups," said Randy Sprinkle, FMB prayer coordinator.

"People continued to call in to the prayer line Sunday evening, and at night services they were still praying."

Meanwhile, people in Ivory Coast affected by the film, "La Solution," seemed "compelled to come for counsel all night long and into the next day," he said.

More than 1,000 people viewed "La Solution" on its debut in the Congress Hall of Abidjan's Hotel Ivoire. "A steady stream of people entered the hall for more than an hour after the doors were opened," said missionary Barbara Whittington.

Late into the night after the film's showing, and again the next morning, people moved by the film were knocking on the doors of Baptist leaders in Abidjan, Whittington said.

Moving? See page 4 (1004)

Company reaches high from Baptist roots

CAMPBELLSVILLE—A company begun in the 1950s by a small Baptist college has reached new heights as one of the world's premiere manufacturers of church steeples.

Campbellsville Industries currently is listed in the "Guinness Book of World Records" as manufacturer of the world's largest prefabricated steeple. The 229-foot-high steeple sits atop First Baptist Church of Huntsville, Ala.

The company was begun by Campbellsville College in the 1950s as a way for students to earn money for their education. Campbellsville

College alumnus Herb Keeton bought the business in 1969 and pioneered production of prefabricated steeples.

Keeton sold the company in 1979 to Jerry Bennett, Kenny Bennett, Wilbur Cox and Roger Grant. Jerry Bennett, also a Campbellsville College graduate, is president.

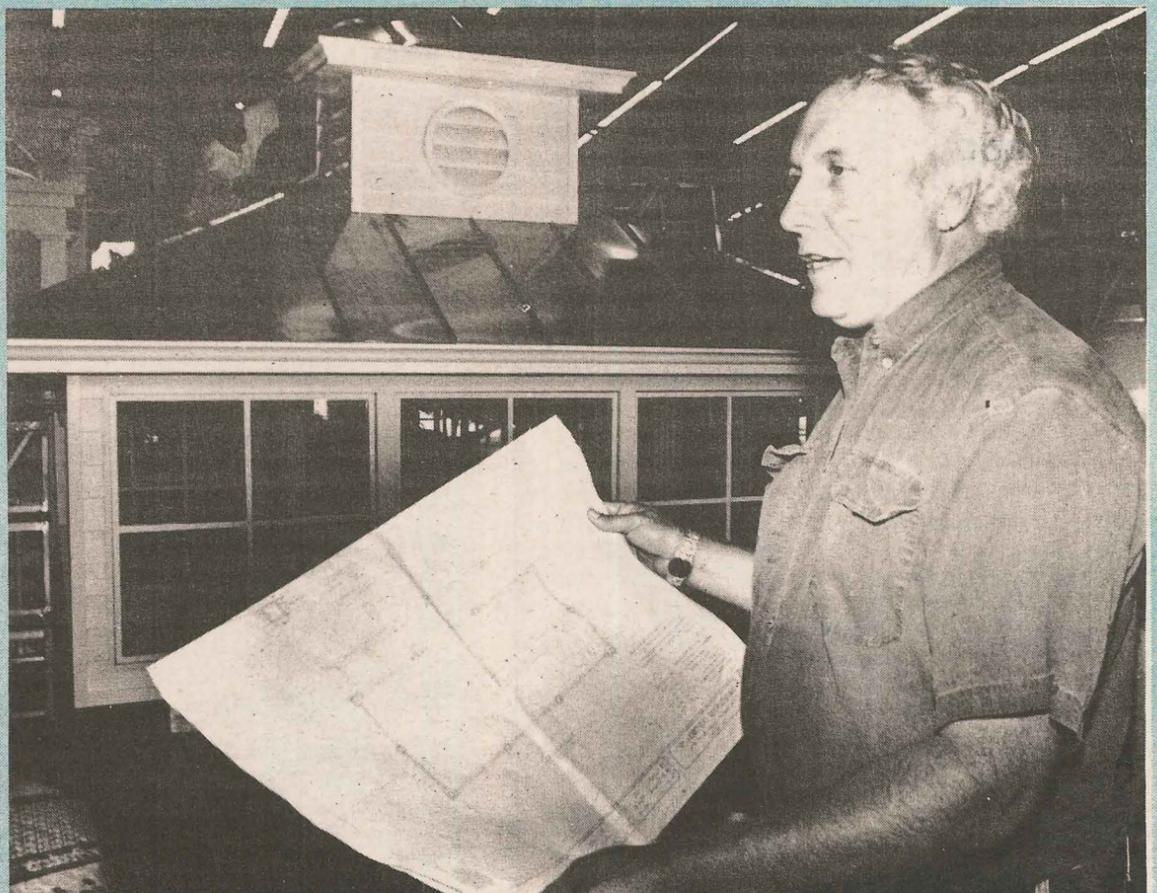
Campbellsville Industries has produced steeples, cupolas, cornices, towers, clocks, domes, crosses, louvers and balustrades for more than 7,000 churches, schools and businesses. The company's work is featured at Camden Station in Baltimore, West End Collegiate Church

in New York City, Troy State University in Alabama, the Belle of St. Louis paddlewheeler, the Norway Pavillion at Disney's Epcot Center and the University of Louisville's clock tower.

The company also donated a clock tower to Campbellsville College.

Campbellsville Industries has grown to currently occupy a main plant with 20,000 square feet of manufacturing space and a satellite plant in Greensburg with 7,200 square feet. Campbellsville Industries employs 70 people.

□ See Company aims high ..., page 13



TOP OF THE LINE Kentucky Baptist layman Jerry Bennett, a 1963 graduate of Campbellsville College, shows off a tower under construction at his business, Campbellsville Industries, which also produces church steeples. (Photo by Joan McKinney)

BAPTISTS

Sunday School Board funds down but projected to rise

Staff restructuring at the Sunday School Board has resulted in 599 employees leaving and 480 being hired, for a net reduction of 121 to date.

NASHVILLE (ABP)—Despite a projected budget deficit this year of more than \$3.7 million, trustees of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board adopted a budget for next year that anticipates an overage of almost the same amount.

President Jimmy Draper told trustees the board has invested heavily in research and development this year in hopes of reversing a 13-year pattern of declining church literature sales.

Draper predicted the resulting changes, including a redesigned Life and Work curriculum, remodeling of Baptist Book Stores and upgrades in computer ordering systems, "will pay off in the future."

Finances became the major topic

of discussion during the trustees' Sept. 26-28 meeting in Nashville. During that meeting trustees also learned of a plan to "downsize" the number of board trustees from 93 to 55 by the year 2000 and voted to close four Baptist Book Stores.

The board's total revenue for 1993-94 is up about \$16 million over last year, but will fall short of the \$238 million budget by about \$13 million, according to Ted Warren, chief financial officer.

Draper said the board has borrowed money, with trustee approval, for investments in curriculum research, Baptist Book Store upgrades and development of the "Secret Adventures" family video series. The board elected to borrow money rather

than use reserves because money could be borrowed at a lower interest rate than reserve funds currently are earning.

The board had about \$13.6 million in outstanding loans as of Sept. 15, but has reserve funds of \$49.9 million, Draper said.

Draper said the board is nearing the end of its massive staff restructuring. Staff cuts and early retirement incentives have resulted in 599 employees leaving and 480 being hired, for a net reduction of 121 to date.

In other business, trustee Tommy French of Louisiana reported on a plan which would reduce the trustee board to 55 members by the year 2000.

French told trustees the board

spends about \$185,000 a year in meetings for trustees. Cutting the number of trustees to 55 would reduce costs and give the board "a more workable number," he said.

Currently, a state with 20,000 Southern Baptists has one trustee, with an additional trustee for every 250,000 church members. The new plan would keep the 20,000 minimum in place, but would add a trustee for every additional 500,000 members.

The plan, if approved by the trustees in February, would be enacted through attrition. The plan also would need approval from the SBC Executive Committee and Southern Baptist Convention messengers during annual session.

Conservative strategists meet to assess progress in states

NASHVILLE (ABP)—Strategists for the Southern Baptist Convention's conservative movement met behind closed doors Sept. 21 in Nashville to hear of plans and progress of their movement within state conventions.

The group, organized by T.C. Pinckney of Alexandria, Va., met on the heels of the fall meeting of the SBC's Executive Committee, of which Pinckney serves as secretary. Other members of the Executive Committee also participated.

In recent years, the group has met

periodically, most often following the Executive Committee, to help extend the influence of conservatives in state conventions.

Pinckney, a retired Air Force general, said no head count was taken, but by "a good estimate," 25-30 people attended the meeting from several states. Most were not Executive Committee members, he added. He declined to say where the meeting was held.

Conservatives have targeted the state convention presidencies, hoping to repeat the success they had in

using the Southern Baptist Convention presidency to steer the national SBC onto a more conservative course. Most state presidencies carry power to appoint important committees that choose state leaders.

But the effort was less than successful last fall. Presidential candidates backed by conservative forces lost in at least seven large Baptist conventions—in Florida, Kentucky, Louisiana, Missouri, North Carolina, Texas and Virginia. However, conservative-backed candidates won in several other states, including South

Carolina and Arkansas.

Asked if the group expects to make any gains in state convention meetings this fall, Pinckney said: "We really didn't talk in those kinds of terms. We didn't try to make any assessment state by state or even a representative sampling."

Pinckney said the loosely structured state-level group, which has met at least five times in the last two years, does not have a national strategy for gaining control of the state conventions but meets merely to exchange experiences from their states.

Kentucky schools among consortium planning exchanges

WILLIAMSBURG (BP)—Kentucky Baptists' three liberal arts colleges are among a 43-member consortium planning to increase student and faculty exchanges with universities in "World A" countries where missionaries often are not allowed.

The coalition of Southern Baptist schools approved a cooperative agreement with the Southern Baptist

Convention's Foreign Mission Board and Education Commission during a Sept. 23 meeting at Cumberland College.

Cumberland, Georgetown College and Campbellsville College all are members of the Cooperative Services International Education Consortium. Since 1987, the consortium has worked with the FMB to coordi-

nate exchanges of professors and students and to establish satellite higher education programs predominantly in "World A" countries.

The consortium currently is involved in about 300 projects with educational institutions in 80 countries, particularly in China and the former Soviet republics.

Under the new agreement, the

FMB and Education Commission each will contribute about \$30,000 per year to help fund an administrator and a clerical person who will operate out of Education Commission offices in Nashville. The agency also will help establish an international computer data bank to match member schools with overseas opportunities.



PASTOR, WE'VE BEEN HIRED BY THE LADIES CIRCLE TO DETERMINE WHO LAST USED THE CHURCH KITCHEN... MAY WE HAVE A FEW WORDS WITH YOU?

BAPTIST BITS

■ **Taylor to lead Sunday school.** Bill Taylor, executive pastor of North Phoenix Baptist Church in Phoenix, has been named director of the Bible teaching-reaching division of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, succeeding Harry Piland. Taylor, 55, previously was minister of education and administration at Prestonwood Baptist Church in Dallas and at other churches in Florida, Georgia and Louisiana.

■ **Advisory team named.** Bob Farmer, recreation minister at First Baptist Church of Owensboro, has been named to a leadership/advisory team helping redefine the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's church recreation program.

■ **New Orleans gets Georgia site.** New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary has accepted the gift of an entire church complex in Decatur, Ga., and will use the facility for its north Georgia extension

center. After experiencing a significant decline, members of Columbia Drive Baptist Church offered to donate the property if they would be allowed to continue worshipping there.

■ **Polish seminary opens.** Classes began Sept. 19 in a new Baptist seminary in Radosc, Poland. Polish Baptists have been working since 1989 to complete the \$1 million facility near Warsaw. Dedication ceremonies were held Sept. 17-18 even though the interiors of the five buildings are not complete. Currently, 17 students are training for pastoral ministry and other roles at the seminary.

■ **Nobles indicted.** A federal grand jury returned a 20-count indictment Sept. 21 against Lewis Nobles Jr., former president of Mississippi College. Nobles resigned from the presidency amid charges that he had misused donations. The official indictment charges Nobles with six

counts of mail fraud, five counts of money laundering, evasion of income taxes and four counts enticing women to travel in interstate commerce for the purpose of engaging in criminal sexual conduct.

■ **Rogers named by BJC.** Melissa Rogers has been named associate general counsel with the Baptist Joint Committee in Washington, D.C. She is the daughter of Bill and Luwilda Rogers of Louisville. She will fill the position part time beginning Oct. 1, while pursuing a master of arts degree in history from George Mason University. She is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania law school and Baylor University.

■ **Book stores lose positions.** The chain of 65 Baptist Book Stores will cut 116 full-time and part-time positions in a cost-saving move. Most of the positions are vacant, but 36 people will either retire or receive outplacement assistance.

KENTUCKY

Miss Kentucky sees God at work despite disappointment

By Mark Wingfield
News Director

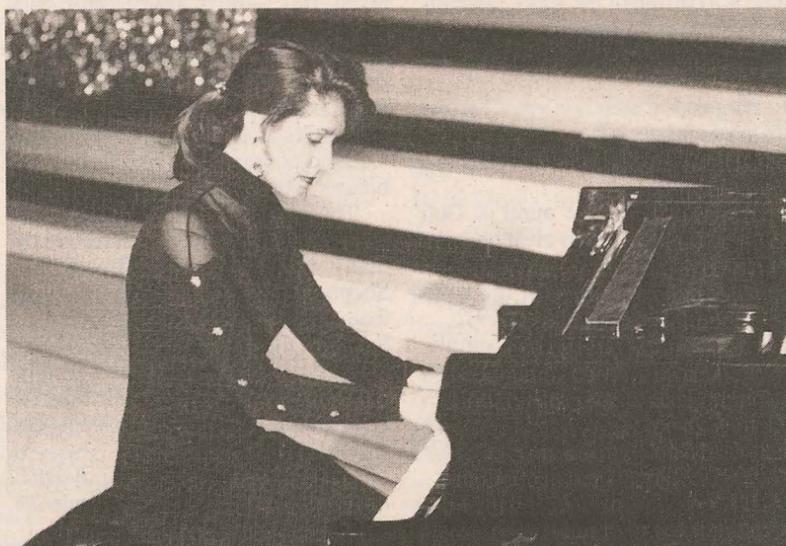
CAMPBELLSVILLE—Not being crowned Miss America was a devastating loss to Laura Sue Humphress, but remembering God is still on his throne put things in perspective, she said.

"I prayed that the Lord would give me strength to deal with whatever happened," said Humphress, the reigning Miss Kentucky and a long-time member of Elkhorn Baptist Church in Campbellsville. "I think I reacted very positively. I didn't go off and complain and cry. I was emotional, but that was from the disappointment. I'm perfectly fine now, because I realize there must be something for me here."

Humphress, a student at Campbellsville College, was crowned Miss Kentucky in July, which sent her to compete in the Miss America pageant last month.

Not making the top-10 cut at Miss America was a new experience for Humphress, who has been competing in pageants since she was 15. "In all my pageant experiences, I always had been in the top 10 or I won."

But Humphress said she believes



MISS KENTUCKY Laura Sue Humphress, a student at Campbellsville College, performs on the piano during a previous pageant. She was crowned Miss Kentucky last July and recently competed in the Miss America pageant.

God has a better plan for her this year in her home state, where she'll tour and promote literacy.

"I feel it was important for me to know what God's will was in my life," she said. "I firmly believe this was his will."

And God has used all her pageant

experiences to teach her perseverance, Humphress said. "It took perseverance and determination and faith that only God can provide."

That's a message she would like to impress upon other young people.

"Anything is possible, for he who believes in Christ," she said. "There

is one statement from the Bible I always think about when I'm competing: 'If we have faith even as small as a mustard seed, we can move mountains.'"

That message of hope translates into her interest in literacy as well. By working with Operation Read in Lexington and through other appearances, she hopes to help break the cycle of intergenerational illiteracy prevalent in Kentucky.

Humphress said both her church and her college have been influential forces in her life. Her parents, Wallace and Peggy Humphress, remain active members of Elkhorn Baptist Church.

After completing her reign as Miss Kentucky next summer, she will return to Campbellsville College for about a year to finish a degree in social studies and secondary education. Then she plans to become a teacher.

"The atmosphere in general at Campbellsville College has been very warming," she said. "I've had so much joy just being here. I even miss coming to school this year."

"It's like one big happy family. They're not just interested in me because I'm Miss Kentucky. That's what makes it so special."

Santos named KBC language consultant

Renato Santos has been named language consultant in the Kentucky Baptist Convention's direct missions department.

Santos, a native of Brazil, will assist Kentucky Baptists in creating and sustaining ministries among the state's ethnic populations and language groups.

He has a background in pastoral care with a diversity of groups, including cultural and racial minorities and the mentally and physically handicapped. He also served as an interpreter and translator for the KBC's partnership missions venture with Baptists in Brazil.

Santos is an ordained minister and Home Mission Board-endorsed chaplain. Most recently, he has worked as a chaplain at Jefferson Hospital in Jeffersonville, Ind. He also has worked as a chaplain at Central State Hospital in Louisville and as a counselor at International School of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

He is a graduate of Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Mo., and will complete the master of divinity degree from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary next May.

Santos and his wife, Tania, have a 19-month-old daughter and live in Louisville, where they are members of Highland Baptist Church.

For information about language ministries, contact the KBC direct missions department at (502) 245-4101.

Wayne Oates Institute opens, plans first major conference

LOUISVILLE—The Wayne E. Oates Institute has been established in Louisville to promote the study of spirituality, ethics and pastoral care.

The institute's namesake currently is senior research professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He previously was professor of psychiatry and behavioral science at the University of Louisville School of Medicine.

Oates is a longtime member of St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville and is well-known among Southern Baptists for his writings on pastoral care and mental illness.

The institute's executive board is headed by James Hyde, director of ethics and pastoral counseling at the University of Louisville, along with Robert Ellis, a Louisville doctor of internal medicine, and Janice Woods Yusk, a Louisville dermatologist. Ten other individuals representing various religious and medical backgrounds serve as members of the board of directors.

"Dr. Oates has mentored many caregivers in the understanding that treatment requires collaboration, integration and compassion among all the healing disciplines," Hyde said. "This institute is in tribute to his outstanding work."

Hyde said the institute will focus on education, research and publication.

In the future, Hyde said, he envisions the institute serving as an independent learning center for post-graduate students, with alliances between university systems.

Financial support comes from individuals and foundation grants, said Joan Pauly, development director. She currently is the institute's only

full-time employee. Another employee works part time.

The institute has opened an office inside Highland Baptist Church in Louisville.

The institute's first major conference is scheduled for Oct. 16-17 at the Galt House in Louisville.

The conference title is "Spirituality and Health: Recovering the Soul of Healing."

Pauly said about 300 people are expected to attend.

Featured speakers include Wendell Berry, Kentucky farmer and author; Larry Dossey, a medical internist, author and lecturer; and Deirdre Brigham, a behavioral medicine therapist, author and founder of Getting Well, a program for individuals with life-challenging conditions.

Hyde said this conference will allow professionals and laypeople to discuss the relationships between the healing disciplines and spirituality.

Other conference speakers include Ed Vaughn, president of Baptist Healthcare System; Kevin Cosby, pastor of St. Stephen Baptist Church in Louisville; Walt Jackson, professor of ministry at Southern Seminary; Helen Jones, senior chaplain at Norton Hospital in Louisville; Bobby DeWeese, a surgeon and former state representative; Paul Simmons, former professor of Christian ethics at Southern Seminary; and Clifford Kuhn, professor of psychiatry at the University of Louisville.

The conference is co-sponsored by 11 other organizations, including Baptist Healthcare System and the V.V. Cooke Foundation.

For more information about the institute or the conference, call (502) 459-2370.

BLUEGRASS BURGEO

■ **Henry praises Georgetown.** Jim Henry, current president of the Southern Baptist Convention and pastor of First Baptist Church in Orlando, Fla., has kind words for his Kentucky alma mater. In an interview with the Georgetown College alumni magazine, Henry says his experiences at Georgetown College "were critical in my spiritual, emotional and educational maturity. I met some of the greatest people there I have ever known. Godly professors inspired, taught and encouraged me. ... I've never regretted for one second the privilege of being a Georgetown student and alumnus."

■ **Resolutions requested.** Resolutions to be considered by messengers to the Kentucky Baptist Convention annual meeting should be submitted in advance if possible, according to Malcolm Lunceford, resolutions committee chairman. Send resolutions to Lunceford at 400 Barley Dr., Frankfort, Ky. 40601. Submissions should be typed or neatly written, titled and dated and should include the name, address and church of the author.

■ **Prospective students invited.** High school juniors and seniors and their parents are invited to visit Georgetown College Saturday, Oct. 8, and Saturday, Nov. 12. Day-long activities include meetings with faculty members, fine arts scholarship auditions, information about financial aid, campus tours and brunch in the campus cafeteria. For information, call (800) 788-9985.

■ **Campbellsville secretary dies.** Judith Stewart, former executive secretary to President Ken Winters at Campbellsville College, was found dead in a back room of the president's office suite Sept. 29. Stewart, 42, had taken a new job with the Association of Independent Kentucky Colleges and Universities, but was returning to help periodically at the college. Authorities said Stewart apparently died of a self-inflicted gun wound.

■ **Correction:** The "Events" insert in the Sept. 20 issue of the Western Recorder incorrectly listed Nov. 14 as the date for Frankfort's Candlelight Tour. This annual event has been changed from its normal time this year and will be held Nov. 7, the week prior to the Kentucky Baptist Convention annual meeting.

OPINION

WESTERN RECORDER

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

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Stay out

Is it necessary to invade the autonomy of the local church by dragging their private business affairs across the pages of the Western Recorder? Immanuel Baptist Temple in Henderson has apparently suffered through a difficult time, and we should nurture and lift them in our prayers.

A small group became dissatisfied with their pastor's leadership. Your article (WR, Sept. 20) would lead its

readers to believe this split was over the controversy in Southern Baptist Convention life. The pastor was placed in a very bad light, as though he were a tyrant.

Several things obviously should trouble us about this apparently slanted article. First, for a group of 70 to leave a church that has around 1,300 members could hardly be characterized as a major split. Secondly, the pastor should be applauded for having the courage not to be in attendance at the business meeting, therefore giving everyone the freedom to speak. Thirdly, does everything in Baptist life have to be characterized in terms of the conflict?

I hope the Western Recorder will not make it a practice to monitor and report on the business meetings of our churches.

*Howard F. Beauman
Paris*

Part ways

I am somewhat disturbed by how your editorials seem to be for the most part slanted in favor of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, and critical of most actions of the Southern Baptist Convention. I'm not saying the SBC is always right. However, the Bible says a house divided against itself cannot stand. The Bible also says for us to be of one mind.

To an old friend, belatedly

My years at Southern Seminary covered a period of 10 years: first as a student beginning in 1958 and graduating in 1961; traveling there regularly as a Foreign Mission Board personnel representative from 1964 through 1969; and, finally, in 1973-74 while on furlough from overseas, completing the doctor of ministry degree.

My memories of seminary are positive; my professors demanded much, but my chief complaint was toward myself for not having been more serious about my studies in college. Even so, I left that institution much better equipped to be a "life-long learner" as a minister, and I shall be forever indebted. Education is a value no one can take away from you.

During all of those years and more, the "Skipper" was Dr. Duke K. McCall. His now-deceased wife, Marguerite, was a special friend to Alice during the year we served as host and hostess of the Faculty Center, a residence used for hosting visiting speakers and prospective faculty. There we were privileged to have breakfast with

Now, the Fellowship is not of one mind with the SBC. What needs to be done is a parting of the ways, then this controversy will cease to exist. The more a stink is stirred, the greater the stink.

We need to stand on what the Bible says and not what man says. We have allowed too much compromise over the years.

Who can know the mind of God or his attributes except what is revealed in his word (Isaiah 55:8-9)?

Christians should feel complimented by being called conservative, or fundamentalist—that's biblical.

*Troy Fields
Brooksville*

Appalling letter

I was appalled by Edward Clark of Danville's letter (WR, Sept. 6). The opening statement in the fourth paragraph is a statement you might find in a tabloid.

*C. Sherman Ramsey
Georgetown*

God's names

James Merritt's syllogism (WR, Sept. 20) may be stated: (1) fathers are male, (2) God is our Father, therefore (3) God is male. That Jesus says God is our Father, not merely like a father, indicates that this should be taken literally, not metaphorically.

With this in mind, consider Hebrews 12:29: "Our God is a consuming fire." Not, "God is like a fire," but "God is a fire." Merritt should thus have no problem with this syllogism: (1) a fire is an impersonal force, (2) God is a fire, therefore (3) God is an impersonal force. Of course, both Merritt's syllogism and mine break down because the language we finite humans use to speak of the infinite God is never up to the task.

In Genesis 17:1, God says, "I am El Shaddai." As C.I. Scofield recognized, this term is derived from the Hebrew word "shad," meaning the female breast. Scofield suggests understanding Shaddai as "the breasted one," and he is followed by many reputable Hebrew scholars. Note that God did not say "I am like God-with-breasts" but "I am God-with-breasts."

The issue is indeed biblical inspiration. God is revealed in Scripture by many names: Father, Fire, Rock, Shepherd, Son, King, Spirit. How sad that some deny the full revelation of Scripture that names God also as Midwife (Psalm 22:9), Mistress (Psalm 123:2) and Mother (Isaiah 66:13). How perplexing that they label this denial "conservative."

*Darrell J. Pursiful
Louisville*

Best-kept secret

Recently, I discovered the best-kept secret of Kentucky Baptists—Cedarmore.

I had the privilege to spend a weekend retreat there with a group of our church people, and I cannot begin to tell you how pleasantly surprised I was to find such a facility provided by Kentucky Baptists and available to all Kentucky Baptists. The facilities were clean, adequate and very user-friendly. The staff was very accommodating and friendly, and the food was excellent.

First, I want to express a word of appreciation to those who have made Cedarmore a reality for us as our retreat and conference center within the state. Secondly, I would like to encourage anyone who has not experienced Cedarmore to take a day to drive there and take a tour of this grand facility and campus. I believe this would be time well invested for all of us in the future.

*Rodney Burnette
Louisville*

changed. He still possesses the creative abilities that made him a legend among Southern Baptist leaders. Here is an account of his 80th birthday celebration.

"There were Friday and Saturday food and festivities, then they gathered Sunday morning, 31 family members, for worship at the McCall summer home at Highlands, N.C. After a 4-year-old granddaughter sang a solo, McCall read Psalm 46 and preached a sermon.

"Then he said the worship service would not be complete without passing the offering plate.

"Do not put anything in," he instructed. "As the plate is passed, take something out." The plate was filled with \$100 bills.

"He told his gathered family to use what they had taken in some way that would bless the world. They would not be asked to tell him how it had been used, but paralleling Jesus' parable of the talents in Matthew 25, they should find a way to let the money be a blessing to someone.

"He drove home a powerful point." And so, to an old friend of many Kentucky Baptists, I send a belated but deeply felt "Happy Birthday!"

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

BAPTIST FORUM



FAMILY FORUM: CHILDREN

Choosing curriculum

By Jewell Nelson

Q I am a new minister to children in the area. I was surprised to learn my new church is using David C. Cook in the preschool and Awana with children. Give me some ideas to help teachers use Southern Baptist curriculum.

A Do they know that David C. Cook and Awana are not published by the Southern Baptist Convention?

Some folks frown on having their tithes and offerings go to other denominations or non-denominations.

Let teachers know of the new and improved discipleship and Sunday school materials now available.

In a training session, ask teachers to list words that describe the age children they teach.

Then, ask teachers to look at the descriptive words and determine what children need in a teaching session. For example, children are active. "Active" calls for hands-on activities and space for movement. Children have different learning styles. Teachers need to offer choices of activities and so on.

Help teachers understand that children learn through doing, relationships, satisfaction, imitating, the five senses, play, curiosity and repetition.

Use this information and ask teachers to evaluate curriculum in use, or to be used. Some guidelines for selecting curriculum are:

- Is it age-appropriate?
- Is it based on the Bible, with long-range goals for faith development?
- Do the activities relate to the Bible teaching aim?
- Is it educationally sound?
- Does the curriculum meet the needs of various learning styles?
- Does it give children choices?
- Is it child-oriented rather than teacher-oriented?
- Does it allow children to move about rather than stay seated most of the time?
- Does it allow children to think and reason for themselves?
- Does it offer creativity rather than patterns?
- Does it help children apply what they learn to everyday life?

Jewell Nelson is associate director of the KBC's Sunday school department.

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

ON MISSION TOGETHER



William W. Marshall

some of the most exciting Christians of that era.

We see the McCalls on the occasions of his visits to his "home" church, Broadway.

I was delighted to note in the Sept. 22 issue of the Baptist Courier that South Carolina the following column by Editor John Roberts:

"Duke McCall was 80 on Sept. 1. The retired seminary president, denominational executive, Baptist World Alliance president who began a career of Baptist service as the 'youngest' in everything, has reached the seasoned age of four score years.

"He was the youngest president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary at 28, and four years later the youngest executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee. Then at 37 he became president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, where he served 32 years.

"All this is only background to give the uninitiated a picture of Duke McCall at 80. Only his age has

EDITORIALS

Southern Baptists can affirm steps toward civility

Congratulations are in order to three Southern Baptist Convention groups or individuals for taking important steps toward civility and understanding in recent days. Unfortunately, we live in an age when partisanship and petty rivalry divide loyalties and create discord among Christians. Fortunately, some leaders occasionally rise above such divisions and shine a light on the path toward consensus. They deserve commendation:

■ CLC—a step toward life.

The SBC Christian Life Commission provided the most sensible leadership it has offered in a long time last month, when it produced an insightful response to the murders of abortion doctors by abortion opponents. The CLC, sometimes noted more for its political rhetoric than for its reasoned leadership, aided all participants in the abortion debate by drafting an articulate, sensible statement explaining why "lethal force is not justifiable" in preventing abortion. (A news story about the document is printed on page 7 of this paper.)

The CLC's statement offers a carefully crafted rationale for rejecting murder as a tool to stop abortion. As such, it strengthens the hand of "pro-life" forces by enforcing the notion that murder is not the answer to abortion. It can, and should, be affirmed by all people who claim to care about life, including both sides of the abortion debate.

The CLC should capitalize on the momentum it established with this document by developing a similar statement that would build a case for a "whole life" ethic. The CLC promotes Sanctity of Human Life Sunday but tends to narrow the issue to abortion. It could make a giant contribution to people of faith by articulating a position that sanctifies all of human life. Admittedly, this would be a harder task, for it must provide a consistent, life-affirming answer to a whole range of non-consensus issues: capital punishment, gun control, adoption reform, welfare reform, health care reform, urban redevelopment, rural infrastructure development, educational opportunity and more. But if faithful people are going to be pro-life, they've got to learn to protect and affirm all of life.

■ Evangelism—a step toward hope.

SBC evangelism leaders, particularly the Home Mission Board and state evangelism directors, such as Kentucky's Bill Jagers—launched the convention's first simultaneous personal witnessing effort last Sunday. Evangelize the Lost Launch Day kicked off "Here's Hope. Share Jesus Now," the witnessing effort set for Jan. 9 through March 9, 1995. The emphasis will encourage Southern Baptists to share their faith in Christ with at least one person a day for 60 days. That effort will be followed by "harvest revivals," planned to guide people who have heard these Christian witnesses to make professions of faith in Christ.

A campaign that involves personal faith-sharing probably scares the bejabbers out of many Baptists. But the deployment of a huge force of Christian witnesses offers untold potential for leading people to faith in Christ. Every Kentucky Baptist should make plans to participate and make that commitment this Sunday, Oct. 9.

■ Henry—a step toward trust.

SBC President Jim Henry took giant strides toward creating trust among many Southern Baptists when he spoke to the SBC Executive Committee a couple of weeks ago. He reported he would not employ Barry McCarty, the Church of Christ parliamentarian used by SBC presidents since 1986, when he presides over the 1995 SBC annual meeting next summer. He also challenged the victors in the SBC controversy to pull their own weight in supporting the denominational program. And he advocated a level of inclusion in denominational life not seen in 16 years.

Admittedly, many Southern Baptists who have been disaffected by the SBC "holy war" aren't likely to feel safe back inside the denominational tent any time soon. But for the countless Southern Baptists looking for a way to relate positively to both "sides" in the SBC battle while continuing to relate positively to the convention, Henry's is the kind of leadership needed today.

Marv Knox

The Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission's opposition to the murder of abortion doctors, the Home Mission Board's "Here's Hope" simultaneous personal witnessing effort and Southern Baptist President Jim Henry's peacemaking speech to the Executive Committee all are much-needed steps toward civility and understanding.

'It is sad that all of us cannot truly love one another'

I have been affiliated with Southern Baptist churches my entire life. I have been a Kentucky Baptist for more than 20 years—most of that as a pastor.

MINISTERIALLY SPEAKING

It has been my privilege to have some great Southern Baptist preachers as my pastors and friends: John Buchannan, Floyd Roebuck, John Claypool, Wayne Dehoney, David L. Bailey Sr. and Bill Hancock.

I also have had the privilege of knowing and having some great Southern Baptist professors: W.W. Adams, Clyde Francisco, Dale

Moody, Page Kelly, William Hull, Penrose St. Amant, Walter Delamarter, Lucien Coleman and Findley Edge.

I have been privileged to know some great Kentucky Baptist leaders: Frank Owen, Bill Marshall, Marv Knox, A.B. Colvin, Bob Jones, Ross Figart, Bill Jagers, Benton Williams, Barkley Moore, James Boswell, Jim Taylor, Kenneth Winters and Bill Whittaker.

I feel all of these individuals, as well as myself, would be considered "conservative" Christians and South-

ern Baptists. I have always thought of myself as being thoroughly Southern Baptist. I am a great believer in the Cooperative Program and will always contribute to it. I am also solid in my support as a Southern Baptist, and will always be one. I also believe all of the Bible.

I shall always be a solid Southern Baptist. I shall always be saddened that Satan has been so successful in splitting our ranks, as we were working hard towards our "Bold Mission Thrust." I truly love those on both the right and left of most of us as Southern Baptists. It is sad that all of us cannot truly love one another. I know all

of us who truly are "born again" will be in heaven, so why can't we just love one another here on earth?

When Jesus looked on Jerusalem, he wept for these he loved. As I look upon the Southern Baptist Convention and the Kentucky Baptist Convention, I see so many whom I love; and yet I also weep. I weep because Satan has won such a victory over those of us who are not bearing the fruit of Christian love. What has happened to our belief in the priesthood of the believer?

Joel A. Rackley, pastor
Bethlehem Baptist Church
Springfield

Heather may be Miss America, but Martha always will be my ideal

Heather Whitestone, the new Miss America, will go down in Knox family history as a favorite beauty queen.

I know, I know. Picking favorite beauty queens isn't exactly a politically correct hobby in the '90s. As the husband of one wife and the father of two daughters, I've repented of old-fashioned skin-deep definitions perpetuated by beauty pageants. I think all three women who live at our house are gorgeous, but their beauty shines most brilliantly in the brightness of their intellect and the generosity of their hearts.

But back to Miss America. Heather Whitestone stands out because she's deaf, the first "handicapped" winner. That may be a novelty at your house, but it's big news at ours. My sister, Martha, has been deaf

since birth.

So we were thrilled when Heather Whitestone, a deaf woman, became Miss America. Not just because she's deaf and now she's Miss America. But because a young person overcame serious challenges to compete and win on a level playing field, and the whole nation watched.

We live in a culture that obsesses on perfection. Healthy young women starve themselves trying to obtain the model figure. Middle-aged men with better things to

do make fools out of themselves trying to live and look like they're still young and virile. Cosmetics companies make fortunes off the futile efforts of normal people to look like digitally altered photographs of the American Ideal.

I was blessed to grow up with a strong and determined sister who literally laughed at adversity, time and again. Martha reads lips and speaks with a soft, flat voice. She learned to speak by

placing her hand on the throat of her teacher, feeling the vibrations, and then, hand on

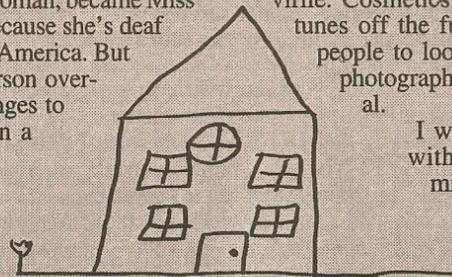
her own throat, imitating them. I remember worrying that Martha would be embarrassed when strangers or slight acquaintances couldn't understand her. But Martha just laughed. She could read their lips and understand them. To her mind, they were the handicapped ones.

I also recall the grace and courage that have helped Martha flourish in a hearing, "perfect" world. Each day demands more of her energy and attention than I exert in a week.

So I hope Heather Whitestone enjoys huge success as the first deaf Miss America. And I hope countless children claim her as their hero.

Martha always will be mine.

Marv Knox



MARRIAGE

Money conflicts called 'No. 1 killer' of marriages

Three financial principles

In a workshop on "Money Matters in Marriage" during the Fall Festival of Marriage, Dan Griffin offered three rules for financial security:

■ **Tithe.** God blesses those who honor him by giving 10 percent of their income to God's work, Griffin said. "People ask, 'Should I tithe on net or gross income?' It depends on whether you want a net blessing or a gross blessing." Tithing "puts God in the right place in your life. ... It is Matthew 6:33 in your checkbook."

■ **Take care of what you've got.** Good stewardship includes making things last, Griffin said.

■ **Earn interest, don't pay it.** The first step to getting out and staying out of financial bondage is to stop using credit cards, Griffin said. He also discouraged financing other purchases, saying the better way is to save until you have enough to pay cash.

LOUISVILLE—Money is "the No. 1 killer of marriages," according to Dan Griffin, keynote speaker at this year's Fall Festival of Marriage in Louisville.

"Most men and women think a whole lot more about money than about sex," he said to illustrate his point.

In addition to his three keynote addresses during the Sept. 23-25 festival, Griffin led a workshop on "Money Matters in Marriage." He identified himself as not an expert on the subject but a "battle-worn pragmatist."

"Money matters, like all matters in life, are spiritual matters," he advised.

If a couple is in financial bondage, they must make it a priority to get out of bondage, Griffin said, noting financial bondage afflicts many areas of a couple's life. "Being in financial bondage is not a good witness for

God," he said.

Griffin said a few possible indicators of financial bondage include: Buying groceries, dry cleaning or gas regularly on credit cards because you don't have the cash to pay; not being able to pay bills on time; arguing with your spouse over money; being dishonest in money matters; not being able to give God anything.

He suggested these steps to get out of financial bondage:

■ "Draw a line in the sand and say, no new debt." While it is important to stop using credit cards, Griffin said, this pledge means more than that. "It means you're not going to waste any more money."

■ Pledge to pay any unexpected money you receive toward eliminating existing debt. Griffin quoted Malachi 3:10, where God says to put him to the test on stewardship. "God will take care of you if you actually trust

him," Griffin said. "When you show God you will use extra money on old debt, he will send you extra money."

■ Cut expenses to the bone. The key to financial success is learning to live within the resources available, Griffin said. "It doesn't matter how little or how much you make, you can be in financial bondage."

■ Sell all depreciating items you can. For example, making payments on a new car is not a wise position for a person in financial bondage to be in, Griffin said. The better course would be to sell the new car, pay off the balance of the loan and use the remaining money to buy a used car with no debt.

■ Pay cash. Paying for purchases with bills and coins rather than a check or credit card provides a graphic reminder of what you're spending and what you're keeping and will cut down spending, he said.

Spouses often signal desire for affection by their actions

15 ways to affirm your spouse

LOUISVILLE—Participants in a workshop on "Affirming Each Other" during the Fall Festival of Marriage suggested these ideas for affirming a spouse:

■ Remember to say "Good job" when appropriate.

■ Show appreciation for mundane tasks that usually go unheralded.

■ Send an unexpected card or letter at a time other than a birthday, anniversary or holiday.

■ Recognize the good work your spouse does at his or her job.

■ Periodically review what you've done as a family and affirm the accomplishments.

■ Remember special occasions.

■ Demonstrate acceptance, tolerance and patience.

■ Remember to say "thank you."

■ Praise your spouse for who he or she is rather than for what he or she does.

■ Show physical affection.

■ Respect your spouse's opinion.

■ Talk.

■ Listen.

■ Share your problems rather than keeping them to yourself.

■ Give your spouse your time.

By Terri Lackey
SBC Sunday School Board

NEW ORLEANS (BP)—Want to know how to shower your spouse with tenderness and affection and do it just the way he or she wants it?

Then pay attention to how your spouse shows you love, a couple leading a marriage enrichment workshop said.

"Many of us give tenderness and affection in the way we receive it best," Marilyn Foley told a group of couples attending a Fall Festival of Marriage at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary Sept. 16-18.

Foley, a fifth-grade teacher, and her husband, Mark, an administrator at New Orleans Seminary, taught a seminar on "Tenderness and Affection" at the New Orleans festival, one of 33 being held across the nation.

In a class poll, wives said they like it best when their husbands display tenderness with hugs, patience, fo-

cusated attention, genuine concern, closeness and respect.

Husbands said their wives show affection best when they initiate sexual encounters, when they are thoughtful, considerate and use soft and gentle words and touches.

"Men are more sexual in their orientation. They like to be touched and held," Mark Foley said. "Women receive tenderness and affection in a more romantic sort of way."

"As we look at tenderness and affection, we see it really is different strokes for different folks. It doesn't matter how we intend to show tenderness, it matters how the other person receives it. If I'm not showing tenderness to Marilyn in a way that she can receive it, then it's not working," he said.

Words, tones of voice, volume, posture, gestures, eye contact and facial expressions all serve to convey or hinder expressions of tenderness, Foley continued. "Guys, if you want to

be tender and be believed, then you need to make eye contact and have an open body posture as well as say the right words."

He said facial expressions used in communication count for 55 percent of whether one is believed or not. Tone of voice rates 38 percent and actual words only 7 percent.

Husbands and wives interested in learning each others' needs when it comes to tenderness and affection should sit down alone, with no children present, make eye-to-eye contact and talk about it, he said.

The Foleys said couples should be honest enough with each other to answer questions such as, "You are most tender when you ...," "When you do that, I feel ...," "When I hurt, I appreciate it when you ..."

Among their suggestions for showing tenderness and affection to mates were saying something good about your partner to another person when your partner is present; answering with positive, loving words, no matter what; saying thank you and meaning it; being consistently courteous; choose to forgive when offended.



Husbands & wives different but can become best friends

By Terri Lackey
SBC Sunday School Board

NEW ORLEANS (BP)—Learning to understand the differences between male needs and female needs and then putting that information to good use can make the difference between a great marriage and a so-so one, two workshop leaders said.

Pat and Monte Clendenning led two separate seminars—one for men only and one for women only—at the Fall Festival of Marriage at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary Sept. 16-18.

The Clendenings, who both work at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, outlined what husbands and wives need in a friendship.

"God created males and females. He was the one who thought this up," Monte Clendenning told the women's

group. "He has made us different in our thought processes, our emotions, our ways of thinking and in our needs and drives."

Pat Clendenning told the men's group that both men and women look for acceptance, understanding, trust, mutual interests and dependability in their friendships.

Friendship between married partners is a relatively new phenomenon, he said. When he and Monte were married 37 years ago, "nobody talked about husbands and wives being friends. ... It never dawned on me that I was gaining a friend in my wife."

Both Clendennings said the characteristics men and women seek in their same-sex friends are the ones they want in their mates.

Trust, sharing, appreciation, listening, companionship, respect, communication, encouraging, consistency,

humor and flexibility are some of the characteristics needed to form long-lasting friendships, they said.

Sexual and romantic dimensions are included in that list when the friendship is between husband and wife, Pat Clendenning said. "What is really special about a friendship between a husband and wife is the intimacy factor—the closeness you feel as you both work toward the same things while being aware of your differences."

It is true that differences between men and women sometimes make it more difficult to relate to each other, Monte Clendenning said.

For example, she said women use both sides of their brain, the creative and the logical, when thinking. Yet men usually think out of the left side or the logical side.

Women are emotional and feeling,

and "men are taught they aren't supposed to cry."

"Men are goal-oriented and women are more relational. Men want to get somewhere, women want to stop and smell the roses."

Women talk much more than men, Monte Clendenning said. "We have a lot more words in our vocabulary."

"And our sex drives are entirely different. Women need a great deal of affection. That doesn't mean men don't need affection; they just don't need as much. They just need to feel secure they are loved."

"For men, a high priority is to be accepted as a sexual partner—a satisfying lover," she said.

"It is important for us to understand these are the ways God made us. One of the basic things about marriage is that we meet each others' needs."

Baptist panel outlines opposition to killing doctors

By Mark Wingfield
News Director

NASHVILLE—The killing of abortion doctors is not morally justifiable, according to a panel of theologians and ethicists convened by the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

Two Kentuckians served on the six-member panel, which released a 12-page document outlining its position Sept. 20. David Gushee, assistant professor of Christian ethics at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, was the primary author of the document. Al Mohler, Southern Seminary's president, also served on the panel.

"Pro-life Christians must act quickly and vigorously to prevent a small but vocal band of militant activists from destroying the credibility, effectiveness and witness of the mainstream Christian pro-life movement," the panel declared.

CLC Executive Director Richard Land convened the panel to draft a response to the July killing of an abortion doctor and his escort in Pensacola, Fla. Land said his intent was for

the panel to offer a reasoned explanation of why such violence is inconsistent with a Christian ethic that also opposes the killing of unborn children.

The group first outlined an argument against murder. "Human beings are not free to take the lives of others, for those lives belong to God, their Creator," they said.

Further, "Jesus personally rejected the use of violence" to accomplish his holy aims, the panel noted.

While there are a few "tragic and exceptional" circumstances in which the taking of a human life can be justified, killing a doctor to stop abortions is not one of them, the panel said.

"From our perspective, the Bible establishes a profound presumption in favor of preserving life rather than ending it. God wills that human beings should make peace with each other, should be reconciled and should treat every life with the respect its divine origin and ownership demands."

Executing criminals is a right granted to governments, never to individual citizens, the group asserted.

"A peaceful and orderly society can have no place for self-appointed executioners."

According to both U.S. law and God's law, individuals may use lethal force against others "only if this occurs as an unintended effect of the act of defending oneself or another against an assailant's unjust attack," the panel explained. "Private citizens are not allowed to intend to kill another human being and are not allowed to engage in premeditated acts of deadly force in order to accomplish what they intend."

Killing abortion doctors does not fall within the definition of civil disobedience and is not a meaningful defense of unborn life, the group concluded.

"An abortion doctor is only one of the participants in the act of elective abortion, and not the most important one. It is the woman seeking an abortion who drives the process. ... As long as abortion is legal, if we wish to save the lives of unborn children, we must influence the actions of women who are considering abortion."

The panel had harsh words for U.S. government policies that have

made abortion legal and commonplace. "The federal government has wrongfully abdicated its responsibility to protect the innocent and to establish and enforce stringent criteria for the justifiable taking of human life."

Nonetheless, Christians who oppose abortion should work through legal channels to effect change, the panel said.

Actions affirmed by the panel include supporting crisis pregnancy centers and maternity homes; supporting adoption ministries; voting, lobbying and campaigning for candidates who oppose abortion; writing and calling elected officials; and praying and witnessing near abortion clinics.

In addition to Gushee, Mohler and Land, other members of the panel were Mark Coppenger, vice president for convention affairs with the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee; Ben Mitchell, consultant on biomedical and life issues with the CLC; and Daniel Heimbach, associate professor of Christian ethics at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

NATIONAL NOTES

■ A federal court ruled Sept. 9 that a Washington, D.C. church has the right to feed the homeless. Western Presbyterian Church filed suit to retain the right to run a feeding program after the District of Columbia zoning board voted in April to ban the ministry when the congregation moves to a new location in an upscale neighborhood.

■ Bible prophecy teachers who believe that Christians will one day disappear from the earth in a "rapture" have created a video message for those who will be left behind. The video was created by Peter Lalonde of "This Week in Bible Prophecy" and also features Hal Lindsey, Dave Breese, John Ankerburg, Zola Levitt and John Walvoord.

■ The Bible continues to be America's best-selling book, even though it doesn't show up on most best-seller lists, according to pollster George Gallup Jr. "No other book comes close to having been read, re-read, owned and cherished by more people. By now, so many Bibles have been printed in this country, and continue to be published by the millions each year, that even rough estimates of the total number printed to date do not exist."

Clinton sides with church in Minnesota tithing case

WASHINGTON (ABP)—Acting on orders from President Clinton, the Justice Department has withdrawn its argument that a Minnesota church must turn over tithes given by a couple headed for bankruptcy.

The department had argued in a federal appeals court brief that under bankruptcy laws, the \$13,450 donated by Bruce and Nancy Young to Crystal Evangelical Free Church actually belongs to their creditors and should be recovered from the church.

Particularly troubling to religious groups was the Justice Department's insistence that recovering the funds from the church would not violate a new religious freedom law designed to enhance protections for religious practice.

Signed into law in November by President Clinton, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act restored a legal standard that permits government to restrict religious practice only when it

can show a compelling reason.

Senior administration officials said Clinton's "exceptional interest" in RFRA prompted the rare action of ordering the Justice Department to abandon its position in the case. The department withdrew from the case the day before it was scheduled for argument in the 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

Clinton's action is consistent with his record of support of RFRA, said senior administration officials, who noted that the president's remarks when he signed the bill were more than routine.

Top officials said the president's view is reflected in his statement at the signing that "government should be held to a very high level of proof before it interferes with someone's free exercise of religion."

Religious organizations that had challenged the department's stance quickly praised the reversal.

"President Clinton has proven that he is sincerely committed to meaningful legal protection for religious exercise," said Steve McFarland, director of the Christian Legal Society's Center for Law and Religious Freedom. "The administration has told government lawyers nationwide that the Religious Freedom Restoration Act is not a toothless tiger."

The Christian Legal Society, along with other religious groups such as the Baptist Joint Committee and the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, had filed a friend-of-the-court brief siding with the church. In addition, attorneys for those organizations and three prominent law school professors met with high administration officials in June to discuss application of RFRA.

BJC General Counsel Brent Walker commended the administration for "doing the right thing."

"It takes courage to admit a mis-

take and reverse a legal argument," Walker said. "This is further proof that President Clinton cares deeply about the free exercise of religion and spiritual values."

Michael Whitehead, general counsel for the Christian Life Commission, praised Clinton for "calling off Janet Reno's assault against RFRA" but added he had asked the president to go further.

"More than just stopping Ms. Reno's attacks, the president should have told Justice to stay in the case and actively support RFRA," Whitehead said.

While the Justice Department is no longer fighting against RFRA, "they don't deserve the medal of honor just for being AWOL at the battle for religious freedom," Whitehead said. "RFRA is under attack, and we hope the White House will actively engage the battle to rescue and revive RFRA."

EEOC withdraws guidelines on religious discrimination

WASHINGTON—The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has withdrawn proposed guidelines on workplace harassment in response to congressional orders and widespread public protest.

Virtually every religious and civil liberties group, including the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission and the Baptist Joint Committee, criticized the guidelines as open to misinterpretation. Some, fearing the guidelines would lead to "religion-free" workplaces, asked the EEOC to drop religion from the guidelines; others urged EEOC to keep religion in the guidelines but clarify them to ensure legitimate religious expression is not stifled.

The EEOC withdrew the guidelines entirely Sept. 19 because it be-

came apparent the objective for drafting them had not been accomplished, an EEOC spokesperson said. The objective, she continued, was to clarify what the Civil Rights Act of 1964 said about workplace harassment.

The EEOC received more than 100,000 comments about the proposed guidelines in four months' time, the largest volume of response in the agency's history.

The public protest and overwhelming Senate opposition "helped the EEOC to decide that these one-size-fits-all harassment guidelines were not a very good idea—at least not right now, just before election time," said Michael Whitehead, general counsel of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

"But there's always next year. The

EEOC will be back, no doubt, with new proposed guidelines. Our view is that (the 1964 Civil Rights Act) already protects employees from religious discrimination in the workplace, and we would rather not invite the EEOC to enumerate what religious speech is acceptable or unacceptable to Caesar."

The CLC and other organizations charged the inclusion of religion in the proposed rules would result in a ban on religious expression on the job, largely because of employers' fear of lawsuits.

The guidelines—which also covered race, color, gender, national origin, age and disability—could have resulted in harassment charges against employees or employers for witnessing to fellow workers or sub-

ordinates, or for displaying religious art or literature, the CLC warned.

Other religious liberty groups—such as the Baptist Joint Committee, the National Council of Churches and Americans United for Separation of Church and State—called for retention of religion in the guidelines but said revisions should be made by the EEOC to protect religious expression.

But Brent Walker, general counsel of the Baptist Joint Committee, said it was probably best for the EEOC to withdraw the guidelines entirely. "The worst thing would have been to withdraw only religion and move forward with the rest of the guidelines. Religion would have been left at the station as the train departed."

Compiled from Baptist Press and Associated Baptist Press

3 seminary presidents view Abstract differently

How

CONCRETE
is the
ABSTRACT?

By Marv Knox
Editor

LOUISVILLE—Historic changes at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary turn on a new understanding of the seminary's theological statement, according to the presidents who have led the school during the past 43 years.

The Abstract of Principles has been Southern Seminary's confession of faith since its founding in 1859. Using the Abstract as a theological fence around the seminary's interpretation of truth, the president can move for the dismissal of faculty he believes step out of bounds.

That's important in the current Southern Baptist Convention context. New President Al Mohler was installed last year by trustees hand-picked to take the SBC's oldest seminary in a more conservative direction. Southern Baptists who elected those trustees have charged the seminary with liberalism and declared it must be turned to the right.

Mohler should have an easier time than his predecessors in removing faculty, due to his understanding of the purpose and use of the Abstract.

Mohler believes the Abstract is a clear and rigid statement of theological truth that should be followed to the letter. His predecessors during the previous four decades, Duke McCall (1951-82) and Roy Honeycutt (1982-93), also believe it is straightforward, but they view its enforcement more flexibly.

In a recent series of interviews, the presidents agreed the Abstract exists to define the seminary's theological boundaries and to articulate them to Southern Baptists.

"The Abstract stands as a public statement of what is to be taught," noted Mohler. It is addressed to the faculty, providing the parameters for their teaching; to the students, providing expectations of what is to be taught; and to the churches, explaining those expectations, he said.

"The Abstract provides the outer boundaries for those of us who work at the seminary," said McCall. "But it also provides protection for us" by safeguarding faculty and administrators from unwarranted attack.

Numerous seminary faculty have said they don't feel protected in the wake of the forced resignation of Molly Marshall, an associate professor of theology who has been accused of liberalism and exonerated for much of the past decade. Mohler accused her of teaching outside the Abstract and told her to resign or he would initiate proceedings for removal.

Mohler's aggressive enforcement of a rigid Abstract sets his administration apart from McCall's and Honeycutt's.

The three agreed the president's first responsibility is to investigate charges of aberrant teaching. From there, McCall and Honeycutt parted company with their young successor.

"Should the issue represent a clear and consequential violation of the Abstract, the administration has no choice but to act," Mohler insisted.

"Sometimes the president's job is



Al Mohler

"I believe my interpretation of the Abstract is that of the founders themselves."

to protect a faculty member who is out of bounds long enough to get back in bounds or prove we need to move the boundary," McCall countered. "You would not clobber him as soon as he put his toe over the line, but act only when he demonstrated he was out and intended to stay out."

Furthermore, the Baptist principle of soul freedom dictates the president should give the faculty member some say in the decision, he added.

"I not only used my interpretation, but would look at the interpretation given by a faculty member who could say, 'I teach in accordance with the Abstract,'" he said. "Perhaps he might not teach precisely as I would have done. But I had to take his view into account."

As an example, McCall cited long conversations he had with the late theology professor Dale Moody, often accused of non-Abstract views on apostasy, or the ability to lose one's salvation.

Moody could "beat me over the head with his old Greek New Testament," citing numerous Scripture passages that supported Moody's view and convinced him he taught within the boundaries of the Abstract, McCall said.

McCall recalled a long winter meeting that ended with him telling Moody: "Here's a copy of the Abstract, and if you're going to teach this fall, I want you to sign it and acknowledge you are teaching within the Abstract. I really read you as over the border, but if you read yourself as within the border, then I will abide by that."

That approach is important because of the nature of academic freedom and the search for truth, McCall added.

"I saw academic freedom as the faculty not 'having the truth,' but exploring and 'seeking the truth,'" he said. "A professor might test whether a view is tenable or not, and the only way he can test it is to try it himself. He then may say, 'No, I can't live with that,' and he will give his students better guidance than he would if he had never tested it."

Honeycutt concurred: "You can't

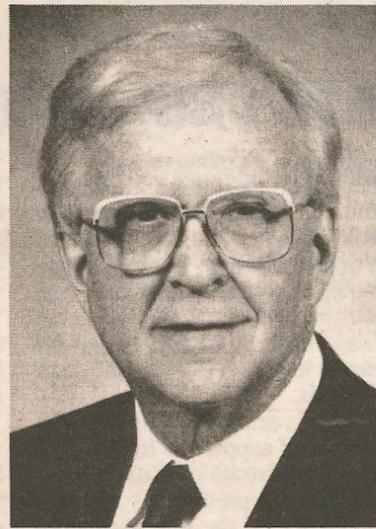
have a high-quality, low-risk faculty. That's an oxymoron of the first order.

"Some people assume we have all the truth nailed down. I don't know why they think a student should come (to seminary) except to learn to become a 'practitioner' in the worst sense of the word."

But under Mohler's administration, a professor does not have the right to disagree with the president and declare himself or herself within the boundaries of the Abstract.

If the president and a professor disagree, "one of us is right, and one of us is wrong," Mohler said. "The Abstract is not a diffuse and confusing document. I do not believe interpretation of the Abstract has been a problem. But the question is whether this institution will require professors to stand clearly within the meaning of the words."

Consequently, if the president "determines there is a violation of the Abstract, ... he has no choice but to forward that to the board of trustees,"



Roy Honeycutt

"To presume one can go back 130-plus years and read the minds of Boyce and Manly is claiming omniscience reserved for God."

who can vote to remove the professor.

Although Mohler insisted he is not "judge, jury and executioner," he admitted that if he charged a professor with violating the Abstract, the trustees probably would find the professor guilty.

"It is fair to say there is a remarkable consensus between the president and trustees on both the meaning and role of the Abstract," he said. "But that is a consensus that should exist."

However, Honeycutt said that's an assumption not borne out by history. "The process never assumed that kind of board" which would walk in lockstep with a president, he said. "There's never been a formal interpretation of the Abstract."

Nor should the Abstract be locked into a rigid, formal interpretation, he added.

"The Abstract is written in such a way that it is a living document," he said. Like all historic documents, it is

shaped by the spirit of the times, subject to new understandings when new issues in succeeding periods put pressures on the old interpretations, he explained.

For example, the Abstract avoids comment on issues related to the Landmark Controversy, which raged at the time it was written, he said. And although the Abstract closely follows the Philadelphia Confession, its article on the Scriptures substitutes "authority" for "infallible" as a description of the Bible's nature.

"These beg the question, 'Why?'" Honeycutt said, answering, "It was written—and documented in the biographies of (seminary founders) James Boyce and John Broadus—to hold diverse churches together, not push them apart."

Mohler disputes that claim, saying that describes the purpose of the SBC's Baptist Faith and Message statement, but not the seminary's Abstract.

The Baptist Faith and Message was indeed designed to provide a rallying point for Southern Baptists, he said, but the Abstract was written to provide clear guidelines for faculty teaching.

He quotes Boyce, the first seminary president: "No difference, however slight, no peculiar sentiments, however speculative, is here allowable. His agreement with the standard should be exact."

Backed by the seminary's board of trustees, Mohler's understanding of the purpose of the Abstract makes his interpretation of its contents paramount: Faculty literally will stay or leave according to that interpretation.

"I certainly do not believe the founders of this institution believed the Abstract was an open door to re-interpretation," he charged. "I believe my interpretation of the Abstract is that of the founders themselves."

That's preposterous, contended Honeycutt. "To presume one can go back 130-plus years and read the minds of Boyce and (another founder, Basil) Manly is claiming omniscience reserved for God."



Duke McCall

"Sometimes the president's job is to protect a faculty member who is out of bounds long enough to get back in bounds."

ISSUES

Text of Southern Seminary's Abstract of Principles

■ **The Scriptures.** The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God, and are the only sufficient, certain and authoritative rule of all saving knowledge, faith and obedience.

■ **God.** There is but one God, the Maker, Preserver and Ruler of all things, having in and of Himself, all perfections, and being infinite in them all; and to Him all creatures owe the highest love, reverence and obedience.

■ **The Trinity.** God is revealed to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit each with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence or being.

■ **Providence.** God from eternity, decrees or permits all things that come to pass, and perpetually upholds, directs and governs all creatures and all events; yet so as not in any wise to be the author or approver of sin nor to destroy the free will and responsibility of intelligent creatures.

■ **Election.** Election is God's eternal choice of some persons unto everlasting life—not because of foreseen merit in them, but of His mere mercy in Christ—in consequence of which choice they are called, justified and glorified.

■ **The fall of man.** God originally created man in His own image, and free from sin; but, through the temptation of Satan, he transgressed the command of God, and fell from his

original holiness and righteousness; whereby his posterity inherits a nature corrupt and wholly opposed to God and His law, are under condemnation, and as soon as they are capable of moral action, become actual transgressors.

■ **The Mediator.** Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, is the divinely appointed mediator between God and man. Having taken upon Himself human nature, yet without sin, He perfectly fulfilled the law, suffered and died upon the cross for the salvation of sinners. He was buried, and rose again the third day, and ascended to His Father, at whose right hand He ever liveth to make intercession for His people. He is the only Mediator, the Prophet, Priest and King of the Church, and Sovereign of the Universe.

■ **Regeneration.** Regeneration is a change of heart, wrought by the Holy Spirit, who quickeneth the dead in trespasses and sins enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the Word of God, and renewing their whole nature, so that they love and practice holiness. It is a work of God's free and special grace alone.

■ **Repentance.** Repentance is an evangelical grace, wherein a person being, by the Holy Spirit, made sensible of the manifold evil of his sin, humbleth himself for it, with godly sorrow, detestation of it, and self-abhorrence, with a purpose and endeavor to walk before God so as to please

Him in all things.

■ **Faith.** Saving faith is the belief, on God's authority, of whatsoever is revealed in His Word concerning Christ, accepting and resting upon Him alone for justification and eternal life. It is wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit, and is accompanied by all other saving graces, and leads to a life of holiness.

■ **Justification.** Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal of sinners, who believe in Christ, from all sin, through the satisfaction that Christ has made; not for anything wrought in them or done by them; but on account of the obedience and satisfaction of Christ, they receiving and resting on Him and His righteousness by faith.

■ **Sanctification.** Those who have been regenerated are also sanctified, by God's Word and Spirit dwelling in them. This sanctification is progressive through the supply of Divine strength, which all saints seek to obtain, pressing after a heavenly life in cordial obedience to all Christ's commands.

■ **Perseverance of the saints.** Those whom God hath accepted in the Beloved, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere to the end; and though they may fall, through neglect and temptation, into sin, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, bring

reproach on the Church, and temporal judgments on themselves, yet they shall be renewed again unto repentance, and be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

■ **The Church.** The Lord Jesus is the Head of the Church, which is composed of all His true disciples, and in Him is invested supremely all power for its government. According to His commandment, Christians are to associate themselves into particular societies or churches; and to each of these churches He hath given needful authority for administering that order, discipline and worship which He hath appointed. The regular officers of a Church are Bishops or Elders, and Deacons.

■ **Baptism.** Baptism is an ordinance of the Lord Jesus, obligatory upon every believer, wherein he is immersed in water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, as a sign of his fellowship with the death and resurrection of Christ, of remission of sins, and of his giving himself up to God, to live and walk in newness of life. It is a prerequisite to church fellowship, and to participation in the Lord's Supper.

■ **The Lord's Supper.** The Lord's Supper is an ordinance of Jesus Christ, to be administered with the elements of bread and wine, and to be observed by His churches till the end of the world. It is in no sense a sacrifice, but is designed to commemorate His death, to confirm the faith and other graces of Christians, and to be a bond, pledge and renewal of their communion with Him, and of their church fellowship.

■ **The Lord's Day.** The Lord's Day is a Christian institution for regular observance, and should be employed in exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private, resting from worldly employments and amusements, works of necessity and mercy only excepted.

■ **Liberty of Conscience.** God alone is Lord of the conscience; and He hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men, which are in anything contrary to His Word, or not contained in it. Civil magistrates being ordained of God, subjection in all lawful things commanded by them ought to be yielded by us in the Lord, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

■ **The Resurrection.** The bodies of men after death return to dust, but their spirits return immediately to God—the righteous to rest with Him; the wicked, to be reserved under darkness to the judgment. At the last day, the bodies of all the dead, both just and unjust, will be raised.

■ **The Judgment.** God hath appointed a day, wherein He will judge the world by Jesus Christ, when every one shall receive according to his deeds: the wicked shall go into everlasting punishment; the righteous, into everlasting life.

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BAPTISTS

SBC officials studying trend toward church schools

An estimated 541 Southern Baptist churches operate Christian schools that serve 132,000, take in \$300 million annually and spend \$15 million annually purchasing curriculum.

By Mark Wingfield
News Director

NASHVILLE—School bells and church bells are ringing together in an increasing number of Southern Baptist congregations, but denominational officials aren't quite sure what to do about it.

This fall, an estimated 541 Southern Baptist churches opened their doors to 132,000 students in church-sponsored schools nationwide, according to projections of the Southern Baptist Association of Christian Schools. These Southern Baptist Christian schools are projected to take in \$300 million this year and spend \$15 million purchasing curriculum.

In the past 18 years, the number of Southern Baptist churches sponsoring schools is believed to have increased 57 percent, although precise data is not available.

This mirrors a national trend among Protestant churches, particularly among theologically and politically conservative congregations. The number of Christian schools nationwide is increasing at a rate of about 5 percent per year, according to Joel Belz, publisher of God's World Publications, a provider of periodical and curriculum materials for Protestant-

related schools.

The increase has been fueled by conservative Christians' concern about problems in public schools and the absence of religious teaching there. A Gallup poll taken earlier this year found that the number of Americans who believe their local schools have gotten worse has doubled in the last eight years. This year, 37 percent of Americans said they believe their public schools have declined.

Texas Baptists lead the SBC in number of churches sponsoring schools, with an estimated 184 schools. Florida has the second-largest number of SBC church-sponsored schools, an estimated 78.

Other leading states are Alabama, 32; Tennessee, 25; Georgia, 25; North Carolina, 17; Virginia, 16; Oklahoma, 13; Arkansas, 11; and Kentucky, 11.

This grass-roots movement burst onto the Southern Baptist Convention agenda last summer, when David Baker of Belton, Mo., made a motion at the SBC annual meeting to establish a standing committee of the SBC to relate to Christian schools and home schoolers.

Baker is pastor of Heartland Baptist Tabernacle in Belton, a Southern Baptist church which operates a Christian school.

Baker's motion was referred to the SBC Executive Committee, which took up the issue during its Sept. 19-20 meeting in Nashville. The motion was discussed at length in the Executive Committee's administrative subcommittee. A recurring theme in the meeting was reluctance to establish a standing committee—as Baker's motion requests—combined with a desire to do something to unify the very loose-knit association between SBC churches with schools.

Baker addressed the group at length and provided several handouts. In a cover letter to the committee, he said, "If we fail to develop a comprehensive response to church-sponsored schools in our convention, we can be assured that Southern Baptists will play only a minor role in a major movement of God. A revolution of the way we do developmental education in this country is taking place right now."

Baker's supporting documents drew largely upon a 1993 report from the SBC's Inter-Agency Council, composed of the heads of all SBC agencies and institutions. That report did not call for establishing a standing committee of the SBC, but did call for various SBC agencies to do more to support church-sponsored schools.

The complexity of the situation is illustrated by the fact the Inter-Agency Council report suggested assigning church-school tasks to 10 SBC agencies and commissions.

The scope of what Christian schools are about does not fit neatly into any one existing SBC agency.

The Sunday School Board currently has the program assignment of weekday education, which could include everything from day cares to high schools. Despite that, board officials have said it would take a multi-million dollar commitment and significant restructuring for the board to be all that church-school supporters desire. The board's primary focus is on publishing Sunday school curriculum, not Christian school curriculum.

But Christian school advocates counter they want to be loyal Southern Baptists and would rather give their \$15 million for annual curriculum purchases to an SBC agency than to the independent organizations they now use.

The quandary of how the SBC will address this issue likely will not be resolved soon. The Executive Committee has asked for more information from the Sunday School Board and won't take up the issue again until February.

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"FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS"

Dr. R. Albert Mohler, Jr., Ninth President

We, the undersigned, affirm the president of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Dr. R. Albert Mohler, Jr. We commend Dr. Mohler for his strong, non-compromising, visionary leadership. We are deeply grateful to God for his interpretation and defense of the Abstract of Principles as intended by the founding fathers of this world-renowned institution. In exercising the responsibilities of his office, Dr. Mohler has manifested both courage and integrity in a Christ-like manner. We commend Dr. Mohler for the serious manner in which he views the accountability

of his office to grass-roots Southern Baptists. In fulfilling these responsibilities, difficult decisions must be made. Hence, conflict is inevitable. Yet, Dr. Mohler displays courage to look beyond the conflict at the long-term results. We pledge our love and prayer support for Dr. Mohler, Mary and their children as he leads The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary into the twenty-first century. We the undersigned, are convinced that "...thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this!" Esther 4:14

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							Melvin Elam

(Cost of publication and time restraints eliminated scores of people who requested their names be added to this list.)

Poll finds support for & against religious right's campaigns

WASHINGTON (RNS)—American voters may be concerned about moral values, but they are not necessarily drawn to the specific agenda of activist religious conservatives, a liberal policy group said.

"Even though many Americans might agree with the religious right's point of departure concerning the need to strengthen moral values, large majorities disagree with the movement's conclusions on specific issues," said Geoffrey Garin of Peter D. Hart Research Associates.

Garin made his comments at a news conference sponsored by People For the American Way.

Both liberals and conservatives could take comfort in the poll, which surveyed 1,002 voters.

For example, 74 percent of those polled said they would support a political candidate who "put top priority on returning to traditional moral values," the rhetorical touchstone of religious conservatives. And by 51 percent to 34 percent, those polled said that the most serious problems in society stem mainly from a decline in moral values, rather than from economic and financial pressures on the family, another central argument of religious conservatives.

But on the other hand, 80 percent said people in government "should not let their private religious views be the most important consideration in public policy decisions." And 89 percent said political leaders should not question the religious faith of people with whom they disagree.

School prayer provides a classic case of Americans' ability to make fine distinctions, according to the survey. Americans support laws to allow organized prayer in public schools, 53 percent to 22 percent.

But when those same supporters are asked about the consequences of that policy—having school board officials or administrators involved in selecting or approving prayers to be used—52 percent oppose and 35 percent support praying.

Ed Young joins Robertson in voter drive

By Mark Wingfield
News Director

A former president of the Southern Baptist Convention has joined televangelist Pat Robertson in urging churches to help get out the vote in next month's elections.

A recent letter to church leaders from Robertson's Christian Coalition is signed by Robertson; Ed Young, pastor of Second Baptist Church in Houston and immediate past president of the SBC; and James Kennedy, president of Coral Ridge Ministries in Florida.

Young's signature line identifies him as "Former President, Southern Baptist Convention."

The letter urges church leaders to request two things: materials to help register Christian voters and copies of the Christian Coalition's "Voter Guides."

"On November 8th, the entire U.S. House of Representatives, one-third of the U.S. Senate and most governors must face the voters," the letter explains. "These elections will have a profound impact on the future course of our nation."

The letter describes plans for a "massive Christian voter registration and education effort."

The letter also pledges that the Christian Coalition materials do not endorse any candidate and are in compliance with Internal Revenue Service guidelines for non-profit organizations.

A sample "Voter Guide" enclosed with the mailing shows a comparison between "Candidate A" and "Candidate B" in a particular race, noting whether each candidate "supports" or "opposes" certain issues.

Issues included in the surveys are "increased federal income taxes," "increased state income taxes," "balanced budget amendment," "abortion on demand," "taxpayer funding for abortions," "outcome-based education," "parental choice in education (vouchers)," "voluntary prayer in public schools," "term limits for Congress," "homosexuals in the military," "banning ownership of legal firearms" and "riverboat casino gambling."

A press spokeswoman at Christian Coalition's national headquarters in Chesapeake, Va., could not say how many copies of the letter with Young's signature had been mailed or whether any SBC figures had signed similar letters.

Earlier this fall, the Christian Coalition mailed out a reported 5 million large packets titled "Official 1994 National Referendum on the Clinton Presidency." These packets included a survey for "eligible Christian voters" to express their opinions on 17 questions.

Among questions on this survey: "Would you be more likely or less likely to vote for a politician who supported President Clinton's \$273 billion in spending increases?" and "Would you be more or less likely to

vote for a politician who supported President Clinton's proposal to use your tax money to pay for abortions?"

The material says the Christian Coalition has a goal of distributing 40 million "Congressional Scorecards" before the November elections.

These scorecards are an enlarged version of the "Voter Guides" mentioned in Young's letter.

The "Congressional Scorecards" report the voting record of all U.S. senators and representatives on 14 issues described in such terms as "Clinton Tax-and-Spend Budget Plan" and "Promoting Homosexuality to School Children."

Names of Republican congressmen are listed in all capital letters, while names of Democratic or independent congressmen are not.

Yet the scorecard also includes this disclaimer: "Christian Coalition does not advocate the election or defeat of any candidate and does not endorse any political party."

In his cover letter accompanying the survey packet, Robertson says too many elected officials talk about Christian values at home but go to Washington and support "the Clinton Administration's radical social agenda."

"This Scorecard will give America's Christian voters the facts they need to distinguish between good and misguided congressmen," Robertson explains.

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KENTUCKY BAPTIST HOMES FOR CHILDREN

'God, it hurts so bad!'

By Jim Hawkins, chaplain
Western Baptist Hospital, Paducah

"Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, 'You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself'" (Matthew 27:39).

The hospital is filled with things that any normal, rational human being wants to avoid—pain, suffering and death, for example. Even the happy event of birth is accomplished with great pain. When my 10-year-old daughter was born, I was fortunate to be there. As my wife struggled and suffered in great pain, I tried to be supportive. At one point she really wanted to push, but the doctor said it was too soon and that she needed to relax. I tried to coach her to breathe and relax. With fire in her eyes, she looked up at me and said, "Shut up! You breathe. I've got to push ...!"

Few of us like pain, whether physical, mental, emotional or spiritual. We will do anything to avoid it. Nevertheless, we often find ourselves in situations that cause pain. And short of taking drugs or losing touch with reality, we cannot make the pain go away. At those times we feel powerless. But we know that the all powerful God we worship does not have this limitation. Surely Jesus

could have come down from the cross or could have died a painless death on the cross. Certainly that would prove to all that he is God. So why did he choose to stay in pain?

I believe Jesus did not come down from the cross because of the very fact that he was human. We all know that to live means to experience pain from time to time.

But what we do not always seem to remember is that by the grace and presence of God we and those around us can overcome and grow.

The hope and mission of the five hospitals that form Baptist Healthcare System is to be a constructive part of your life and growth.

My wife tells me that she is more mature than I, and knows more about life than I because she has experienced the pain of childbirth. I am sure she is right. Because she was willing to experience the pain of pregnancy and then childbirth and because God gave her the grace to persevere, both of our lives are richer. And because Christ stayed on the cross, all of our lives are richer.

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.

**BAPTIST
HEALTHCARE
FOUNDATION**

Christian Coalition touts Jews & Christians

WASHINGTON (RNS)—The Christian Coalition recently underscored its growing effort to bring a broad spectrum of religious conservatives under its ideological umbrella.

In the opening sessions of the group's Sept. 16-18 annual conference in Washington, the podium was dominated by Jewish and Catholic speakers, including media critic Michael Medved, Orthodox rabbi Daniel Lapin, and Roman Catholic writers Michael Novak and Richard John Neuhaus.

"We share basic values, and those values are far more important than our differences," said Medved, the New York Post's chief film critic and co-host of PBS' "Sneak Previews."

The lineup of Jewish speakers allowed the coalition, formed five years ago by Christian broadcaster Pat Robertson, to strike back at the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, a mainstream Jewish advocacy group. The ADL has criticized the Coalition—and the Christian right in general—for seeking to lower church-state barriers and pursuing notions of an "exclusivist" Christian nation.

Medved invoked the Holocaust when he said the attacks against the coalition sounded particularly alarming to "Jewish ears."

"Substitute Christian Coalition for international Jewry or the Jewish conspiracy and you have the kind of lines that anti-Semites were using 50 years ago," he said.

Daniel Lapin, a Seattle-based rabbi who leads Toward Tradition, in-

voked the spectre of "militant secularism" as the common enemy, adding that "we are the making of their worst nightmare—Jews and Christians unified in doing their duty in one spontaneous impulse."

Boston Herald columnist and editorial writer Don Feder said the "cultural elite" portrays the religious right as being entirely white and evangelical Protestant. But he noted his Jewishness and the participation of blacks, Hispanics and Catholics in the convention.

The coalition's pursuit of religious diversity is not new, but it has been growing. In an article last year in the "Christian America" newspaper, Christian Coalition Executive Director Ralph Reed wrote: "Evangelicals and their Roman Catholic allies are concerned about the same issues as the broader electorate, but with a pro-family twist. Their primary interest is not to legislate against the sins of others, but to protect the health, welfare and financial security of their families."

At the Sept. 16 opening session—dubbed "Road to Victory '94"—Robertson also sought to sound a note of unity, telling the group there is a "groundswell for moral change" in America.

"The nation is saying we're right," Robertson declared. "The (coalition's) message is finally getting through. This is a mighty army, and it's an army that does not threaten anything but the doctrinaire liberals and the radical leftists."

Robertson's brief remarks brought the 3,500 people in the audience to their feet.

Much of the opening session's agenda had the hallmarks of a political convention—red, white and blue bunting on the stage, enthusiastic partisans in the seats, and bitter denunciations of the opposition, in this case the administration of President Bill Clinton.

The criticism aimed at Surgeon General Joycelyn Elders was especially vociferous, eliciting loud boos from the standing-room-only audience in the main ballroom of the Washington Hilton Hotel. Elders' views on teenage pregnancy, homosexuality and drugs have come to symbolize everything the coalition's constituency finds wrong with the nation.

When Reed called on Clinton to fire Elders, the crowd rose to its feet in the longest and loudest ovation of the morning.

Company aims high from its Baptist roots

Continued from page 1

Bennett, a Sunday school outreach director at Campbellsville Baptist Church, said the work he and his staff do is an art.

"We often create our own style and our own molds," he said. "We also pay close attention to historical design when we are required to do a restoration project. The 70 who work with us are truly skilled craftsmen and artisans. They take great pains in creating a piece that will stand the test of time."

Everything the company sells is produced to order, he said. Normal production time is three months, but some projects can take up to one year.

Bennett credits his success to God and Campbellsville College. "I feel the Lord has directed my path in so many ways," he said. "I want him, not me, to have all the praise for what I have been given in life."

And Campbellsville College, which he now serves as a trustee, "had faith in me years ago," he noted. "It gave me opportunities to prepare for life."

Alliance calls congregations to nurture electoral process

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Religious congregations need to drop their traditional aloofness from politics and become more engaged in nurturing the electoral process, according to panelists at a symposium on religion and politics held in Washington.

"The religious community needs to take more seriously its responsibility to prepare people for politics," said Alan Geyer, a political ethicist at Wesley Theological Seminary.

"It has been too much the habit in the religious community to believe that it is morally preferable to be independent" rather than politically committed, Geyer said. The result, he added, is that many people in public service "have the experience of enduring a lot of scorn and abuse."

Geyer made his comments during a panel discussion sponsored by the Interfaith Alliance, an organization of national religious leaders formed to promote religious involvement in public life and to combat what it believes are excesses by some conservative, religion-based political groups.

The panel, which included Protestant, Roman Catholic and Jewish religious officials and political activists, was the first public event by the Alliance since its appearance on the political scene in July. The symposium was timed to coincide with the autumn election season and a convention of the Christian Coalition, founded by television evangelist Pat Robertson.

While some of the Alliance panelists took swipes at the Coalition, the session's emphasis was on how religious issues and language can be a proper part of the nation's political debates. Special attention was focused on the need to avoid religious bigotry and intolerance.

"Tolerance has always been the sauce of the American system," said Rep. Jim Leach, R-Iowa, "but commitment is the meat."

Leach is founder and chairman of the Republican Mainstream Committee, which has sought to rally moderate members of the GOP in the sometimes bitter war between Christian conservatives and moderates.

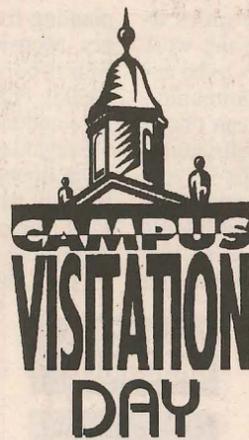
Leach stressed the importance of hearing the perspective of religious conservatives. "Their views have at times been left out in American society," he said.

Leon Hooper, senior research fellow at the Woodstock Theological Center of Georgetown University, called for more rather than less theological language in the nation's public policy debates.

Even so, he said, religious conservatives need to be challenged on the very basis of the theology they bring to political debate.

"People need to speak out in public in theological terms," Hooper said.

Added Ann Lewis, a longtime political consultant and liberal Democratic activist: "This is not a debate between people of religion and irreligion, but between people of faith with different religions."



The faculty, staff, and students of Cumberland College invite all high school seniors and their parents to this year's first campus visitation day.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 29, 1994

For further information contact:

Cumberland College

Office of Admissions

816 Walnut Street

Williamsburg, KY 40769

or call 1-800-343-1609



RICK STANLEY

RICK STANLEY, step-brother to the late **ELVIS PRESLEY**, is a dynamic **PREACHER/EVANGELIST** who brings first-hand knowledge of the devastation of drugs and alcohol along with

the **GOOD NEWS** of his miraculous deliverance and life-changing experience with **JESUS CHRIST**.

Rick will be preaching a **REVIVAL** crusade

OCT. 9-12, 1994

at **CLOVERLEAF BAPTIST CHURCH**

4401 Manslick Rd.

Sun. 10:45 a.m. & 7:00 p.m., Mon.-Wed. 7:00 p.m.

367-0218

The general public is invited to attend.

PEOPLE

KENTUCKY KERNELS

Americans' belief in absolute truth continues to remain low. The latest Barna Research Group poll of American adults found 71 percent of respondents agreed with this statement: "When it comes to morals and ethics, people must decide for themselves what is right and wrong. There are no absolute standards that apply to everybody in all situations." Only 24 percent disagreed with the statement, and 5 percent weren't sure what they believed.

Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Ann Tatum

■ **BOWLING GREEN**—Burton Memorial Church ordained **George Smith** to the deacon ministry.

■ **CORBIN**—First Church honored **John Dunaway** Aug. 28 for 25 years as pastor there. The day of celebration included a sermon by David Nelson, former pastor of First Church in Owensboro, a luncheon and presentation of several gifts. The church gave Dunaway extra vacation time and a grandfather clock, named the family life center in his honor and redecorated his office. Mrs. Dunaway was presented a silver tray.

■ **CYNTHIANA**—Cynthiana Church called **Wayne Spivey** as education/music minister. He began his new ministry Sept. 19.

■ **HAWESVILLE**—New Life Church called Interim Pastor **Eugene O'Bryan** as pastor. He was ordained to the gospel ministry at Walnut Memorial Church in Owensboro Sept. 18.

■ **LEWISBURG, Tenn.**—**Phillip Rosenbaum**, former director of missions in Freedom Association, was honored by Parkview Church, where he was pastor in the 1970s. A fellowship hall is named in his honor.

■ **LONDON**—Hart Church ordained **Doug Slone** as a deacon.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—**Ronald Loughry** of Baltimore, Md., has been elected coordinator of the Hunger and Racial Justice Center of the Kentuckiana Interfaith Community. Loughry also

teaches as adjunct faculty at the University of Louisville and Jefferson Community College and coordinates the activities of United Crescent Hill Ministries' Senior Adult Center. He is a graduate of Southern Seminary.

Ashby Lane Church will feature noted gospel singer **Squire Parsons** in concert Nov. 19 at 7 p.m. Reservations are necessary. Call Betty Mauldin (502) 935-6272 for more information.

Beechwood Church will host a concert with gospel singer **Gary Griesser** Oct. 8 at 7 p.m. He also will participate in the Oct. 9 service at 10:45 a.m. Call (502) 895-3439 for information.

■ **OWENSBORO**—Buena Vista Church called **Donald Eskew** of Mauleton, Ga., as pastor. He began his new ministry Oct. 2.

MISSIONARY UPDATE

■ **James and Rebecca Courson**, missionaries to Taiwan, are in the states at 200 Hutchins Dr., Wilmore, Ky. 40390.

■ **Paul and Diane Davidson**, missionaries to Nigeria, are on the field. Mailing address is c/o Baptist Theological Seminary, Box 30, Ogbomoso, Oyo State, Nigeria. She is from Louisville.

■ **Larry and Marie Harris**, missionaries to Hong Kong, are on the field at 169 Boundary St., Kowloon, Hong Kong. Both lived in Bellevue.

■ **Wayne and Barbara Myers**, missionaries to Swaziland, are on the field. Mailing address is P.O. Box 2726, Mbabane, Swaziland. Both are natives of Kentucky.

■ **David and Laura Spiegel**, missionaries to Brazil, are on the field at R. Barbosa da Cunha, 138, 13073-320 Campinas, SP, Brazil. She lived in Louisville.

CLASSIFIED ADS

NEEDED: Full-time youth minister. Please send resumé to: Youth Committee, First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 756, Prestonsburg, KY 41653.

NEEDED: Experienced pastor for church with exciting, innovative ministry in established yet growing area. Fully aligned with CBF. Send resumé to Ridgewood Baptist Church, 6209 Greenwood Rd., Louisville, KY 40258.

COUNSELING: Do you know someone who wants individual, marital or family counseling in the Spanish language? If so, please refer them to the Counseling Ministry of Misión Latino-Americana at St. Matthews Baptist Church, (502) 894-8734.

NEEDED: Part-time minister of music. Please send resumé to: Music Committee, First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 756, Prestonsburg, KY 41653.

NEEDED: First Baptist Church in Somerset is receiving resúmes for the position of youth minister. If interested, mail to FBC, P.O. Box 797, Somerset, KY 42502.

SEEKING: Full-time minister with youth and young adults. Inclusive, social ministry church. Write or call for copy of job description to Personnel Committee, Trinity Baptist Church, 1675 Strader Dr., Lexington, KY 40505, (606) 254-6795.

SEEKING: Pastoral minister. Send resumé to: Columbia Baptist Church, 201 Greensburg St., Columbia, KY 42728.

MISSIONS: Youth groups needed in Atlanta, Orlando, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Boston, Toronto and Buffalo for 1995 summer mission projects. We provide meals, lodging, assignment. For more information, costs, call Dr. Harry Fowler, Youth on Mission, Box 2095, Rocky Mount, NC 27802. (919) 985-4499.

AVAILABLE: Experienced Baptist minister (B.Th., M.Div.) for supply, revivals, Bible conferences, interim. Also available for pastorate in eastern Kentucky. Contact Mike York, 300 Clear Creek Rd., Pineville, KY 40977 (606) 337-9792.

WANTED: All trades needed for remodeling. Steady work, competitive pay, full benefits available. Insured subcontractors also needed. Call (502) 267-4222.

NEEDED: Church custodian, 40 hours/week, with benefits. Contact Highland Baptist Church, Louisville, (502) 451-3735.

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

Education for time and eternity

Oneida Baptist Institute does not advertise for new students or have any kind of recruitment process, yet every day people call with the question, "How can I enroll my child in your school?"

We take these calls daily because we accept students throughout the year. An important part of our basic philosophy is that we must meet needs when they arise. If a family is seeking placement for its child today, we will work as quickly as possible to enroll that child.

We only put our admissions "on hold" before each major school vacation. Experience has taught us that if a student comes to us just a week or two before a long break, the student does not have time to fully adjust before taking that first long trip back home. Even if we do not admit newcomers, however, we still conduct all the preliminaries so that students can join us as soon after the break as possible.

There are as many different reasons why children come to Oneida as there are children. Some just like the independence that a boarding school can give in preparation for college. Many like the loving environment away from family problems. Others want to be involved in school activities to a greater extent than they could in their home schools. Many want to go to a school with a Christian atmosphere.

Our admission process usually begins with a phone call from a parent, pastor or other concerned adult. This first call is a time for both parties to gather information. We encourage the caller to talk at length about the child.

If the parent thinks Oneida sounds like a good place for the student, we send the family an information packet. Before the child is ever admitted, the child and family go through a lengthy orienta-

tion process. These are on Sundays and are by appointment. We want the family to know as much as possible about our school before the student enrolls. They watch videos that explain our whole program and let parents and children know what those first weeks at Oneida will be like. They take a walking tour of the campus, then have a family interview with our admissions personnel. Usually by the time a student has spent the day with us, the student begins to soften up to the idea of being away from home and to see what Oneida has to offer.

Our admission criteria are quite flexible. We don't call the student's neighbors or school to get references. You can tell us "Johnny" stole the neighbor's car and refuses to go to school and we will still take him. You can tell us "Susie" is an angel and we will take her too—though we probably won't believe you! Basically, if a child is physically fit and emotionally sound we will accept that child. Money is never an issue, either; our fees are based on household income.

We know God created each student and Jesus Christ died for them. That is the only reference any child needs. It is a joy to be a part of a school that lives out this approach to teenagers today. We rejoice in giving every child a new beginning. Please continue to pray for the Lord's work here at Oneida.

To obtain information about our school, please call (606) 847-4111 and ask for our admissions director, Billie Faye Hoover.

Written by Kay Underwood, administrative coordinator; Billie Faye Hoover, admissions director; and Denise Spencer, publications

W.F. "Bud" Underwood is president of Oneida Baptist Institute, Oneida, Ky. 40972

THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

Love and faithfulness from J.S. Bell

Sometimes folk who move to eastern Kentucky from the west wonder how long it takes to be accepted as part of the community. Some feel an "outsider" can't have a lasting influence. J.S. Bell certainly destroyed that myth. His 35-year pastorate at Hindman Baptist demonstrates what love and faithfulness can accomplish. Following his Sept. 7 funeral Bell was buried on the hill behind the church.

Born and reared in west Tennessee, Bell was saved in a Methodist revival at age 13. He united with a Baptist church where his mother was a faithful member. The Second Baptist Church of Lexington, Tenn., called him as pastor at age 17. Bell graduated from Union University, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and at age 69 earned the doctor of ministry degree from Lexington Theological Seminary.

After three years with Fleming church, J.S. and Beulah Bell moved to Hindman. They reared four children in the Knott County hills. During the Hindman years, many calls came from other churches. One year was spent in Champaign, Ill., but he returned in 1959.

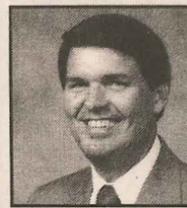
Missions and outreach were synonymous with Bell. He led in

planting five churches: Montgomery, Mousie, Topmost, Caney and Smithsboro. For 25 years he led weekly chapel at Alice Loyd College and taught there for 10 years. He organized the dry forces to keep legal liquor sales from the county. In 1949 he delivered the KBC annual sermon. The subject was "Amazing Grace."

Bell retired from the Hindman church in 1976. For three and a half years he taught at Clear Creek. The present faculty and former students fondly remember his love for the Word and his wisdom. He was director of missions in Three Forks Association for two years.

Parkinson's disease finally brought confinement, but even then he was faithful in praying for the needs of the people he knew. The ministry model described in his eulogy is desperately needed among Southern Baptists: "His desire was to be more like his Lord. He loved all people. He was a peacemaker at heart. It was never his desire to downgrade a person or a group of people, regardless of the circumstances or their beliefs."

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

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

WORLD



He had no number, but he was first to arrive

GOMA, Zaire (BP)—He didn't have a registration card, or a refugee number, so 10-year-old Nzabirinda John was turned away from the overcrowded orphanage in Goma, Zaire.

It didn't matter that he was naked, malnourished and alone. It didn't matter that he was dying from exposure, that he hadn't seen his family since the night two months earlier when he was separated from them in the mad scramble of Rwandans across the border to Zaire.

It didn't matter that his friends and family—when he had friends and family—called him "Zabi." No one called him anything in Goma. He was just another nameless, numberless refugee.

Then a team of Southern Baptist missionaries and volunteers noticed him huddled against the team van, trying to soak up some reflected heat from the chill morning sun.

Pam Conteras, a volunteer nurse from Cleveland, Miss., pointed the boy out to missionary Lucy Driggers. Driggers started asking officials at the orphanage about Zabi. The Baptists, all part of the joint Foreign Mission Board-Brotherhood Commission relief effort in Goma, said they were shocked by the callous victory of bureaucracy over humanity.

"We'll take him and get him registered later," Driggers declared, shaming the orphanage into giving the boy a shirt and trousers. The Baptist center to care for "unaccompanied minors" had been authorized the day before by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees to begin accepting children.

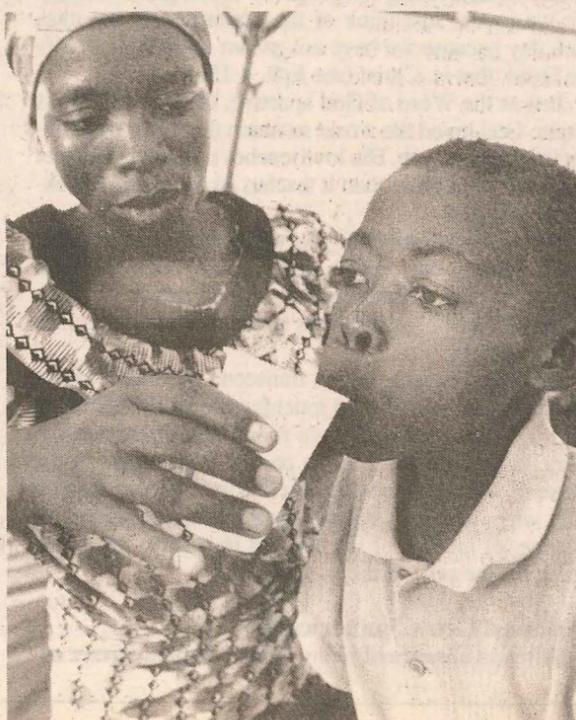
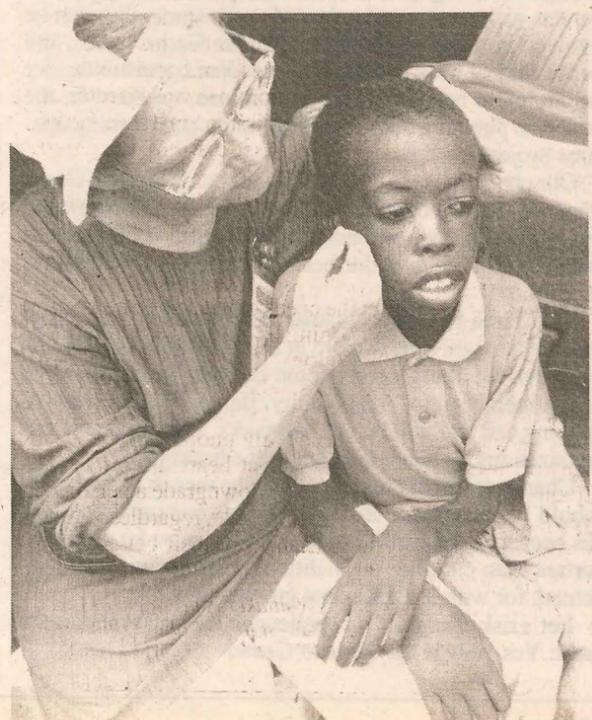
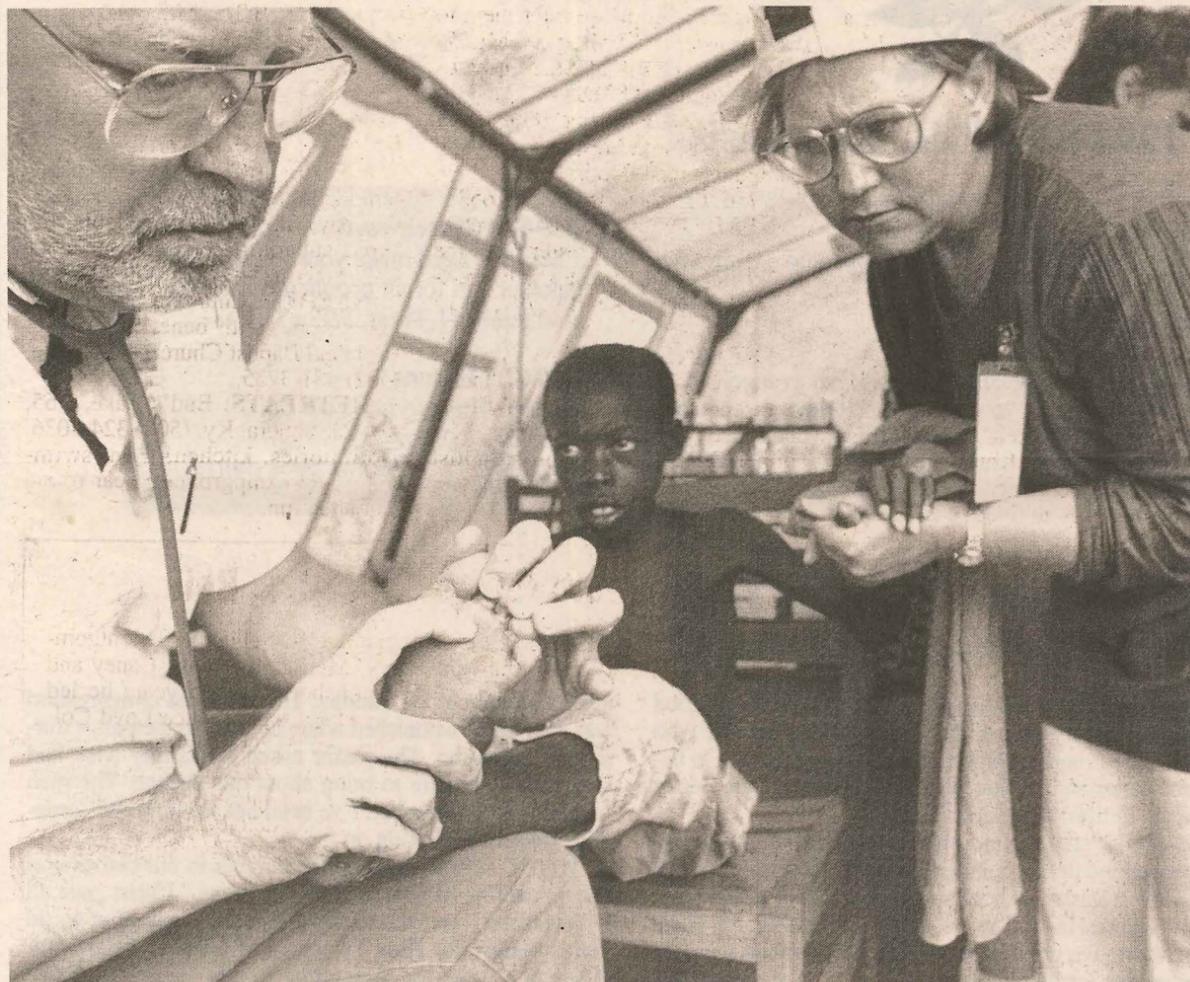
Zabi would be the first of hundreds. By 11 a.m. he was undergoing an exam by Daniel Brown, a volunteer physician from Raleigh, N.C.

The Rwandan Baptist woman hired to care for Zabi and nine other children hugged the somber boy, assuring him, "We're going to feed you and love you. We're going to play and laugh."

Before the team was through examining Zabi, a UNICEF van arrived with three more children. Ten minutes later the Baptist van returned with five youngsters. By the end of the week, there were 75 children. By the end of September, there were to be 500.

LONG JOURNEY After two months of wandering without his Rwandan family, 10-year-old Zabi was discovered by Baptist relief workers in Goma, Zaire. He had spent the previous night naked and alone outside an orphanage where he had been denied admittance. Baptist volunteers found him clothes and escorted him to their refugee camp for "unaccompanied minors." There Baptist medical volunteers Daniel Brown and Pam Contreras examined him and comforted him. A Rwandan Christian nurse took Zabi under her wings and helped him take in enough liquids to regain strength. (BP photos by Kevin Morley)

No one called him anything in Goma. He was just another nameless, numberless refugee.





1994-95 WMU Emphasis

Objectives

1. To enlist more members in WMU by providing dynamic organizations that appeal to a diversity of people for indepth and lifelong missions involvement.
2. To challenge church members to grow spiritually as they:
 - A. Accept responsibility for a lost and hurting world.
 - B. Develop witnessing skills for ministry and personal, marketplace, and interfaith evangelism.
 - C. Identify the pioneer spirit of missions and take similar risks to minister and witness in new and difficult areas (geographical, cultural and social).
 - D. Pray about and make lifestyle changes for missions involvement.

1994-95 Watchword

"May the Lord make your love for one another and for all people grow more and more" (1 Thess. 3:12a TEV).

1994-95 Hymns

"Teach Them to Love the Lord"
 "A Time to Grow"
 (available from Baptist Book Stores)

A Time To Grow

Carolyn D. Miller, president, WMU, SBC

In times past, the Farmer's Almanac was one of the farmer's most important possessions. Still today, both career and would-be farmers consult the Almanac for advice about the time and conditions for planting and harvesting. As I was growing up, I remember seeing Dad look in his Almanac to find out when to plant his corn and sweet potatoes. He knew the timing had to be just right if the crop was to grow and produce properly. Bad timing meant the seed would not germinate but would lie in the ground, resulting in death, not growth.

In Ecclesiastes 3 we read that "there is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven." Then, after listing 28 things for which there is a time, the writer concludes: "There is a proper time and procedure for every matter." So I take the liberty of adding to these times already listed yet one more time—**A Time to Grow**.

This year's emphasis is an almanac of sorts, reminding us that now is the time to grow. We must determine in our hearts and minds that we will accept the challenge to grow and change in both spiritual and numerical dimensions.

We must Grow Spiritually

As we think of the need to grow spiritually, let's first consider our commitment to the Word of God. Peter wrote that we must grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. How do we grow in knowledge of Him? We grow as we spend time in fellowship with Him, studying His words to us. The Word of God nourishes our spirit for growth just as food nourishes our physical bodies. The Word of God must be taken in so that it can take root and nourish us from inside out. The Lord asked us to take His words so seriously that we hide them in our hearts and minds, allowing them to become our constant companion. Paul parallels growth in grace with growth in knowledge of Christ. Like knowledge, grace must grow or die. Grace is not a natural quality, but a necessary one if we

would love the world as we should, spreading the good news to the very ends of the earth. Ministry to those who need Christ requires grace. And to grow in grace, to become committed to this mandate to grow, may require a change in lifestyle or priorities.

Another step toward spiritual growth comes as we discover and utilize our spiritual gifts. This growth helps us view ministry as both a privilege and responsibility. God wants His followers to do something for Him. Therefore, we grow in service each day as we seek opportunities for involvement. Believers have the responsibility of cultivating the gospel so it can grow in every life we touch. Just think of the opportunities we miss each day because we have not grown up in Him who is the Head, that is, Christ (see Eph. 4:15b).

Just as the Word of God is active, the love of God is active. God loved the world so much that He gave. Giving is an active verb. His love teaches us to sit at His feet and learn from Him, then it teaches us to follow His example and give.

As we learn from Him, His word becomes a guide or mold, shaping our prayers, our witness, our very lives. He asks to pray without ceasing—which means to live in Christ and let Christ live in us so that life itself becomes a living prayer.

Through prayers we can transcend the limits of our humanity and join Him in touching the world. Growing spiritually enables us to love more inclusively and become more Christlike as we partner with others in the cause of winning the world for Christ. This can happen only when each of us learns sacrificial living—sacrifice of time, of money, of talents, and in reality, our whole being for the sake of the gospel.

We Must Grow Numerically

After an absence of many years, a retired farmer ap-

peared at church one Sunday. The surprised congregation was even more astonished when he went to the pastor during the invitation. The pastor asked the farmer what had happened in his life to bring about this change. The man replied, "Well, preacher, I've been out plowing and something has been working on me."

Well, I've been out among churches in our convention and something has been "working on me." Christ gave all believers the command to take His word to a hurting world that is hungry for Him; Woman's Missionary Union provides an avenue for responding to this commission. We must provide organizations and programs that appeal to women, girls, and preschoolers of every age so they can be involved in missions for their sake, for Christ's sake, and for the sake of a lost world. We must plan opportunities for the church to become aware of missions; we must be the leaders in planning one-time, short-term, and ongoing missions projects.

Our one purpose in WMU is missions. **A Time to Grow** demands that we continue calling believers to understand and respond to the responsibility and spirit of missions. It demands that we give our best efforts to quality missions education.

The Time to Grow almanac tells us this is a new day, and it is the right time to plant in anticipation of growth. As we grow, we must expect some changes in organization and in membership. Adaptability, flexibility, and creative thinking can and will be our hallmarks. We can renew our organizations by being relevant to the times today.

Change and challenge should not be seen as threats; they should be recognized as a part of the renewal process. It has been said that fulfilling the mission must be more important than carrying on traditions. Change must be welcomed, for with it comes new growth, new life.

Let's risk changes. Our challenges and opportunities are great. Yes, now is the **Time to Grow!**