

WESTERN RECORDER

January 17, 1995
Vol. 169, No. 3**FOR THE RECORD****Probation likely**

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary is awaiting news of its accreditation status with the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada. Those familiar with the process expect the school to be placed on probation.
See page 2.

Motorcycle minister

An unorthodox church in Owensboro is reaching bikers for Christ and drawing criticism from some Baptists.
See page 3.

Editorial

The debate over government's role must balance responsibility and compassion.
See page 5.

Opposing views

Religious groups are weighing in on opposing sides as Congress gears up to reconsider the nation's response to major social issues.
See page 7.

Abstract debate

Frank Stagg, a longtime professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, says President Al Mohler currently interprets the founders views but that both the founders and Mohler espouse dangerous views.
See page 10.

How accessible?

If you had an accident tomorrow and had to use a wheelchair, would you be able to get into your church next Sunday? See page 13.

Baptists blanket state with media message of hope

By Mark Wingfield
News Director

Accompanied by gentle background music, the camera zooms in on a boy and his first birthday cake, with a numeral 1 candle still burning and the icing already splattered across the boy's face.

"Here's one big reason you should be in church next week," a narrator says. "Your children. Whatever their ages, there's so much they can learn in church—about positive life values, about faith and love that only God can give.

"So bring your children to church," the narrator continues as the camera draws back from the boy and his cake. "You might learn something

too."

It's not another ad from the Mormon church. This time, it's a message from Kentucky Baptists that will be seen across the state beginning Jan. 23.

The television commercials—along with similar ads in newspapers, magazines and on radio—are part of the "Here's Hope. Share Jesus Now" campaign sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

But because the ads are part of the outward focus of this evangelistic campaign, they will carry the theme of "Here's Hope. Jesus Cares for

You." This will convey a message of loving concern from Baptists toward people across Kentucky who need to hear the gospel, said Bill Jagers, KBC evangelism director.

The ads will appear during the same time Kentucky Baptists are intensifying their efforts to tell everyone around them about the love of Jesus Christ.

Through the "Here's Hope" campaign, thousands of Kentucky Baptists have committed to share their Christian faith with at least one person every day for 60 days. This 60-day period of intensified witness will be followed by simultaneous revivals

in the churches.

The ads, which also were used during the 1990 "Here's Hope" campaign, focus on real-life problems such as the pain of divorce, the struggle to find someone who cares, the sorrow of loneliness, the search for personal peace, spiritual fitness and help in time of crisis.

The HMB has invested in national ads in magazines and on radio. The KBC has bolstered that outreach by securing additional exposure on Kentucky television and cable channels, magazines with statewide circulation, major daily newspapers and two statewide radio networks.

National magazine ads already have appeared in *Southern Living* and *See Baptists blanketing ...*, page 14



Churchgoers giving less, buying more

By Mark Wingfield
News Director

CHAMPAIGN, Ill.—Church members are giving a decreasing percentage of their income to churches while going into debt to purchase more personal luxury items, according to an annual report on church contributions.

This trend may be caused in part by the failure of churches to communicate with members the needs of the churches and their mission agencies, according to researchers John and Sylvia Ronsvalle.

With assistance from the Lilly Endowment, the Ronsvalles are studying church member giving patterns in 29 U.S. denominations from 1968 to the present. They recently released their annual report on "The State of Church Giving" with new data through 1992.

With analysis of the 1992 data, total member contributions to church causes lost ground to inflation for the second year in a row—a first-time occurrence in the 25-year study.

In addition, member giving as a percentage of income continued to decline, following a long-term pattern, the Ronsvalles said.

From 1968 to 1992, church member giving as a percentage of income decreased from 3.14 percent to 2.52 percent.

Hardest hit by the declining giving pattern are benevolent causes outside the local church, such as support for missionaries. When viewed in constant 1987 dollars, total support for causes outside the local church has decreased 1.8 percent in the past 25 years, compared to a 24 percent increase in support for local church needs.

Congregational funding for 600 Protestant missionary-sending agencies in the U.S. has remained flat, at about \$2 billion, since 1987, the Ronsvalles said. The \$2 billion spent on world missions compares to \$4 billion
See Church members ..., page 6



JOYFUL NOISE Under the watchful eyes of Israeli police snipers on rooftops, Messianic Jews dance and sing their way along in the Jerusalem March, an annual parade through West Jerusalem. More than 200 Jewish believers marched in the parade late last year, held in conjunction with the Feast of Tabernacles. Messianic Jews in Israel are growing in number—estimated between 3,000 and 6,000. (BP photo by Don Rutledge)

In Israel, more Jews believing in Jesus

By Mike Creswell
SBC Foreign Mission Board

JERUSALEM (BP)—So many Israeli Jews are becoming Christians that Southern Baptist workers in Israel say the growth could be the top story not only of this decade, but of the age as well.

Estimates on the number of Messianic Jews—as Jewish believers call themselves—in Israel now range from 3,000 to 6,000. They belong to more than three dozen congregations scattered across Israel. One new congregation is started each year, on average.

While the numbers remain relatively small for a country of about 5.5 million people, this trend is compounded in significance because of the historical reluctance of Jewish people to profess faith in Jesus Christ as the Messiah.

Messianic Jews say they numbered perhaps 200 in Israel 25 years ago—and they kept a low profile. Now they routinely hold evangelistic crusades in which they distribute

tracts and share their faith with passers-by.

One Southern Baptist worker compared Messianic Jewish growth to lighting a skyrocket in the rain: the fuse has taken decades to ignite, but now things are beginning to happen.

The phenomenon is not just a Baptist one. Other Christian groups in Israel report slow but steady growth.

Most Messianic Jewish congregations avoid denominational labels to make the gospel message more appealing to other Jews. Also, many of the congregations are charismatic, although there are signs some may be moving away from that.

One phenomenon considered a factor in the growth of Jewish believers is a new custom of Jewish citizens traveling overseas when they complete their terms of military service. As they travel in Christian

lands, many hear the Christian gospel for the first time, and in a more relaxed atmosphere than possible in Israel.

Some of the hundreds of thousands of Russian Jews who have arrived in Israel in recent years also believe in Jesus as Messiah. They can be found in congregations throughout Israel. Increasing numbers of them have sought baptism.

The same has been true of Ethiopian Jewish immigrants. Several hundred Ethiopians, officially identified as Jewish, took part in a Christian retreat last year. Some found Christ before leaving Ethiopia; others made Christian commitments after arriving.

During the Jerusalem March, a major parade held in the heavily Jewish western part of the city last September, 200 Messianic Jews marched amidst 20,000 Jews from
See More Israeli Jews ..., page 12

Jesus & Jews & Jerusalem

BAPTISTS

Southwestern awaiting news on possible probation

By Greg Warner
Associated Baptist Press

Most faculty members blame trustees for the instability at the seminary. In a recent survey, 88.1 percent said trustees are not acting responsibly in guiding the seminary.

FORT WORTH, Texas (ABP)—It won't be official until the end of the January, but faculty and administrators at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary expect the seminary to be placed on probation by at least one of its two accrediting agencies.

Officials of the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada, who visited the Fort Worth campus late last year, recommended the seminary receive probation for violations stemming from the 1994 firing of President Russell Dilday, seminary sources say.

The accrediting commission of ATS received the recommendation of their visiting committee in a hearing Jan. 6. They also heard from Southwestern representatives, who tried to convince the agency the 3,200-student school is on the mend.

Southwestern will learn the commission's decision in a letter due by the end of January. Ken Hemphill, the seminary's new president, who led the delegation that argued the seminary's case before ATS, said Jan. 9 he did not know the agency's decision.

But longtime observers of the ac-

crediting process already are convinced the verdict will be probation.

"It is my opinion that the seriousness of the charges would justify probation," said one administrator familiar with ATS proceedings who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Most faculty members and administrators contacted by Associated Baptist Press said they expect probation. ATS officials, meanwhile, declined to comment until after the school has been notified and has a chance to appeal.

Probation, while not as serious as withdrawal of accreditation, can hinder a school's ability to attract students and financial support.

Among concerns of ATS is the alleged abuse of power and proper procedures by trustees, who fired Dilday despite giving him glowing job evaluations right up to the end. Conservative trustees said Dilday was sympathetic to moderate Baptist causes and blocked conservative reforms at the school.

In a rare letter of censure immediately after the firing, ATS Executive Director James Waits called the action "a clear violation of accepted governance practices (which) places in jeopardy the vitality and basic integrity of the institution."

That criterion—the vitality and basic integrity of the institution—is one of the overarching factors which accreditors consider crucial in evaluating schools. It is one of six problems cited by ATS last May as jeopardizing Southwestern's accredited status.

The other concerns are threats to academic freedom, the financial integrity of the school, violations of the school's governance policies and the evaluation procedures for the president and faculty.

Southwestern's faculty is deeply troubled over perceived threats to academic freedom, according to a survey conducted for ATS. Three-fourths said they fear the academic freedom of faculty members will be violated in the near future, and that the seminary won't defend them.

While most faculty members said their own academic freedom is unscathed so far (73.1 percent), two-thirds said the freedom of some faculty members already has been violated (67.2 percent).

Seminary leaders say Hemphill's election last July signals the school is on the road to recovery. And most faculty members (64.2 percent) approve of Hemphill's election, even though he lacks the ties to Southwestern they said were important.

But that has not alleviated faculty concerns about the future of the school. In fact, their confidence in academic freedom has weakened between May, when the ATS survey was initially taken, and November, when it was taken a second time.

While most said in May they felt free to teach and investigate truth (58.5 percent), in November a slight majority said that freedom no longer existed (50.7 percent). While 72 percent said in May they felt free to express their conscientious convictions, only 47.7 percent felt that confidence in November.

Most faculty members blame trustees for the instability at the seminary. In the most recent survey, 88.1 percent said trustees are not acting responsibly in guiding the seminary, and 89.6 percent said trustees are not accurately representing the seminary's situation.

Although Southwestern will find out soon how ATS has ruled, the school is under no obligation to disclose the decision. Administrators have one month to file an appeal if they wish. Once all appeals are handled, ATS publishes its findings for all schools—usually in late March, said Nancy Merrill, ATS public relations director.

Texas conservatives moving ahead with organization

Three prominent conservative Texas pastors said their churches are considering either reducing amounts sent to the state convention or bypassing it altogether and sending money directly to the SBC.

FORT WORTH, Texas (ABP)—A leader of a group of "conservative" Baptists organized recently in Texas offered no definite answer about whether the group intends to form a new state convention but hinted he has discussed the possibility with Southern Baptist Convention leaders.

At a Jan. 10 rally in Fort Worth, Miles Seaborn told about 300 people he had spoken to a "national leader" who urged them "to make sure your heart is for missions and evangelism" and told him the "Southern Baptist organization is open to you."

Seaborn encouraged churches to reconsider their missions giving in light of action in November by the moderate-controlled Baptist General Convention of Texas. In annual session in Amarillo, the Texas convention broadened its definition of denominational support to allow

churches to channel money to a variety of causes under the banner of Cooperative Program giving.

Seaborn, pastor of Birchman Baptist Church in Fort Worth, announced that his group now wants to be called "Southern Baptists of Texas" rather than "Conservative Baptist Fellowship of Texas."

Four to six regional meetings will be held this year, a newsletter will be distributed and "we are talking to people about being candidates" for office at the state convention in San Antonio next fall, Seaborn said.

A brochure distributed at the meeting described the organization as "a network of biblical conservatives who believe the Southern Baptist Convention has a bright future."

The brochure outlined the group's purposes as including:

■ Support for Southern Baptist

work in Texas and around the world with strengthened Cooperative Program funding.

■ Encouraging churches and individuals with "positive responsible" distribution of information.

■ Giving churches options on how to financially respond to the Texas convention until the "Amarillo Act" is rescinded.

■ Networking with pastorless Southern Baptist churches "to help them find godly, biblically sound pastoral leadership."

At the Jan. 10 rally, three prominent pastors said their churches are considering restructuring their missions giving by either reducing amounts sent to the state convention or bypassing it altogether and sending money directly to the SBC.

O.S. Hawkins said First Baptist Church of Dallas has been escrowing

its Cooperative Program gifts since October. Hawkins said he is sure there will be a change in the percentage of the church's gifts going to the state convention but suggested the state will not be cut out of the church budget entirely.

George Harris said his congregation, First Baptist Church of Castle Hills in San Antonio, is selecting a committee to decide how to designate the church's missions gifts.

Claude Thomas, pastor of First Baptist Church of Euless, also urged pastors to be careful how they approach their churches about altering denominational support. "The last thing we need is a local church in turmoil with its pastor," he said.

Seaborn said at least 750 churches and individuals have asked the organization for advice about how to respond to the vote in Amarillo.

SBC president calls young pastors to participate

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)—Many younger pastors are "on the bubble" and need to strengthen their commitment to the Southern Baptist Convention, Jim Henry recently said at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

"It's not that they don't love Southern Baptists, but they don't fully know the value of the convention," said Henry, SBC president and pastor of First Baptist Church in Orlando, Fla. "Many are apathetic to who we are as Southern Baptists."

These pastors are not against the conservative direction the convention has taken but they feel their involvement in denominational activities doesn't make any difference, Henry said.

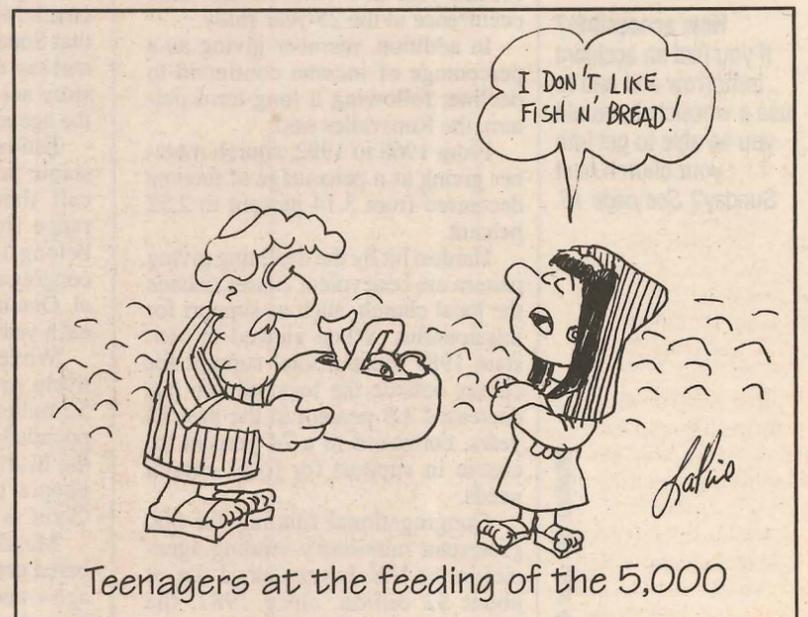
Even though conservatives now control the SBC's denominational structures, Henry noted, an independent mindset continues in some

conservative churches."

"If these guys don't understand their relationship denominationally and fail to support the convention, it won't make any difference who is in leadership," Henry said. "It will be just a matter of a generation and then everything we have gained will be gone."

"I do not want them to be denominationally lost. For the health and welfare of the convention, Southern Baptists in their 40s and younger need to consider their denominational responsibility," Henry said.

"If we can get pastors to really see what God is doing with Southern Baptists—the unique position that we occupy and the opportunities that are before us—with prayer and support, there is not a denomination in the world that can accomplish as much for the cause of Christ."



Owensboro motorcycle church draws bikers & critics

By Melanie Childers
Staff Writer

OWENSBORO—An unorthodox church known as SOS Christian Fellowship may serve as a harbor of salvation for hundreds of new Christians, but it's sending a distress signal to some mainstream Kentucky Baptists.

In October 1992, Kentucky Baptist pastor and evangelist Jim Powell founded Sharing Our Savior Christian Fellowship, a non-affiliated congregation geared especially toward reaching motorcyclists.

"Our church is not what you'd call a traditional church," Powell acknowledged. "I started it for the specific purpose of reaching bikers and giving them a place where they can come and worship the Lord."

However, some Kentucky Baptists critical of Powell's ministry accuse him of denouncing Southern Baptists in the process. Although Powell, 40, is a former pastor of three Kentucky Baptist congregations and was licensed and ordained to the ministry by a Kentucky Baptist church, SOS Christian Fellowship remains unaligned.

"He just decided to start his own church and not be a Southern Baptist," said Lester Nash, pastor emeritus of Airline Baptist Church in Henderson, Powell's home church. "Brother Jim just doesn't have anything to do with Southern Baptists."

On the contrary, Powell said, he feels Southern Baptists have abandoned him. "I did not leave the Baptist denomination. I did not cut them off," he said. "They have cut me off."

SOS Christian Fellowship meets

on Sundays at 10 a.m. for worship in a former bar.

Services, which Powell described as "charismatic Baptist," last about an hour and a half. A praise and worship band and a contemporary Christian band provide music, which emphasizes choruses and gospel songs.

"My preaching has not changed," Powell explained, from the "dynamic, evangelistic" and "very conservative" style he has used as a preacher and full-time evangelist since 1985.

Because the church has no baptistry, Powell has borrowed unusual places, like the Holiday Inn swimming pool, for baptizing nearly 100 new Christians during the last two years, he said.

A sign on the church marquee reads: "All long-haired, bearded, sandal-wearing people are welcome at SOS."

And they come.

The pastor estimated 35 percent of the congregation is made up of motorcyclists, who drive to church on their Harley-Davidsons. "They wear leather and Harley clothes, long hair and earrings to church," Powell explained.

Powell dresses similarly, usually in jeans, a T-shirt with a Christian message and boots, and with his long hair tied back in a ponytail. "I describe myself as a sheep in wolf's clothing," he said.

The fledgling congregation has experienced significant growth. After starting with Powell's family and several others, "we've probably seen 1,500 people come through our doors," Powell said. "We average 150 in worship services. We had been up to 200, until it got too crowded."



SOS Christian Fellowship reaches out to the community through three innovative projects: a prison ministry, street ministry and motorcycle ministry. These have helped lead about 300 people to make professions of faith in Jesus Christ, Powell said.

Powell and others lead worship once a month at Branchville correctional facility, north of Tell City, Ind. "About 60 people were saved there last year," Powell said.

The street ministry involves teams of church members who wear specially printed T-shirts and go to local festivals, malls and hangouts, looking for opportunities to witness.

About 36 men and women are in-

involved in the motorcycle ministry, "Soldiers for Christ." These people—including both church members and others—have formed a Christian motorcycle club, with distinctive colors and patches on their jackets. Some had never ridden motorcycles before and bought bikes specifically to participate in the ministry.

"Soldiers for Christ" members attend regional and national biker rallies in order to witness to "outlaw" bikers.

Through the church and motorcycle ministry, Powell leads several events in Owensboro each year.

For example, all area bikers are

UNIQUE PASTOR Jim Powell (left), pastor of SOS Christian Fellowship, helps a child with cerebral palsy sing a song during a fellowship at the church. Powell has been criticized by some because of his unusual outreach ministries to motorcyclists and because the Owensboro church is not affiliated with the Kentucky Baptist Convention or the local association. The congregation maintains an active ministry to bikers, prison inmates and others not being reached by traditional churches. (Photo by Bob Bruck, Owensboro Messenger-Enquirer)

Compton names 13 to Cedarmore transition committee

By Mark Wingfield
News Director

A 13-member committee has been named to determine what the Kentucky Baptist Convention should do with Cedarmore Baptist Assembly.

This "transition committee" was created when the KBC Executive Board voted Dec. 13 to terminate KBC ownership of the 1,300-acre campground near Shelbyville.

As requested by the board, KBC President Billy Compton has named the committee, which will begin meeting as soon as possible, he said.

Chairing the committee will be

Bob Browning, the KBC's immediate past president and pastor of First Baptist Church in Somerset.

Other committee members represent a diversity of backgrounds and geographic locations. They are:

■ Benny Bivens, businessman and bivocational minister of music at Mason Baptist Church in Williamstown.

■ Michael Diggs, minister of education at Shively Baptist Church in Louisville.

■ Jimmy Gentry, pastor of Lewis Lane Baptist Church in Owensboro.

■ James Hales, businessman and bivocational music minister from Cold Spring.

■ Deborah Harston, layperson from Bowling Green.

■ Eric Lethco, pastor of Parkwood Baptist Church in Louisville.

■ Robert Lowery, pastor of First Baptist Church in Barbourville.

■ Jackie Perkins, layperson from Bremen.

■ Rick Shannon, pastor of First Baptist Church of Pikeville.

■ Gerald Sharon, pastor of Highland Hills Baptist Church in Fort Thomas.

■ Anna White, layperson from Versailles.

■ M.A. Winchester, KBC first vice president and a medical doctor from

Whitley City.

Three of these people also served on the assemblies long-range work group which brought the initial recommendation to terminate ownership of Cedarmore: Winchester, Perkins and Hales.

The transition committee was charged by the Executive Board with suggesting how the KBC should make the transition away from owning Cedarmore, including what to do with the property, how to handle employees and how to continue camping programs. The committee is to report back to the Executive Board in December 1995.

Free information available on advance medical directives

LOUISVILLE—As Kentucky Baptists focus on January as "Make Your Will Month," officials at Baptist Healthcare System want to help people understand several other documents that impact end-of-life decisions.

A free video on advance directives is now available to Kentucky Baptist pastors. And a brochure outlining the same information is available to anyone who requests it.

Advance directives allow individuals to make their wishes about medical care and the use of life-prolonging treatment known ahead of time—

before a medical emergency occurs. Advance directives also may be used to state a person's desires about organ donation.

"The decision to make out an advance directive is a matter of personal and family choice," said Janet Norton, corporate counsel with Baptist Healthcare System.

Kentucky law recognizes several types of advance directives, including living wills, health care surrogate designations and durable powers of attorney.

Living wills usually state a person's desires for or against life-pro-

longing treatment in certain medical emergencies.

Health care surrogate designations allow individuals to name in advance someone to make important health care decisions when the patient is not able to do so.

Durable power of attorney is similar to a health care surrogate designation, except that a person given power of attorney also may execute other decisions about the patient's personal and financial affairs.

Pastors who want the free video should call (502) 896-5013.

Individuals who wish to receive

the free brochure should contact any of these Baptist hospitals: Central Baptist Hospital in Lexington at (606) 275-6100; Baptist Regional Medical Center in Corbin at (606) 528-1212; Tri-County Baptist Hospital in La Grange at (502) 222-5388; Western Baptist Hospital in Paducah at (502) 575-2100; or Baptist Hospital East at (502) 897-8131.

Baptist Healthcare System chaplains also are available to speak to church groups on the subject of advance directives. To schedule a speaker, call one of the hospitals listed above.

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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We agree

I would like to compliment the Western Recorder on the great "Here's Hope" coverage that I have seen in the first two issues of 1995.

Regardless of how we feel about controversial issues, it is obvious all of us in the Kentucky Baptist family agree lost people need Jesus!

*Mike Morris
Wickliffe*

Keep Cedarmore

I read with dismay that the Kentucky Baptist Executive Board has decided to cut loose Cedarmore Baptist Assembly (WR, Dec. 20). Instead of closing it down or turning it over to some secular agency, why not give it to Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children for an emergency shelter or set up Oneida Baptist Institute, West?

Several Baptists in Franklin County are trying to set up an emergency shelter for youth in need of being placed outside the home for a short time. Baptist Homes for Children has three emergency shelters now, and we could use more. Oneida is cramped to capacity, and we could use another Oneida-type facility. If we had a shelter that could house 100 children, it would be filled quickly.

Also, many Kentucky Baptists have camping trailers and many do tent camping. Why not set up some kind of camping area for these kinds of people, and offer Bible studies, deacon/spouse retreats, etc.?

There has been a lot of private Baptist money and even more Cooperative Program money that has gone into Cedarmore. I would hate to think it would go the same way that we lost Kentucky Southern College.

Let's keep Cedarmore for Kentucky Baptist use. Failure to do so is

being poor stewards of the Lord's money.

*William A. Hartung
Frankfort*

Sad chapter

The Kentucky Baptist Executive Board's decision to "end ownership of Cedarmore" (WR, Dec. 20) writes another sad chapter in the history of Kentucky Baptists.

It is interesting that at the same meeting they decided to spend a large sum of money to build an addition to the Baptist Building. It is but a continuing step in the move from ministry to big government.

More lives are changed in a single summer at Cedarmore than will ever be changed by an addition to the building. I urge the Executive Board to reconsider its action. It would be far better stewardship of Cooperative Program money to invest it in Cedarmore than in an administrative building. No doubt low-cost rental property is available in Louisville to house any expansion that is needed at the building.

I believe it would have been a far better decision to sell the Baptist Building and expand Cedarmore.

*Sam R. Smith
Williamsburg*

Another TULIP

Notes to those who spend hours arguing the age-old schismatic argument:

Totally oxymoronic: Evangelical Calvinism.

Unconditional reductionism: Grace explained in five finite points.

Limited offspring: Why risk giving birth to a condemned child?

Irrefutable excuse: "I wish I could be saved, but I'm not elect."

*Paul T. Gunn
Owensboro*

Simple enough

May a layman comment on the discussion of predestination?

First, God does not speak with a forked tongue or out of both sides of his mouth. He says, "I am the Lord, I change not." Therefore, when Scriptures seem to disagree, we must assume something went wrong during the interpretation or we are not reading carefully. So let's talk about destinations first.

My daughter lives in Florida. When she calls to say she is coming home, I ask two questions. First, when will you be arriving? And second, what airport will you be flying into? She, not I, makes the airport choice. She decides which airport she will fly into. But after I know her choice, I know which airport to be at to meet her.

Now our destination, be it heaven or hell, is our choice. God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But God has the advantage over mortals. He can foresee the future. Therefore, God knows in advance the choice we will make. Just as my recollection of a choice my daughter made did not affect her making the choice, God's foreknowing does not influence our choice.

Whom he did foreknow, he did foreordain, and predestined them to eternal life (I Peter 1:2 and Romans 8:29).

Man is still a free moral agent, in no way locked into perdition by an unfair God. Seems simple enough to me.

*J.B. Crawley
Campbellsville*

Before it's too late

One of my favorite people is Dr. Ken Lyle, executive director of the New England Baptist Convention. With "Here's Hope. Share Jesus Now" in the count-down phase, I think this recent article of his will "bless and encourage" you, just as it did me.

"Although more than 35 years have passed, I remember vividly the first time I met Mrs. Lovell.

"My mental portrait of this thin, gray-haired woman is still framed by the doorway of the screened porch on her recently rented house.

"With arms folded across her chest, Mrs. Lovell was prepared to confront the part-time Baptist pastor who was walking toward her. I was not prepared for what she said to me.

"Only a few weeks before, the Lovells had arrived in the same town where Judy and I spent weekends trying to learn how to lead a small, rural Baptist congregation.

"The whole process was new to us. But every Friday afternoon, we drove 160 miles to the 'church field.'

"I had heard about the new family in town. I even saw them from a dis-

tance a time or two. I had every good intention to visit them as soon as possible.

"Weekend after weekend was packed with church meetings, hospital visitation, youth activities and on and on. There just wasn't time to meet these new folks.

"One Friday evening, some of our church members were waiting for us when we arrived at the parsonage. The news was sad. Mr. Lovell had died the day before.

"I quickly changed clothes, picked up my Bible and walked past four houses to the Lovell residence. After all, I was the only pastor in town. A word of comfort was needed by grieving neighbors.

"The moment I saw Mrs. Lovell, I also heard her speak: 'Why have you come now? My husband's dead. You're too late!'

"Her message was neither angry nor unkind. It was true. It stopped me in my tracks. I had no answer, except to confess my negligence. For Mr. Lovell, my visit was indeed too late.

"I sometimes wonder how often we who follow Christ are too late in our sharing of God's good news. Consumed by our own good agendas, we miss relating to folks who have

ON MISSION TOGETHER



William W. Marshall



FAMILY FORUM: AGING

Teaching respect

By John Lepper

I attended a meeting some time ago in which older people were discussing issues of concern to them. As numerous concerns were raised, they were summarized and written on a flip chart. The nature of the meeting was to gather information from older people in order to later develop strategies for meeting needs and addressing concerns in the public sector.

One man said something to the effect: "These young people need to show a little respect. We were taught respect when we were young." His point was well taken by the group. Most of the people present had grown up in an era when respect for adults was demanded. And while respect is not completely lost among children today, maybe it isn't appreciated like it once was.

The real question becomes, how can we as older people nurture and guide young people to respect adults, particularly the elderly? As with any issue, it must begin at home. It must begin with me.

Jesus taught respect for all kinds of people by showing respect. Contemporaries of Jesus saw him relating by showing respect and positive regard for others. It may be easy to complain about young people not showing respect, but in the very act of complaining I wonder if we are not participating in the disrespect.

Jesus has a lot to say about this subject. He reminds us to treat others as we wish to be treated. He also calls attention to the fact that it's easy to see a speck in another person's eye, even when we have a log in our own. His challenge to his first followers and to those of us who seek to follow him in the 20th century is to look first at ourselves. In so doing, we can help others.

Maybe the best way to teach young people to respect older people is for older people to respect young people. Maybe we teach respect in our daily conversation as we avoid speaking words which belittle others. Showing respect becomes the light which shines in the darkness of disrespect.

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

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

EDITORIALS

Debate must balance responsibility & compassion

We're about to observe a drama of seismic significance. It will be beamed into our living rooms on infotainment shows, such as "Oprah's Current Copy Turning Dateline Affair, Starring Sally Geraldo Donahue." No, it's not the O.J. Simpson trial. The truly important news will take place on Capitol Hill, as Congress debates the scope and size of our federal government.

"What's that got to do with religion?" you ask. A lot. A school-prayer amendment would bring an overtly religious issue to the fore. Beyond that, the debate over the "Contract with America" and related issues matter to people of faith because they will define our nation at the dawn of a new millennium.

As with almost everything else political, this debate swirls around money. How will we write the federal budget? Can we reduce the deficit? What programs can be cut or eliminated? What must be maintained or increased?

Money may be mammon, but under capitalism it also translates into security and stability. Some say money is morally neutral, but an adequate amount of it allows families to afford "traditional values." This aspect of the debate will be joined by advocates of two schools of thought: Some believe society must help the poor and needy through direct aid. And others believe the poor and needy can be helped best by strengthening society overall.

If this sounds more like economics than theology, look in the Bible. The Old Testament, particularly Mosaic law, emphasizes care for widows and orphans. In the New Testament, Jesus' compassion for widows, children, the lame and the blind stands out. Scripture's abiding concern for the poor and downtrodden reflects a passion for protecting the basic needs of the early Hebrew underclass.

Moreover, the Bible emphasizes other virtues that many people of faith believe are needed to make government stronger. The prophets called for justice and also for moral responsibility. Jesus also spoke often of the need for prudent stewardship and fairness.

Now, some folks say people of faith have no business quoting Scrip-

ture and applying biblical principles to public policy. They say the Bible's for the church and the Constitution's for the country. Granted, democratic theory stipulates that no group can impose its articles of faith upon another. But the Bible and Torah prescribe how Christians and Jews are to care for other people, and those beliefs should shape our involvement in public affairs.

(Yes, the church should do its part apart from government. But isn't it interesting how many of the same people who tell the church and the private sector to do more don't pitch in to do their part. Churches and non-profit organizations can't make a dent in society's problems with an average charitable contribution of less than 3 percent of basic income. And since churches and synagogues can't levy taxes, don't expect them to get more money from a people increasingly shaped by the New Golden Rule: "Them that have the gold make the rules.")

Although the debate is taking place in a political context, participants and close observers must not yield to the temptation of modern politics—demonization of the opposition. This temptation will be strong, since adherents of both groups feel religious fervor. Liberals tend to focus on Matthew 25 and Jesus' admonition to care for "the least of these." Conservatives focus on other biblical themes, particularly Old Testament admonitions to responsibility and righteousness. Both believe they are advocating God's will.

And both have a point. As people of faith, we can help the process by seeing the issue holistically and championing both themes. We need to encourage responsibility and self-reliance. We need to give people a hand up instead of a handout. But we also need to be sure we care for the truly needy who simply cannot make it on their own, particularly children.

We can influence the debate by writing to our senators and representatives. We can shape the public sphere of the debate by writing letters to editors, calling talk shows and offering thoughtful comments to friends, neighbors and colleagues. And we can pray that our lawmakers will analyze the issues wisely and compassionately, and vote courageously.

Marv Knox

"Some folks say people of faith have no business quoting Scripture and applying biblical principles to public policy. ... But the Bible and Torah prescribe how Christians and Jews are to care for other people, and those beliefs should shape our involvement in public affairs."

Paul's prescription: A three-part formula for spiritual growth

It is some of the best advice I have ever read. I am going to carry it with me all through 1995. Let me encourage you to do the same:

"Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3: 12-14).

The Apostle Paul reminds us of

our need to grow and mature as Christians. No one is perfect.

How do we grow? We must do three things if we are going to become what God wants us to be.

First of all, we must put the past in perspective. After having confessed our sins and dealt with them, we need to forget them.

Sometimes in counseling one who is struggling with guilt, I will encourage them to do a rather bizarre thing. I'll ask them to take a shovel to a cemetery, dig a hole, dump their mistakes in it, cover them and walk away. Just as they would never dig up a corpse, so should they not uncover those

blunders. We all need to practice the art of forgetting. Paul did.

Second, we need to focus on the future. We will never bury the past and move on until we outline our goals for the future and visualize accomplishing them. Paul did this very thing. He stated that his obsession in life from that moment forward was to know Christ and become like him.

If we spent as much time planning for the future as we do worrying about the past, we would be different people. What changes do you need to make to have a closer relationship with Christ, be a better parent, be a more productive worker or student?

Plan. Visualize. Act.

Third, to grow and mature, we must be disciplined and determined. Paul uses the analogy of a runner in this passage. Our eyes need to be fixed upon the finish line, and all our energy should be harnessed to move us toward that goal. We should let nothing distract us or interfere with accomplishing our objectives.

Without a doubt, this is good, sound, practical advice. As with all advice, though, it is only valuable when heeded. Let's do it together.

Bob Browning, pastor
First Baptist Church
Somerset

The Apostle Paul offers sound advice for Christian growth and maturity: Put the past in perspective. Focus on the future. Be disciplined and determined.

Blessed (and sore) is the child whose colorful teeth match her blouse

"Daddy, look! My teeth match my clothes!"

That was the happiest declaration I heard all last week.

Lindsay made her sartorial discovery Thursday morning, while she was dressing for school and I was dashing toward the door, trying to get to work on time.

On Monday morning, she opened her mouth wide and received the first installment on a 30-month process to straighten her teeth. (By the way, I'm beginning to notice that straightening teeth makes interstate highway construction seem speedy. And cheap.)

By Monday afternoon, Lindsay could no longer gnash her teeth. But that didn't stop the new wires in her mouth from pro-

ducing a fair share of tearful yet restrained wailing.

Her mouth hurt. Even though she's old enough to know her present pain is an investment in long-term orthodontic gain, her mouth still hurt.

Joanna and I promised things would be better by Tuesday. But who were we to know? Neither of us have ever worn braces. And although I can't speak for my wife, I can verify that I never even kissed somebody who wore braces.

So, on Tuesday, Lindsay's tears were for disappointment as well as pain.

By Wednesday, she felt a little less sore. At least she wasn't thinking life would be better if she could just pull out her teeth and buy some nice straight ones that she would keep in a jar at night, just like Nanny.

And then by Thursday morning, she was feeling good enough to notice the little ironies that accompany her new dental condition. Like the happy coincidence that the teal and purple bands on her braces matched the buttons

and pattern on her print blouse.

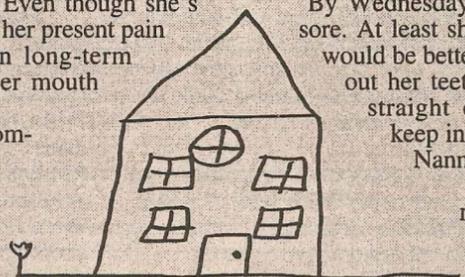
It's not every day a kid can go to school with matching teeth and threads.

As anyone who ever knew nagging pain, and as any parent who ever watched a child suffer, I gladly would have traded places with Lindsay last week, just to give her a rest. But that was impossible. She had to endure tender teeth her own self. Pain will be the price of a pretty smile.

And, come to think of it, that's a lot like life. We must bear the burden of discipline, God's tender yet certain "straightening," if we're going to gain anything of value from the experience of living.

Now, if only life were as easy to straighten as teeth...

Marv Knox



down home

Florida case tests privacy of records

"If a church chooses to organize itself as a non-profit corporation, it is obviously subject to the laws that govern a non-profit organization."
Attorney Tim Askew

LAKE MARY, Fla.—Charges of financial mismanagement against a Florida Baptist pastor have created legal maneuvering that is raising questions among religious liberty experts.

Late last week, Pastor Bob Parker of First Baptist Church of Markham Woods in Lake Mary, Fla., turned over confidential church contribution records to avoid facing \$10,000 in contempt-of-court fines.

Parker previously had refused to hand over the contribution records, claiming by divulging them he would violate the privacy of everyone listed in the ledgers.

"This ruling will have a chilling effect on future contributions to churches and all other non-profit organizations because of the fear contributors will have concerning the confidentiality of their identity and amount given," said Parker, who also sits on the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee.

In a statement issued the day he handed over the records, Parker warned that everyone in his church would now be able to see how much everyone else had given.

But according to the court order issued by Seminole County Circuit Judge O.H. Eaton, only the plaintiff's accountant may view the records, and he must sign an affidavit pledging not to divulge the information.

Parker and the church have been battling a contempt of court ruling

since Dec. 7, when Eaton imposed the sanction in an effort to settle a suit brought by former church member Ann Haynes.

Haynes, a charter member of the 24-year-old church, alleges Parker wrongly usurped control of the congregation, used its non-profit status to avoid paying taxes on his \$285,000 home and kept jewelry for himself that was left to the church as part of a \$416,000 bequest. Parker denies any wrongdoing. He has been pastor of the church since 1983.

Haynes won the right to look at church records in a trial before Circuit Judge Newman Brock last January.

In August 1993, following a church split, Haynes made a written request to view the church records. She was informed the deacons had voted to remove her from fellowship and denied her access to the books.

She sued, claiming her dismissal violated due process and the refusal to show her the documents broke state law.

Brock ruled in Haynes' favor, reinstating her as a member and ordering the church to turn over all records to her. Eventually, the case was appealed to the Florida Supreme Court, which declined to intervene.

The church finally opened some of its records last fall but refused to turn over records of individual gifts. That led to Eaton's ruling Dec. 13 that Parker and the church would be in

contempt of court unless they turned over the records within 10 days.

Haynes' accountant, John King, said the records turned over initially were not specific enough to demonstrate that all contributions to the church were distributed properly.

But Parker and the church argued that turning over more specific giving records would violate the free exercise of religion guaranteed in the First Amendment.

They got support for their cause from Dean Whitford, an attorney with the Rutherford Institute, a religious-liberty watchdog group.

"As applied to churches, we believe this is a fairly substantial burden on the free exercise of religion," Whitford said. "If everyone who comes in and joins a church has a right to see everybody's record of giving, that will very much have a burden on the free exercise of religion."

But Haynes' attorney, Tim Askew, said the disclosure statute is fair because it does not single out churches. "If a church chooses to organize itself as a non-profit corporation, it is obviously subject to the laws that govern a non-profit organization," he said.

A church is not required to organize as a non-profit organization, Askew said. When it does so, it is in effect "making a decision to be subject to the laws that govern a non-profit corporation."

Based on Associated Baptist Press and Baptist Press reports

'Contract' could raise church postage rates

WASHINGTON (BP)—Postal rates have just jumped almost 23 percent for nonprofit mailers, such as churches, state Baptist newspapers and other religious publications.

But if one item in the "Contract with America" now being debated in Congress is adopted, rates will rise another 22 percent to 23 percent, according to Bob Terry, editor of Word & Way, the state Baptist newspaper of Missouri. Terry serves on the Mailers' Technical Advisory Committee, a group of mailers that meets quarterly with senior management of the United States Postal Service.

The item of concern in the "Contract with America" calls for reform in financing future federal retiree benefits.

The proposed reform would require the Postal Service to make advance payments totaling \$11 billion to the federal government to fund the next five years of benefits for Postal Service retirees, Terry said. Currently, the Postal Service pays retiree benefits to the federal government on a "pay as you go" basis.

"The postmaster general has said if (the reform is enacted), they will immediately file for another postal rate increase," Terry said, because all benefits for retirees are provided by postal revenues, not from tax revenues.

The Washington-based Alliance of Nonprofit Mailers disputes whether the proposed "Contract" reform would actually reduce the federal budget deficit anyway.

A news release from the Alliance quotes Robert Reischauer, director of the Congressional Budget Office as saying pre-funding the retirement account would "merely shift the timing of certain receipts and would not reduce the deficit."

School prayer bills introduced in Congress

Some of the bills are "perennial efforts that have failed time and time again. A Republican-led Congress, of course, throws a new factor into the mix."

Melissa Rogers, of the Baptist Joint Committee

WASHINGTON (ABP)—As the 104th Congress convened, several proposals were introduced to amend the U.S. Constitution to allow public-school prayer.

Three of the 149 bills and 38 resolutions introduced in the Senate on the first day of the new Congress related to public school prayer.

Melissa Rogers, associate general counsel of the Baptist Joint Committee, said many of the school-prayer initiatives are "perennial efforts that have failed time and time again. A Republican-led Congress, of course, throws a new factor into the mix."

Sen. Jesse Helms, R-N.C., introduced a bill (S. 27) that would withhold federal funds from public

schools that bar constitutionally protected prayer. He introduced a similar measure in the previous Congress, but it failed to become law.

Sen. Robert Byrd, D-W.Va., also introduced a resolution (S.J. Res. 7) that would amend the Constitution to neither prohibit nor require prayer in public schools or at extracurricular activities.

Sen. Strom Thurmond, R-S.C., who was elected Senate president pro tempore, also introduced a measure (S.J. Res. 6) that would amend the Constitution related to "voluntary school prayer."

In addition to the three Senate measures, prayer-related bills also were introduced in the House of Rep-

resentatives, although no final tally was available.

One proposal introduced in the House by Rep. Bill Emerson, R-Mo., would amend the Constitution to allow for voluntary school prayer.

In December, Richard Land, executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, met with another House Republican, Rep. Ernest Istook of Oklahoma, to help the congressman draft a Republican-sponsored prayer amendment.

Istook's proposal aims to guarantee the right of individual students and groups to pray during the school day. But it would bar government from writing the prayers and would not require all students to participate.

Church members giving less, spending more on luxuries

Continued from page 1

lion Americans spend annually on craft sales, \$32 billion spent on diet programs and \$40 billion spent on leisure travel.

Although the average U.S. household now contains fewer people than it did in 1968, it usually occupies more square feet of space today than in 1968, the Ronsvalls noted. "More comforts such as air conditioning and cable TV are taken for granted."

And while church members have begun giving a smaller portion of their incomes to churches since 1968, this apparently has not produced better money management in the home, they added. "Americans were buying on credit, paying more than an estimated \$30 billion in interest charges

alone in 1991."

For this year's study, the Ronsvalls began looking at causes of the decline in church contributions. They plan to release a final report on these causes later this year in a book to be titled "Behind the Stained Glass Windows: Money Dynamics in the Church."

Preliminary findings point to three key factors in the decline, they said.

First is a "crisis of communication in the church," they reported.

"Local congregation members often express confusion about the purpose of denominational structures," they said. "Changes in attitudes and education efforts have decreased a commitment to international missions, long a source of funding for

denominational structures."

Second, they cited the changing role of women.

"When it was less common for women to work outside the home, women would spend time doing mission and stewardship education within the congregation," the Ronsvalls said. "Many congregations now are hiring people to do tasks which women used to fill as volunteers. Also, there is not a ready-made group to promote a broader vision within the church as women's church groups find themselves in competition with women's careers."

Third, the Ronsvalls cited lack of instruction.

"The church has not developed a positive agenda for the increasing af-

fluence which became common among Americans since World War II," they said. "Rather, the church has often avoided the topic of money, leaving church members to form their attitudes toward accumulation and spending quite apart from the weekly religious services they attend."

The Ronsvalls' study group includes four Baptist denominations: the Southern Baptist Convention, American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A., General Association of General Baptists and the North American Baptist Conference.

Although the decline in giving is clear in all religious groups studied, it is more pronounced in mainline churches than in evangelical churches, they reported.

Religious groups weighing in on social reform

WASHINGTON (RNS)—The Children's Defense Fund is the latest group to enter the fractious—and religiously partisan—moral debate about how best to balance the needs of American's poorest and most vulnerable citizens with the nation's budgetary strains.

Children's Defense Fund, a private lobby agency that works closely with a variety of liberal and mainline religious groups, said Republican strategies to balance the federal budget could leave millions of children facing greater hunger, homelessness and medical neglect.

"While the American people voted for change, and for less government, they did not vote for callous government or to hurt millions of children," President Marian Wright Edelman said at a news conference Jan. 11.

But Edelman's sentiment met with criticism from religious conservatives, who argued in interviews that their liberal counterparts have mounted an irresponsible defense of the status quo and are distorting the debate.

"What we're hearing is a natural result of the revolution that has overtaken Washington, and which some on the religious left still haven't quite figured out," said James Smith, Washington government relations di-

rector for the Southern Baptist Convention Christian Life Commission.

"No one of consequence and responsibility in Washington today argues against the government having a role in helping the poorest and most defenseless members of the society. The healthy debate today is not over should the government help, but how best to help."

Liberal criticism of Republican proposals has been steady since the Nov. 8 elections gave the GOP control of Congress for the first time in 40 years. Now that the 104th Congress is in session and legislation is coming closer to reality, the criticism has been stepped up.

The National Council of Churches issued a statement of support Jan. 10 for an amendment offered by Minnesota Democratic Sen. Paul Wellstone that would prohibit any legislation that adds to the number of hungry or homeless children.

The week before, Henry Lyons, president of the National Baptist Convention USA, an 8-million member African-American denomination, said his church would fight Republican attempts to slash social programs.

Major charitable groups such as Independent Sector, an umbrella organization of 800 charities, foundations and corporate giving programs,

and Bread for the World, a broad-based Christian anti-hunger group, also have weighed in with opposition to GOP plans.

The groups contend that the Republicans are more concerned with pushing their political agenda than they are with the needs of the nation's poor and most vulnerable citizens.

The Children's Defense Fund estimated that 7.6 million children would lose federally funded school lunches by the year 2002 if Congress approves the GOP's plan to pass a balanced budget amendment and cut taxes without reducing defense or Social Security spending. In addition, 6.6 million children would lose Medicaid health coverage, 4.3 million children would lose food stamps and 231,000 blind and disabled children would be dropped from the Supplemental Security Income program.

Federal spending would have to be slashed by about 30 percent if the budget is to be balanced under the conditions set forth so far by Republicans in Congress, Children's Defense Fund projected.

But religious conservatives reject the basic thrust of the liberal position.

Marshall Wittman, the Christian Coalition's Washington legislative affairs director, said "the truly compassionate perspective" is supportive

of major changes in the nation's social welfare system, which he pronounced "a dismal failure."

"No one favors hungry kids. But a system that has produced a 70 percent illegitimacy rate in inner-city neighborhoods is in need of drastic overhaul," he said.

George Weigel, a conservative Catholic and president of Washington's Ethics and Public Policy Center, said liberal warnings about GOP plans "represent an enormous failure of religious and moral imagination."

Not unexpectedly, liberal critics of the GOP, including Edelman of the Children's Defense Fund, reject the arguments of religious conservatives.

Edelman said her organization does not oppose change, favors welfare reform and supports programs that foster greater personal responsibility.

"We do have a values crisis," she said. "Teen pregnancies are one symptom of that."

But "accountability and fair sacrifice across the board must be the bottom line," she said. "Rather than seeking to deny poor babies an average daily welfare payment of \$4.44, Congress should be denying rich farmers their share of the \$8 billion in crop subsidies that give some family corporate empires \$1,000 a day."

Appeal made for suspending abortion clinic protests

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Religious leaders who back abortion rights urged the nation's Roman Catholic bishops Jan. 9 to follow the lead of Boston Cardinal Bernard Law and support a moratorium on demonstrations outside abortion clinics to cool passions and head off further violence.

While defending the bishops' right to speak out against abortion, members of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice said at a news conference that easing tensions after the Dec. 30 killing of two abortion clinic workers in Brookline, Mass., should take priority.

However, a Southern Baptist leader in the fight against abortion rejected the call for suspending clinic protests, saying the latest round of violence was "probably only incidentally about abortion."

The Religious Coalition for Re-

productive Rights represents 38 Christian, Jewish and other religious groups that support abortion rights.

In a letter to the bishops, coalition members called for dialogue between religious leaders who support abortion rights and those who oppose them. The dialogue would aim to create a "new climate of respect and freedom from fear," the letter said.

After the Brookline killings, Cardinal Law urged abortion foes in Boston to cease their protests outside clinics and turn instead to church prayer vigils for the immediate future. Law, who is staunchly anti-abortion, said "the pro-life message cannot be heard in the midst of violence, whether that violence be in thought, word or deed."

But Law's call for a moratorium has gained little direct backing within the church.

Helen Alvare, the chief spokesperson on abortion for the National Con-

ference of Catholic Bishops, said Monday she did not expect the conference to take up the issue. Individual bishops, she said, were free to respond as they saw fit.

So far, only one bishop—Bishop Leo O'Neil of Manchester, N.H.—has unequivocally followed Law's lead, although several others have issued guidelines for anti-abortion demonstrators intended to reduce the possibility of violence, Alvare noted.

Still others, including New York Archbishop Cardinal John O'Connor, said they had no intention of asking for a moratorium. O'Connor said he would call for a moratorium on demonstrations only "on condition that a moratorium be called on abortions."

Richard Land, executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, said the Brookline shootings, while tragic, did not constitute a watershed moment in the

abortion fight.

"What made this more visceral is that it wasn't a doctor but a receptionist" who was shot, he said.

A spokesperson for the National Right to Life Committee blamed the news media for some of the negative reflection on the anti-abortion movement with the latest shootings.

"These actions have a detrimental effect on the pro-life movement because the press portrays them as indicative of the entire pro-life movement instead of just being the actions of a few deranged individuals," said Michelle Arocha Allen.

"People think pro-lifers are hypocrites and killers instead of understanding that millions of pro-life Americans are as deeply saddened by these events as by the 31 million deaths to abortion since 1973."

With additional reporting from Baptist Press

Congressman calls for federal commission on gambling

WASHINGTON (BP)—Amid the clatter in Washington about reducing the size of government, one Republican lawmaker has proposed expanding government's role in monitoring gambling.

Rep. Frank Wolf, R-Va., announced Jan. 10 he will introduce a bill to form the National Gambling Impact and Policy Commission for the purpose of compiling information on gambling's effect on economics, crime, families and individuals.

The nine-member panel Wolf proposes would have three members appointed by the president, three by the Senate majority leader and three by the speaker of the House of Representatives. One of the appointees would

be a governor from a state which has legalized gambling, he said.

The United States is on a "gambling binge," Wolf said. "This is an issue of national economic importance, and I believe the new Congress should examine it closely over the coming months."

The commission, he said, should review the cost and effectiveness of federal and state regulations, gambling's impact on other businesses, the influence of gambling promoters on the development of policies regulating gaming, the relationship between gambling and crime, teenage gambling and the effect of pathological gambling on individuals, families and social institutions.

The commission also should propose whether gaming operations on Indian lands should be regulated by the states, not just the federal government, he said.

The Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission applauded Wolf's proposal.

"The gambling industry has convinced large numbers of the public and state legislators that gambling revenue is a 'free lunch' to state budget needs, but there still 'ain't no free lunch,'" said Lamar Cooper, the CLC staff member who handles the gambling issue.

"An unbiased commission could point out the discrepancies that exist between what the gambling industry

promises to state governments versus what it actually delivers," Cooper said.

In announcing his bill, Wolf illustrated several concerns about gambling's impact:

■ "Gambling cannibalizes other business, such as restaurants," he said. The number of restaurants in Atlantic City decreased from 243 in 1977, the year after the legalization of casinos, to 146 in 1987.

■ In the first 16 years of casino gambling in Atlantic City, the police budget tripled to \$24 million while the population fell 20 percent, according to the Wall Street Journal. The crime rate rose 230 percent in the city's first 13 years of legalized casinos, Wolf said.

Mississippi Baptists in school prayer fight

ECRU, Miss. (BP)—A Baptist layman serving as Pontotoc County school superintendent is facing a federal lawsuit filed by a mother who doesn't like his stand in favor of school prayer.

Jerry Horton, a member of Ecruc Baptist Church in Ecruc, Miss., and superintendent of the 2,700-student school district in northeast Mississippi, said disagreement has been building for months over the issue. The mother, Lisa Herdahl, has five children attending the 1,300-student North Pontotoc Attendance Center.

"There has been prayer in Pontotoc County schools for at least eight years with no complaints," Horton said.

Herdahl has said publicly her children are stigmatized and harassed because they do not participate in a daily, student-initiated devotional piped through the school's classroom loudspeaker system after announcements from the principal's office.

Her lawsuit states prayer is permitted in classrooms and at school events, and a high school-level course on Middle East studies uses the Bible as the only textbook.

The conflict may shape up as a national battle of titans, with the American Civil Liberties Union and People for the American Way coming down on Herdahl's side and the American Family Association on the school district's side.

The Christian Action Commission of the Mississippi Baptist Convention also has sided with the school.

Paul Jones, executive director of the Baptist group, said he has talked with Horton about the lawsuit and offered the support of the Mississippi Baptist Convention and the resources of Christian Action Commission.

Here's Hope TODAY



Lexington man offered others hope while awaiting news of wife's surgery

"I know after what happened in the waiting room that 'Here's Hope' is very serious. I was thinking Judy's operation was the most important thing that day, but the Lord already had that under control."

LEXINGTON—Most people would think John Hunt needed a dose of hope himself while waiting for his wife to have surgery for breast cancer.

Instead, he spent his time in the waiting room offering the hope of Jesus Christ to others.

Before he left his house for the hospital that morning last October, Hunt picked up some witnessing materials to review in preparation for the upcoming "Here's Hope" evangelism campaign.

Rather than studying the tracts, the Lexington layman used them to witness to two lab technicians in the waiting room. The two women had asked him about another book he was carrying, "Husband and Wife: Best of Friends."

Hunt, a risk manager for the University of Kentucky, had picked up the book at last September's Fall Festival of Marriage in Louisville. It was during that weekend that his wife, Judy, first felt the cancerous lump in her breast.

The story of the book and the marriage festival built a natural bridge for Hunt to talk about his Christian faith, he said.

"I ended by witnessing about the plan of salvation," said Hunt, a deacon and member of the outreach

committee at Southern Heights Baptist Church in Lexington. "I explained it doesn't matter what denomination you're a member of, as long as you repent. Only by faith in Jesus Christ can you be saved."

When he finished, one of the women was in tears, saying, "I feel like I should be in church right now."

Hunt then helped the women review the gospel tracts and the prayer at the end. Although they didn't have a chance to pray together, Hunt will have further contact with the women, who are assisting with a University of Kentucky study of breast cancer.

"That episode in the waiting room is a truly remarkable experience," Hunt said.

"It shows us what God wants us to do, what our priorities should be and how important the 'Here's Hope' witnessing campaign is. The time we spend on earth, 70 to 75 years, is so short compared to eternity. That's what we need to be concerned about."

Hunt also surprised fellow church member Carol Sebree when she came to the hospital to check on him. He asked her to wait while he finished talking with the lab technicians about Jesus.

She wondered how he could be

calm in the midst of trying circumstances. But Hunt said he already had worked through grief and had a meaningful prayer time the night before.

"The doctors were doing everything they could, and through faith we knew God was doing everything he could in surgery, working with the doctors," Hunt explained.

"So I had peace and a knowledge that everything works out for the best."

The night after the operation, Hunt told his church family what God had done.

Since then, many other opportunities have arisen because of Judy Hunt's remarkable progress with chemotherapy treatment. When people ask Hunt about his wife's progress, he seizes the opportunity to witness.

On Jan. 9, the first day of the "Here's Hope" campaign, Hunt witnessed to eight people who asked about his wife. He plans to follow up with two who aren't Christians.

As outreach director, Hunt also has encouraged other church members to share their faith. A total of 38 members at Southern Heights have committed to the "Here's Hope" effort.

He compares the 41 pounds he



John Hunt

lost in a university wellness program to the fear some people experience about witnessing. He never had a problem telling others about his weight loss, he said, so why should he be afraid to talk about the greatest thing that happened in his life?

When believers lay a foundation each morning with Bible reading and pray that the Lord will use them that day, God will place people in their paths the same way Hunt experienced at the hospital, he said.

"I know after what happened in the waiting room that 'Here's Hope' is very serious," he said.

"I was thinking Judy's operation was the most important thing that day, but the Lord already had that under control."

"We should be thankful and tell others about this hope we have. Just think, the Creator loves us enough to send his Son to die for us."

Graves County inmates finding hope in Jesus Christ

MAYFIELD—Charlie Simmons isn't sure whether to credit the revival at the Graves County jail to "Here's Hope" or to "Experiencing God" classes. He just knows the Lord is moving mightily.

Recently the jailer told Simmons, director of missions for Graves County Baptist Association, how much the jail has quieted down.

"They don't have all the whooping and hollering they used to," Simmons said. "Things are pretty peaceful up there. The jailer said, 'It's been so quiet, it's kind of scary.'"

The association's jail ministry began in November. When Simmons suggested a Bible study in December, he discovered inmates were eager. So he arranged to begin teaching "Experiencing God," a popular Baptist study course.

Beverly Burton and Lana Burgett of First Baptist Church in Mayfield teach the women's course on Tuesday mornings, with about eight attending regularly. In the afternoon, Simmons and fellow High Point Baptist Church member Ricky Frick teach 20 men.

Two people have professed faith in Jesus Christ thus far.

"I'm seeing a tremendous change in the men because of the study," Simmons said. "Every time we meet, you can see the depth of their spiritual understanding is growing."

News of the classes at the Graves County jail filtered to the neighboring Marshall County jail through a female prisoner's transfer. Now five women in Marshall County want to study "Experiencing God."

The "Here's Hope" campaign is creating additional excitement, Sim-

mons said, even though a formal program is not scheduled in the jail during the 60 days of witnessing. He said prisoners are encouraged to witness there and when they are released so they will have a positive impact on their family and friends.

"We're teaching them a lifestyle that will be a witness," he said. "We're excited about it because we feel God is doing some great things. I just want to make sure God gets the praise, not me. He opened the doors so I could go in. It's wonderful to be a part of what he's doing."

"HERE'S HOPE TODAY" is a joint effort of the Western Recorder and the Kentucky Baptist Convention evangelism office. This supplement will appear in the Recorder through the end of March to support the "Here's Hope. Share Jesus Now" campaign. The supplement is produced by the Recorder staff and State Correspondent Ken Walker. If you have a "Here's Hope" success story to share, please tell us about it by calling (502) 244-6470.

Graefenburg Church knows it takes many to make one disciple

GRAEFENBURG—When a pharmacist walked forward to proclaim his belief in Christ recently, Pastor David Head called five other people to stand beside him, since their efforts had played a part in his decision.

The pastor of Graefenburg Baptist Church could have asked for more, he said, but he had made his point: witnessing involves the entire congregation.

That hasn't been lost on the 50 members of the Graefenburg church who committed to witness for the 60 days of the "Here's Hope" campaign.

"What I'm hearing is that people are beginning to increase their

awareness and are planting a lot of seed," Head said.

"We have involvement across the board as far as ages, from college students through seniors, and our teenagers."

Though Graefenburg is an unincorporated community, its location near the sprawling subdivisions west of Frankfort gives it a wide mission field. The 175 people who attend Sunday school come from a region spanning Frankfort to Shelbyville.

Serving as a "crossroads" gives the church extraordinary opportunities, which is one reason Head scheduled one of the earliest "Here's Hope" kickoffs in the state last Au-

gust. Besides those committed to witness, 44 prayer partners have committed to pray for 200 friends, relatives and co-workers who aren't Christians.

As part of the "Here's Hope" campaign, church members have been encouraged to invite someone to their home for dinner and a gospel presentation. Some members have been trying to reach co-workers for several years, the pastor said, and this is a reminder to make a more intentional effort.

During February, Graefenburg Baptist will use special dramas, music and multimedia presentations at evangelistic services to ex-

plain clearly why people need a Savior.

"It's hard to convince good, moral people who aren't experiencing a crisis, are financially set and own their own business, that they need Christ," Head said.

"They have to see that need. It's an increasing challenge in my own witnessing."

The pastor said it will be important to follow up on those who don't come to Christ during the 60 days.

"If we don't go back to see them again, they'll feel like our witnessing project," he said.

"We want them to know we're in this for the long haul."

Here's Hope TODAY

WHERE'S HOPE?

Look for 'natural bridges' to Christian faith

Give me the outdoors any day and I'd be a happy camper. Skiing, hiking, white-water rafting—and especially camping—have created an outdoor enthusiast out of me.

I don't care for the elaborate motorized campers or quaint cabins. My style is a little more simple, or as some would say, rugged.

There's something about setting up a tent, building a campfire and spreading out my sleeping bag that makes me feel vibrantly alive. It allows me to re-tune my life to the Creator.

It's a peaceful solitude, and yet an awe-inspiring sense of unity and oneness with the universe.

So every once in a while I trade my noisy central-Louisville apartment for the serenity of one of Kentucky's state resorts. Chirping crickets, singing birds and gurgling brooks quiet my soul and offer a re-

prieve from the continuous drone of planes, trains, automobiles and my neighbors' loud music.

Camping also reminds me that life isn't nearly so complex as we humans tend to make it.

Last summer, some friends and I discovered Kentucky's Natural Bridge State Resort Park. The fresh smell of a recent rainstorm still lingered in the air as we arrived to set up camp. The next morning, we cooked up a hearty breakfast to give us energy for the hour-and-a-half hike up to the bridge.

We were rewarded for our efforts: Tucked deep within the Daniel Boone National Forest, the sprawling natural sandstone bridge offered a breath-taking panoramic view of Eastern Kentucky.

Taking in such sights reminds me how nature itself has been a natural bridge for helping me develop

my Christian faith. Whenever I explore a mammoth cave, or canoe the Licking River or ski Paoli Peaks, I cannot but give honor to the Lord. The eternal God, who created the majestic mountain ranges, also sustains the innermost reaches of my soul.

I've had other "natural bridges" to Christian faith as well: Christian parents explained to me in simple terms God's plan of salvation. And my church nurtured and disciplined me as I grew.

Jesus Christ is the ultimate bridge for our faith. He crossed the chasm between a perfect, eternal God and imperfect, mortal human beings.

Born 2,000 years ago as a human baby, God's Son came to us, offering a model lifestyle. And Jesus willingly sacrificed his own life so we could have eternal life.

Since I grew up in the beautiful foothills of North Carolina, in a Christian family and part of a caring church, it's no wonder that asking Jesus Christ into my life seemed like the natural thing for me to do, even as a little girl.

How about you? Accepting Jesus Christ as your Savior is the most important decision you'll ever make. But professing your faith in Christ need not be an unnatural experience at all.

Give your life to the Lord of all creation, and allow God's Spirit to guide every part of your life's journey.

—Melanie Childers, staff writer

■ For more information about how to become a Christian, or for spiritual assistance, please contact a Baptist church in your community or call the Western Recorder collect at (502) 244-6470.

God opens doors to witness in daily routine, woman says

RALEIGH, N.C. (BP)—While praying at her church, Birute Whisnant felt the Lord telling her to go witness to someone at the Days Inn motel next door.

"I went over there, and he directed me to the registration area," said Whisnant, of Raleigh, N.C. "So I walked to the counter and told the lady who registers guests, 'I was in the prayer room at Providence Baptist Church praying that the Lord would lead me to witness to someone. Are you the person I'm supposed to speak to?'"

"She said, 'Well, I don't know, but you can share if you like.'"

A few moments later the woman received Jesus Christ as her Savior.

"Wherever God places you, he's already working, and he's brought you there to be a part of it," Whisnant said. "Everywhere the Lord sends me—whether I stay at home or go to the grocery store—I think of that as my mission field, where the Lord has purposely sent me."

For example, one morning while driving to the dry cleaners, she noticed some men gathered in a parking lot preparing for work.

"The thought came to me, 'Those men need to know about Jesus,'" Whisnant recounted. "And I thought, 'Lord, do you really want me to go over there and tell them? Well, all right, Lord, if they're still there when I drive back, I'll stop and talk to them.'"

"They were still in the lot when I drove back, so I went to the supervisors in the work truck and said, 'I know you're going to think I'm crazy, but I'm here to tell you about Jesus. He said I should come.'"

The supervisors, who were Christians and had been wanting someone to help them witness to the men, said,

"Go right ahead. Just share whatever you want with these men."

So Whisnant told several of the workers about Jesus.

Whisnant did not become a Christian herself until she was 39 years old. But after joining a Bible study, she spontaneously shared her excitement with someone in a store.

"I had no idea what witnessing was at that time," she said. "That's

when you know your experience is real—when you want to share what Jesus is doing in your life. That is witnessing. It's that

simple.

"I think people sometimes have the idea that you have to present the whole gospel to someone at one time or you're not witnessing," Whisnant said. "There will be many times when you will not have that opportunity."

Just offering friendship to another person can be a witness, Whisnant noted.

Once during a retreat, she made friends with Thomasina, a worker in the camp's kitchen. "We only talked for 60 seconds as I passed through the serving line each day, but we began to know each other."

Before leaving the retreat, Whisnant said good-bye to Thomasina, telling her how much she appreciated her sweetness and humor. "You must be a Christian," Whisnant said.

After Thomasina said she was not one, Whisnant added: "You act like a Christian and say the right things. Is there any reason why you aren't one?"

Right then, Thomasina accepted Jesus Christ as her Savior.

Witnessing isn't that hard, Whisnant explained. "Just ask God to give you a love for the people around you."

IDEAS FOR SHARING YOUR FAITH

Celebrate Hope

A Special Session of the Kentucky Baptist Evangelism Conference

Monday, February 27, 10 a.m.
Walnut Street Baptist Church, Louisville

Featuring Kentucky Baptist Vocational Evangelists



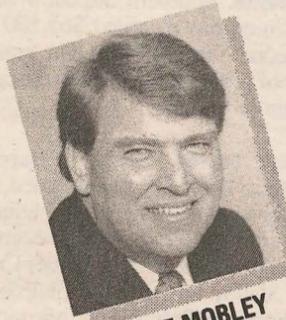
STEVE HARDY
Voc. Evang. president



CYNTHIA WINFREE
Soloist



RON WILBURN
Song leader



JOE MOBLEY
Evangelist



STEVIE REED
Evangelist



DANA DAVIDSON
Soloist

"Do the work of an evangelist"—2 Timothy 4:5

BAPTISTS

Stagg says both Mohler and Boyce wrong on Abstract

Annie offering gets \$37 million

ATLANTA—Southern Baptists gave \$37.18 million to last year's Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for home missions, according to unaudited figures released by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

That is the second-highest annual total ever received for the offering but still fell nearly \$3 million short of the \$40 million goal.

Contributions in 1994 increased 2.4 percent over the previous year's total, the HMB reported.

The largest Annie Armstrong offering was \$37.6 million in 1992. The goal for this year's offering is \$50 million.

DIAMONDHEAD, Miss. (ABP)—A prominent former professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary has issued a statement affirming President Al Mohler's interpretation of the Abstract of Principles but denouncing his application of the doctrinal statement.

Frank Stagg, longtime New Testament teacher at the Louisville seminary, said Mohler's intention to require teachers to adhere strictly to the Abstract is precisely what the founders intended. However, that intent was "a major flaw" in the institution's founding, Stagg charged.

Stagg wrote an essay on the subject which he released to the press in December.

Mohler, president since 1993, has said the Abstract should be the "irreducible minimum" governing what is taught in the seminary's classrooms. He has written a lengthy interpretation of the Abstract, which he views with strict literalness.

Last summer, Mohler forced the resignation of theology professor Molly Marshall by charging her teaching fell outside the Abstract's boundaries. He did not specify in what way she taught outside the Abstract.

Mohler's use of the 20-point Abstract has been criticized as a departure from recent history, where professors were allowed latitude in inter-

pretation of the document. The Abstract has been signed by every faculty member who has taught at the school since its founding in 1859.

Stagg concedes that Mohler correctly reports the opinion of the seminary's first president, James Boyce. Boyce viewed adherence to the Abstract as the "non-negotiable condition" for employment at the seminary, Stagg said.

"No difference, however slight, ... is here allowable," Boyce wrote at the time.

But Boyce mistakenly treated the Abstract itself as inerrant, Stagg charged. And Boyce's strict use of the Abstract introduced creedalism into the Southern Baptist Convention, Stagg added.

In 1856, two years before the Abstract was written, Boyce outlined a vision for theological education that included both advanced scholarship preparing ministers for research and writing and a commitment to an abstract of principles that would be binding on all professors.

Those positions "were on a collision course from the outset," Stagg said. It is not compatible to create an environment that encourages open inquiry for truth while at the same time trying to "shelter truth" through a creedal statement, he explained.

Returning the seminary to a strict understanding of Boyce's views is

dangerous in a world that has gained much in understanding from the 19th century, Stagg said.

"Back to Boyce" means teaching that God has chosen to give saving grace to the elect only," he said. "It means proclaiming outward calling to all with effective calling possible to those only whom God has chosen to give saving grace."

It also means "no women teaching theology to men" and "no women enrolled as students," said Stagg, pointing out that women were not allowed to even audit classes until 1900, after the four seminary founders had died.

"If we now return to Boyce and the Abstract of Principles, it will be bondage to a mixture of truth and error, frustrating honest and competent search for truth, and excluding women," Stagg said.

Stagg said the seminary owes its allegiance not to Boyce, but "Jesus Christ as best we can understand the biblical witness to his word and his way."

Mohler, provided with a copy of Stagg's essay, responded in a written statement that Stagg is "certainly correct" that Boyce intended for the seminary to be a "creedal institution," but Mohler said he offers "no apology" for trying to keep the seminary theologically pure.

He said Stagg's admission that faculty members in the past have

adopted a "private interpretation" of the document indicates "a lack of integrity (that) is breathtaking."

Mohler said Stagg apparently had pledged to teach in accordance with the Abstract only "in so far as the Abstract suited his purposes." He charged that Stagg has violated the Abstract's "clear teachings" on the Trinity, election, the fall of man, regeneration and justification in published materials and classroom lectures.

Mohler called Stagg's references to the founders' views on Calvinism and women "a sad attempt to confuse the issue."

Mohler defended Calvinism, and he said the issue of women is not addressed in the Abstract. "Women are fully admitted into all degree programs. Dr. Stagg knows this is the case," he said.

Mohler said as a student he took a New Testament class taught by Stagg. That experience validated his view that Boyce was right, Mohler said.

"I learned by observing Dr. Stagg that Dr. Boyce's demand for a regulative confession was more than justified," Mohler said. "For a theological seminary, all that stands between belief and unbelief, between orthodoxy and heterodoxy, integrity and compromise, is a clear statement of faith to which all who teach are accountable."

BAPTIST BITS

■ **Prevost named to Fellowship post.** Tom Prevost, director of missions ministries and partnerships with the Baptist General Association of Virginia, has been elected associate missions coordinator for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. Prevost, 48, will coordinate missions administration and short-term volunteers, replacing Betty Law, who retired in October.

■ **Mission fund started.** A band of current and former home missions volunteers has established a trust fund to support future volunteer work not funded through traditional means. Earnings from the trust fund, to be managed by the Southern Baptist Foundation, will be used on a variety of projects, from student summer missions to Mission Service Corps, the Home Mission Board's volunteer program for adults serving four months or longer. For more information about the fund, contact Irene Bennett at (706) 737-2537.

■ **Women's director named.** Willene Pierce, director of Maryland-Delaware Woman's Missionary Union the past 13 years, has been named director of the women's department of the Baptist World Alliance. She succeeds Beth Hayworth MacClaren, who is retiring.

■ **Volunteers sought.** Thousands of volunteers will be sought for a series of major evangelistic campaigns in western Europe between 1995 and 1997. Partnership evangelism crusades sponsored by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board are scheduled for Denmark, Spain, Norway, Sweden, France and Germany. For information, call (800) 888-8657.

■ **Southern names Henry.** Carl F.H. Henry has been named senior research professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. A leading figure in American evangelicalism for the past half-century, Henry was among the founding faculty of Fuller Theological Seminary

and also taught at Northern Baptist Theological Seminary and Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary. Henry rose to international prominence as founding editor of Christianity Today. As a senior research professor, Henry will not teach a few classes at Southern and will be in residence on the Louisville campus periodically.

■ **Southwestern names PR director.** Former missionary to Argentina Jan Johnsonius has been named public relations director at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. She replaces Scott Collins, who resigned last year in the aftermath of Russell Dilday's firing as seminary president. A native of Springfield, Ohio, Johnsonius holds a journalism degree from Murray State University.

■ **Brotherhood names development officer.** Benjamin Kelley Jr. has been named chief development officer for the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission. Benjamin, previously development vice president for a Memphis, Tenn., hospital, will direct the Brotherhood Commission's \$10 million capital campaign.

■ **WMU awards grants.** Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union has awarded \$65,500 in grants from its Second Century Fund. The grants will fund a variety of projects designed to educate and involve women in missions.

■ **Parliamentarians named.** Southern Baptist Convention President Jim Henry has named six parliamentarians for next summer's SBC annual meeting. They are John Sullivan, executive director of the Florida Baptist Convention; Lester Cooper Jr., pastor of Valley Hill Baptist Church in Riverdale, Ga.; Sanford Peterson, a corporate communications consultant; Jimmy Jackson, pastor of Whitesburg Baptist Church in Huntsville, Ala.; David Matlock, a juvenile court judge from Shreveport, La.; and Joe Reynolds, a lawyer from Houston.

WMU dedicates Hunt Museum

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)—The Alma Hunt Museum of Woman's Missionary Union was dedicated Jan. 7 in a ceremony attended by WMU board members and guests from across the United States.

The museum, which highlights WMU's 107-year history, is named in honor of WMU's executive director from 1948-1974. Hunt, along with Southern Baptist Convention President Jim Henry, spoke during the dedication ceremonies.

Also speaking were Carolyn Weatherford Crumpler, WMU executive director from 1974-1989; Delanna O'Brien, current WMU executive director; Carolyn Miller, WMU president; and Dotson Nelson, long-time friend of Hunt.

Henry, pastor of First Baptist Church, Orlando, Fla., described Hunt as a woman who, like the psalmist in Psalm 111:1, has sought the Lord with her whole heart. Consequently, as a missions leader in the SBC for nearly 30 years, she led Southern Baptists to develop "habits of the heart."

Hunt taught Southern Baptists to accept change, Henry said. Her heart's cry was, "Lord, I don't care where we go or how we get there, I just want you to be in charge."

She also firmly fixed in the hearts of Southern Baptists the need to give, Henry said, citing as an example his father-in-law who, although disabled in many ways by a stroke, made sure his gift to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering reached the church.

A third habit developed by Hunt is the close and harmonious relationship WMU has with the SBC and her enti-



PAST & PRESENT Alma Hunt, former executive director of Woman's Missionary Union, gets a hug from Jim Henry, current president of the Southern Baptist Convention. (BP photo)

ties, Henry said.

"The link between Woman's Missionary Union and the Southern Baptist Convention is critical," he insisted. "It must be encouraged, protected and strengthened."

"The Southern Baptist Convention without Woman's Missionary Union would be like ham without eggs ... Lottie without Moon and Annie without Armstrong. We go together. We must pray for and build on in the future this habit created by Miss Hunt."

In her remarks to the audience, Hunt expressed appreciation to the WMU executive board for honoring her, but chided, "You hadn't ought done it. You should have a museum, but you should not have named it for me."

She encouraged WMU leaders to continue seeking God's wisdom as they plan for the future. Referring to Isaiah 43:18-19, she admonished the women not to cling to the past but to look for new ways God is working.

Graham crusade to spread gospel in troubled spots

MINNEAPOLIS (BP)—Despite violence and civil war, church leaders around the world plan to participate in evangelist Billy Graham's "Global Mission" crusade from San Juan, Puerto Rico, March 16-18.

His sermons will be transmitted by satellite to as many as 10 million people gathered in 1,700 sites in 165 countries. They will be translated into 80 languages, and as many as 1 billion people are expected to hear at least one sermon during prime time on television in up to 100 countries.

Graham's crusade will reach into the world's hot spots:

■ In Haiti, Christian leaders originally thought civil unrest would rule out the possibility of participation. But now plans call for transmitting the sermons to two cities.

■ Thousands of Rwandans will have an opportunity to hear Graham preach at a satellite location in a refugee camp near Goma, Zaire.

■ Ugandan Christians hope Graham's sermons can prompt spiritual renewal that will thwart the onslaught of AIDS in their country.

■ Christians in Croatia are distributing Graham's book, "Peace with God," in preparation for the campaign's outreach in their embattled country.

■ Crusade planners hope it will promote social healing in South Africa.

"We've never had anything quite like this, when we're able to reach so many millions of people every night," Graham said.

"It's time for the church to utilize this technology to make a worldwide statement that in the midst of chaos, emptiness and despair, there's hope in the person of Jesus Christ."

Ethnic, religious strife hacks rights

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Violence spawned by ethnic and religious differences posed the greatest threat to human rights in recent months, according to the Human Rights Watch monitoring agency.

Unfortunately, the United States and the rest of the international community failed to provide the moral leadership needed to stop the abuses, the organization said in a 362-page report on global human-rights violations.

"The genocide in Rwanda was only the most horrendous example of a phenomenon that ranged from 'ethnic cleansing' in Bosnia and similar atrocities in Nagorno-Karabakh (in the former Soviet republic of Azerbaijan), to increasing xenophobia and anti-immigrant hysteria in parts of the West," the study concluded.

The Human Rights Watch report painted a bleak picture of 65 nations where human rights were routinely violated, along with a community of nations that responded with what it called "empty rhetoric" to urgent moral challenges.

President Clinton received stinging criticism for the United States' failure to take stronger action to stop the carnage in Bosnia and Rwanda and for continuing to trade with China despite its poor record on human

rights and religious liberty.

"President Clinton rarely showed the moral leadership needed to build public support for tough human rights positions, allowing the pursuit of trade and investment to dominate foreign policy," Human Rights Watch Director Kenneth Roth told reporters. "With the administration trumpeting trade and whispering about human rights, victims worldwide were regularly abandoned."

However, the report did praise Clinton for using the threat of military force to restore Haitian President Jean Bertrand Aristide.

The White House had no immediate response to the report.

In addition to Rwanda and Bosnia-Herzegovina, the report named Nigeria, Ethiopia, Cambodia, India and Russia as sites of emerging ethnic and religious strife.

"Some governments abetted violence by ignoring or endorsing it when directed by fundamentalist religious groups," the report said. It cited activities of Islamic militants in Bangladesh and Pakistan and Hindu militants in Mauritius.

However, affluent nations also endured human-rights problems of their own, the report claimed.

"European and North American governments showed their own am-

bivalence toward ethnic and religious diversity as they responded to mounting xenophobia (the fear of foreigners) at home by restricting asylum," it said.

The Western peace plan to end the fighting in the former Yugoslavia was characterized as one that would divide Bosnia along ethnic and religious lines with little meaningful guarantees of minority rights.

Renewed slaughter could occur in Rwanda, the report warned, as the nation's Hutu ethnic group, blamed for the genocide earlier this year, regrouped in Zairean refugee camps where they fled after rival Tutsi troops won the nation's civil war.

Human Rights Watch also took aim at United Nations Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali for "squandering ... the U.N.'s unique capacity on the global stage to articulate fundamental human rights values and to legitimize their enforcement."

The United Nations, the report said, was caught in a conflict between its duty to prevent the slaughter of innocent civilians and its role as a neutral mediator and provider of humanitarian aid.

"To choose impartiality when both tasks must be performed is to signal a moral equivalence between victim and victimizer."

Smuggling risks lives, Chinese leader warns

HONG KONG (ABP)—Bible-smuggling puts Chinese Christians at risk and should be stopped, their new government-authorized leader warned.

"To receive Bibles smuggled into the country is against the law," said Bao Jiayuan, associate general secretary of the China Christian Council. "Why should Chinese Christians risk their freedom for a foreign Bible when Bibles are legally available within China?"

Each year, about 2.2 million Bibles are produced in China by Amity Press, a joint venture between the United Bible Societies and the Chinese council, the group recognized by

the government as representing most Protestants in the country. Eventually, Amity is expected to publish 4 million Bibles a year.

But the 10 million Bibles produced in China since 1980 are inadequate to meet the needs of China's "unregistered Protestants," estimated by some to number 20 million, say critics of the council. Some also mistrust the official church for its willingness to cooperate with communists.

"The CCC is just a government church. They don't like believers in the countryside to have the Bible, because they are afraid that these people may start their own church, away from them," charged Mark Szander-

na of the Revival Christian Church, which delivered 300,000 Bibles to China last year.

Bao acknowledged that demand for Bibles in China exceeds supply, but he said Bibles smuggled to rural areas are subject to confiscation, while Bibles distributed by Amity Press are not.

"Please stop endangering Chinese Christians," Bao pleaded. "Let us work together to help them instead."

Szanderna said Chinese believers "are willing to pay the price" for smuggled Bibles and that his organization would be reluctant to work with the council. "We do not trust the government church," he said.

Although political and religious extremists have committed human-rights atrocities, their behavior has been abetted by the passive response from Western nations, according to a report from Human Rights Watch.

WORLD VIEW

■ **Sudanese Christians crucified.** Five Christians have been martyred for their faith since July in Muslim-dominated Sudan, Anglican sources reported. Three of the victims were executed by crucifixion with six-inch nails in the Nuba Mountains, according to eyewitnesses. "There is no clear reason, except that they are Christians," said Anglican Bishop Daniel Zindo. "The government is persecuting those who are Christian leaders because they want the people to all become Muslim."

■ **Attorneys attack persecution.** An international network of lawyers specializing in religious liberty will take up the cause of Christians persecuted for their faith, according to World Evangelical Fellowship. "Abuses of religious liberty are of growing concern at a time of religious revivalism among different faiths around the world," said Daniel Ho of the Malaysian Evangelical Association. A fund established by World Evangelical Fellowship's religious

liberty commission will aid Christians who are unable to pay for legal services.

■ **Rebels may let missionaries go.** Six American missionaries kidnapped in Colombia and Panama since early 1993 may have new hope for release if political efforts on their behalf pay off. Ernesto Samper, Colombia's new president, has called for a dialogue with the guerrillas believed to be holding the missionaries. Five of the missionaries work with New Tribes Mission; the sixth is with Wycliffe Bible Translators.

■ **Haitians get food.** At least 14,357 impoverished Haitians have been fed since Baptist feeding efforts began in December. The relief project, operated jointly by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board and Brotherhood Commission, has distributed 13,914 "family packs" of basic food commodities. So far, 81 volunteers have served in Haiti, and 83 more have been re-

cruted. But at least 200 more volunteers will be needed. Information about the relief effort is available from the Brotherhood Commission by calling (800) 280-1891. Financial contributions may be sent to the Brotherhood Commission, 1548 Poplar Ave., Memphis, Tenn. 38104, or the Foreign Mission Board, Box 6767, Richmond, Va. 23230.

■ **Prayer powers missions.** Although "prayer is not the work of missions," prayer "releases the power of the gospel" to strengthen missions, according to Terri Willis, associate director of international prayer strategy for the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. "Prayer is designed to extend the kingdom of God into enemy territory," she told participants in a missions conference in Louisville.

■ **Medical care suffers in Cuba.** Many Cubans, especially children, die for lack of medicine and medical treatment, Havana

oncologist Victor Gonzalez reports. But Gonzalez, vice president of the Baptist Convention of Western Cuba's youth department, is working with U.S. volunteers to get medical supplies to Cuban doctors. They're especially targeting Christian physicians, "so that God would receive the glory," according to Joe Grant, a surgeon and member of the U.S. Christian Medical Association.

■ **Baptist released in Morocco.** A prominent Baptist from El Salvador has been released abruptly from a Moroccan jail after serving only six days of a two-year sentence for sharing his faith in the predominantly Muslim country. Gilberto Orellana, a former conductor of the San Salvador Symphony Orchestra and teacher at a music conservatory in Morocco, was arrested in December for "proselytization" of Islamic Moroccans. But prayers, appeals and possible contacts by foreign governments apparently secured his release.

More Israeli Jews believing in Jesus as the Messiah

Continued from page 1
around the world.

The annual observance, held in conjunction with the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles, has more to do with civic pride than religion, since many marchers are sponsored by local corporations. But the Messianic Jewish group was extremely conspicuous as they marched along Jaffa Road. Led by women wearing brightly spangled costumes, they carried loudspeakers broadcasting Christian music.

Most of the parade watchers paid them no more attention than other marching groups. But in several locations Orthodox Jews, clearly upset

that the Messianic Jews were there, shouted angrily. Some approached the marchers with hands raised as if to strike out, but were calmed by policemen.

Oddly, the scene mirrors Israel today. An estimated 80 percent of the population shuns Jewish Orthodoxy; only a relatively small percentage of the people are devoutly and actively religious.

But Orthodox Jews can be a fearsome force, dedicated to rooting out

Jewish Christianity, which they abhor as a heretical deviation.

When Narkis Street Baptist Congregation in Jerusalem held an open house during the Feast of Tabernacles late in 1994, about 30 Orthodox Jews came to debate church leaders and tried to urge visiting Jews to leave. Many congregation members responded by presenting their Christian testimonies.

"I was surprised at how much they listened," Southern Baptist representative Pat Hoaldrige said of the Orthodox. Hesitant to discuss the limited response among "hard-core" Jews, he admits finding ways to share the gospel with people violently opposed to it is a challenge.

"I try to create a situation where Israelis will come and want to know who we are," he explained. "If we can do that in a non-threatening way, then the door is open. If you go to them, you cause problems."

Narkis Street Baptist Congregation has about 250 members in their English-language, international congregation, plus another 80 people who worship in a Hebrew-language congregation. A group of Russian

immigrants also meets during the week with church leaders.

Aggressive evangelism efforts directed at the Russian immigrants likely would draw the ire of both Orthodox Jews and the Israeli government.

"Narkis Street isn't reaching out to the Russians, yet some have come," Hoaldrige said. "We include them and encourage them to learn Hebrew and get involved with the people who have formed the roots of the society here. If they don't learn Hebrew, they don't get jobs and don't get integrated."

Both Messianic Jews and those who work with them remain cautious because of the obvious dangers. They have endured an assortment of attacks and threats through the years.

In 1992, a youth group from the Narkis Street congregation was attacked by a gang in downtown Jerusalem. But the most destructive attack occurred when unknown arsonists burned down the church in October 1982. Rebuilding has been costly and time-consuming.

Jesus & Jews & Jerusalem

Jewish believers see new openness to Christ

TEL AVIV, Israel (BP)—"The harvest is ready in Israel. We just need to pray for more workers," said the Messianic Jewish woman named Chaya.

She and her husband belong to a congregation that meets in the greater Tel Aviv area.

To describe her as a bold Christian witness would be an understatement. Chaya and other women led 200 Messianic Jews through Jerusalem streets last September as part of the annual Jerusalem March.

Chaya became a Christian at First Baptist Church in Gainesville, Fla. She later married Avi, an Israeli and Messianic Jew, and moved back to Israel with him 10 years ago. Now the two help organize evangelistic campaigns throughout Israel.

Evangelism in Israel is a bit different, she pointed out. Training courses for campaign workers include sessions on how to deal with violence and the police. The Christians work the streets in small groups, handing out thousands of tracts but sharing the gospel meaningfully with just a few people.

A turning point came in 1986 when a handful of Messianic Jews dared to begin witnessing on the streets. They prepared for the worst kind of reprisals, but the expected violence didn't materialize—so they continued. Growth followed.

In one recent three-day campaign in Tel Aviv, they mobilized 74 believers who passed out thousands of tracts, gave out 103 copies of the New Testament to people who had never seen one, and managed to present the entire plan of salvation to 260 people. Eleven people were willing to give their addresses for follow-up visitation. Five accepted Christ as personal

Savior.

Another Tel Aviv believer named Eitan doesn't think increased evangelism efforts account for the increased response.

"I think God has chosen to bring more believers to himself at this time," he said simply. Eitan and his wife, Orit, became Christians after Orit discovered her father had become a believer in Christ shortly before he died of a heart attack. He had not told his family of his decision.

After they learned of her father's decision, they visited a Christian organization in North Carolina and spent months exploring the faith he had found.

"After almost a year, we understood some things," Orit said. "First, there is a God, which we had not known. Second, we knew the Bible was the word of God, that it was impossible for somebody to have just written it. And we learned that the New Testament is part of the Old Testament. The result is that Jesus is the Messiah."

These days Eitan works with a Christian publishing house, producing Christian materials in Hebrew that are in short supply in Israel. And they have come to understand why Orit's father kept news of his conversion to himself.

They found their new faith didn't bother most of their atheistic friends as long as they kept their beliefs to themselves.

And close friends tended to keep the couple's faith a secret, if only to avoid causing problems for them. "They're also trying to protect themselves," Eitan said, "like if you have somebody in your family who's a criminal. You don't talk about it; it's a shame for the family, not socially acceptable."

ENTERPRISERS are Volunteer Missionaries!

Originally known as Baptist Young Women Enterprisers, this volunteer missions option is open to all adult women, and will be a vital part of *Women on Mission*. Service can be in the United States or overseas.

Kentucky's first Enterprisers went to Birmingham, Alabama for a week in July, 1994. From Rich Pond Baptist Church, Bowling Green, they were led by Patience Fort, WMU director. The experience was so meaningful to them, several are planning to be Enterprisers again this year!

If you are interested in serving through Vacation Bible School, Backyard Bible clubs, week-long camps, Baptist center work, day camp, survey work, sewing, clean up, recreation, resort or inner city ministry, contact us. Your preparation needs to begin NOW!

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'Beyond This Time'

"Beyond This Time" was the theme of the Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children endowment campaign led by Dr. Eldred Taylor in the mid 1980s. Its focus was on the creation of resources for children in the future.

I was reminded of this theme during a visit with a donor recently.

He was in the hospital, recovering from serious surgery. He is in his nineties and his wife has already gone home to be with our Lord. The couple had no children and chose to set up trusts so that their estates will help children in the care of Kentucky Baptists.

As we talked and prayed, the donor shared how God had blessed them. He was so happy that what God had given him and his wife would be used beyond their lifetimes to care for children in need. God had not blessed them physically with children; but through their generous legacy, God will bless them with literally hundreds of spiritual children.

In a time when many are saying you should take care of number one, it was so refreshing to hear this man express the sheer joy that this gift has brought to him. I am happy to report that he is back home and

doing well.

God has more work for him here. Maybe it's to share with others the value of giving beyond your own time.

Have you thought about what will happen to the resources God has given to you when you no longer need them? This would be an ideal time to review your plans. If you do not have a will, please make one. The state of Kentucky has one for you, but it will make no provisions for the special things you may want to do. If you have a will, make sure that it is up to date and does what you want done.

After you take care of loved ones and your obligations, please consider leaving something to help hurting children through Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children. It may take the form of a special trust as this donor and his wife established, or as a bequest in your will. God has been generous to you. Channel his money to continued service beyond your time.

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

HOMES FOR CHILDREN



Curtis C. Mooney

CHURCHES

Churches warned to prevent infection in nurseries

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)—Child care practices followed in the average Southern Baptist church are not adequate for the proper control of AIDS and infectious diseases, a Baptist child care expert said.

Wendy Dever, minister to preschoolers and children at The Rock Baptist Church in Rex, Ga., spoke to a group of children's leaders in a conference sponsored by Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union.

"The church today is in trouble," Dever said. "If the state inspectors came in and looked over our practices, I'm sorry, but I think there would be a whole lot of church nurseries closed down."

If nursery workers love babies and children and want to work with them, they should follow standard procedures every time, she said. There is no

room for just some of the time.

"If workers won't follow the procedures, they should not be allowed to work with little people," Dever said.

Dever listed the following as just a few of the practices which should be performed without fail in all church children's areas to help control disease:

■ **Wear gloves.** Gloves should be located in every room in the children's area of the church. A fresh pair of gloves should be worn each time a worker changes a diaper, cleans a cut or scrape, changes a bandage or cleans up after a child has vomited. Gloves provide protection not only for the worker but also for all the children, she said.

■ **Dispose of diapers.** Diapers should be thrown away only after

they have been placed in a plastic bag and the bag closed properly, she said. The diaper changing surface should be cleaned with a bleach/water solution after each diaper change. Babies' hands also should be wiped clean during the diaper change.

■ **Clean up.** All surfaces in the room should be cleaned on a regular schedule and with proper cleaning materials—floors twice a day, beds once a day, toys at least twice a day.

■ **Wash hands.** Hands should be washed often while working with children, Dever said. Workers should wash their hands before they enter the children's room, before and after physical contact as often as possible, after trips to the bathroom, after a cough or sneeze, before handling any food or drinks and after handling diapers or contaminated items.

■ **Mark food and bottles.** Children's food and bottles should be clearly marked and only given when following instructions by parents, Dever said. "Never send home dirty bottles and dishes. The message you'll send home is that this child is not important to us."

Exceptional child care impacts all areas of the church, Dever said. "When young families come to your church, they don't want to go down to the young adult department and see what's going on. They want to go to the children's area and meet the people who are going to be loving their children."

One way children's workers can show their care is by providing an environment where everything that can be done to eliminate and contain disease is done, she said.

How accessible is your church?

If you had an accident this week that put you in a wheelchair, would you be able to get into your church next Sunday?

A new brochure available from the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board helps churches evaluate the accessibility of their buildings to people with disabilities. And Pamela Thrift, Kentucky Baptist Convention consultant on special needs ministries, hopes every Kentucky Baptist church will take the two-page test.

The HMB brochure evaluates a church's accessibility in nine areas: parking, entrances and exits, walkways, ramps, doors, rest rooms, multi-story buildings, water fountains and worship space.

More than 36 million people in the United States suffer some form of disability that could limit their access to many church buildings, the brochure states. These people include children born with disabilities, adults who have developed debilitating diseases or had disabling accidents and older people with decreased mobility.

Items in the survey, for example, ask if handicapped parking spaces are more than 12 feet wide, if walkways are at least 48 inches wide, if doors are at least 32 inches wide and if there is any space in the sanctuary for wheelchair-bound people to sit.

For copies of the brochure, called "How Accessible is Your Church?," call the HMB's customer service center at (800) 634-2462. For information on ministry to people with special needs, contact Thrift at the KBC.

Recover from burnout instead of resigning, minister says

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)—Should a music minister who is suffering burnout change churches or resign from the ministry?

Not necessarily, according to Keith Smith, senior minister of University Baptist Church in Charlottesville, Va. Smith recently led a seminar on burnout for music ministers at Ridgcrest Baptist Conference Center.

"Burnout usually leads to fall out, but it doesn't have to," Smith said. "Changing churches can't solve the problem. There will be a honeymoon period if you move to a new church, but after that you're still the same burned out person."

Smith quoted church consultant Lyle Schaller to say: "The war department in the church is the music department. When you start messing around with people's hymnals, the choir, and the music they sing, you could be in for a battle."

In times of conflict with church

members or other ministerial staff, a minister may choose "fight or flight," Smith observed.

"We can choose flight, to retreat and lick our wounds," he said. "Yet sometimes we need to stay and fight—not necessarily the deacons or the choir—but sometimes an internal fight to change ourselves."

In some extreme situations, a job change may be the only answer, Smith said. "But usually, when you burn out and your well runs dry, it is not the time to leave the church or leave the ministry. It's better to stay and recover from burnout."

"Then you can consider moving, and the new church will have a refreshed minister. The most valuable asset God has is you as a person," he said.

Drawing from authors John Sanford and William Willimon, Smith urged the ministers to realize vocational ministry has several unique characteristics that promote burnout:

■ **The job is never finished** and the minister often cannot tell if his work is having any results. Smith said he reached a point a few years ago where he felt like the figure from Greek mythology who was consigned for eternity to push a boulder up a hill, only to have it roll down again, endlessly repeating the cycle.

■ **The work is repetitive** and sometimes boring. There is a sameness about ministry from week to week and year to year, as weekly schedules and seasonal emphases are constantly repeated.

■ **The minister must deal constantly** with people's expectations, which is difficult because many churches are diverse. As a result, multiple, and often conflicting, expectations are laid upon the minister and his family.

"Do what is best for you and your children," he advised, "no matter what others may think or say."

■ **Ministers feel they must spend** a great deal of time in a public persona.

Smith told of a ministerial colleague who was told by a search committee he could not wear shorts if called to that church.

■ **Ministers may become exhausted** by failure, and the minister and the church are not valued by surrounding culture.

■ **The minister must work with the same people** year in and year out, listening to the same complaints from people who are volunteers. "They know they don't have to be there," Smith noted, "and at the slightest problem, they're often gone."

■ **Ministers work with people in need**, so there's a drain of personal energy because of ministries such as marriage counseling and grief counseling.

■ **Many clergy are ill-prepared** both professionally and personally for the kinds of challenges they face in ministry. Smith urged the ministers to find help and training in areas of professional incompetence.

Owensboro motorcycle church draws bikers and critics

Continued from page 3

invited each spring to the "Blessing of the Bikes," an unusual event at which "we bless the bikers and talk to them about salvation," Powell said. "We have a prayer for them while they're sitting on their motorcycles."

During the Memorial Day poker run for the homeless last year, bikers drew a playing card at each of five stops. They paid \$1 for each card.

"We raised about \$800 in a few hours," Powell said. Proceeds were given to several families in need and to area homeless shelters.

These practices—especially baptizing in swimming pools and blessing motorcycles—are the very reasons some Kentucky preachers have questioned Powell's approach, and indirectly, his doctrine.

These critics believe Powell has gone too far—in his unorthodox techniques and in his distance from other Baptist churches. For example, some question the authority of Powell's baptisms and criticize SOS for not beginning as a mission sponsored by an existing KBC church.

But Powell, a 1988 graduate of

Mid-Continent Baptist Bible College in Mayfield, has a ready defense of his doctrine: "I believe Jesus Christ is the only way to heaven. I believe baptism follows salvation. I believe Christians should be a member of a New Testament, Bible-believing church, that they should tithe and be soul-winners."

Powell perseveres in his ministry, despite some pastors who told him he was "messing up" his ministry and others who accused him of "stealing" church members, he said.

Powell's past has contributed significantly to the ministry he now provides. He has been riding motorcycles for 25 years and was a "patch holder" in a secular bikers' club for more than two years. He often partied with bikers to the neglect of his family.

His life took a dramatic turn in 1983, after he learned that a good biker friend was dying of cancer.

"We sat around a campfire that night and talked about death," he said. "Someone asked me what I would do if I knew I was going to die."

Powell shocked himself as well as his friends when he heard himself

saying, "I'd get things right with the Lord."

Several weeks later, Powell and his family attended Wednesday evening church services at Airline Baptist Church near their home in Henderson. Powell gave his life to the Lord.

"It changed me," he said. "I tried to conform to the way everybody else was. I sold my bike, cut my hair and got rid of my leathers."

By 1985, Powell had begun preaching. He entered Mid-Continent Bible College and accepted a call from a nearby church as pastor.

Revival invitations followed, and in 1992, he was invited to share his story at the KBC evangelism conference. However, Powell struggled with the type of reception other pastors gave him, especially during that conference.

"I feel like sometimes people used me because of my testimony of being an outlaw biker who got saved," he said. "I felt like their trophy at times."

Powell became indignant: "I wondered how many other bikers those (church leaders) had won to Jesus

since me."

"Then God spoke to my heart right there on that pew," Powell continued. "He said, 'Jim, how many bikers have you won to Jesus since you got saved?' That brought me under conviction."

Powell said he realized then that God saved him to be Jim Powell, not to conform to what others determined was proper.

That's when Powell began to develop a vision for ministering to bikers. "With a 'who better than me' attitude, he let his hair grow back out and bought another bike."

Although not respected by some Kentucky Baptists, Powell has won the respect of the biking culture: "Just about every biker in this town, whether they come to this church or not, has made me their pastor," he said. "I do their weddings and funerals."

"My brothers who pastor First Baptist churches are going to win people to Jesus that I cannot win because of my appearance," he continued. "But I ask them to realize that I'm winning people to the Lord that they'll never win."

PEOPLE

KENTUCKY KERNELS

By their 13th birthday, 97 percent of American teenagers have at least a working knowledge of a computer, according to the Gallup Youth Survey.

Also, 64 percent of today's teenagers have at some time used a cellular telephone. Nearly 60 percent of teens report having instructed their parents in the use of a calculator, computer, telephone answering machine, cellular phone or fax machine.

Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Ann Tatum

■ **ASHLAND**—Fairview Church called **Michael Rice** as pastor. He previously was associate pastor at Unity Church.

■ **CADIZ**—Canton Church called **Paul Cannon** as pastor. He previously was pastor of Emmanuel Church at Marion.

■ **FISHERVILLE**—Green Hills Church ordained **Bruce Bentley** and **Jenny Coulter** as deacons Jan. 8.

■ **FRANKFORT**—Calvary Church recently called **Allen Baker** as minister of youth. Baker is a student at Kentucky State University. Also, **Joy Morgan** was called as director of children's ministries. She began her new ministry Jan. 1.

■ **GOSHEN**—Liberty Church called **Drew Smith** of Arkansas as pastor. He is a student at Southern Seminary.

■ **LEXINGTON**—Immanuel Church will honor Pastor **Ted Sisk**

and wife, Ginny, on his 25th anniversary as pastor, with an open house in the fellowship hall 3:30-5:30 p.m. Jan. 21. A mini-concert in his honor will be at 6 p.m. Friends are welcome to attend.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Walnut Street Church declared Jan. 15 as **Margaret Gibson Day**. Gibson has been a member 61 years, and has for the past 35 years been responsible each week for the flowers in the sanctuary. **Marjorie Davis** will now assume that responsibility.

■ **MILTON**—Corn Creek Church called **Bill Jackson** as interim pastor.

■ **OWENSBORO**—First Church ordained **Mike Baird** and **Alan Walter** as deacons Jan. 8.

■ **SOMERSET**—New Enterprise Church ordained **Joseph Richards II** and **William Mounce** as deacons. Curtis Keith is pastor.

Fall seminary graduates



Leslie Hughes Jr.
Ph.D.
Louisville
New Orleans



Franklin Callaway
M.Div.
Benham
Southwestern



David Etter
D.M.A.
Williamsburg
Southwestern



Daniel Crocker
M.A.R.E.
Lexington
Southwestern



Bill Patterson
D.Min.
Henderson
Southwestern



Sherry Taylor
M.A.R.E.
Williamsburg
Southwestern



Sherian Aldridge
A.Div.
Shelbyville
Southeastern



Ronnie Aldridge
A.Div.
Shelbyville
Southeastern

Baptists blanketing state with 'Here's Hope' media message

Continued from page 1

Time, and more are scheduled. Southern Living will carry another Baptist ad in its February issue, and Time will carry more in its Jan. 23, Feb. 6, Feb. 20 and March 6 issues. The ads also will appear in the February and March issues of McCalls.

National radio time also has been secured on four syndicated programs: Bruce Williams, a conservative talk

show; the Best of Bruce, a weekend version of the same show; MTV News; and Casey Casem's Biggest Hits.

The KBC has purchased additional exposure across the state, including the February, March, April and May issues of Kentucky Living magazine and the March-April issue of All Around Kentucky magazine.

Radio ads will be heard statewide

over the PrimeLine radio network and Kentucky Radio Network beginning Jan. 23.

Print ads will appear in the Ashland Independent, Bowling Green Daily News, Kentucky Post, Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer and Paducah Sun.

Television ads will run on broadcast stations based in Louisville, Lexington, Bowling Green and Paducah.

Cable TV ads—generally on ESPN, CNN and TNT—will run on systems in Western Kentucky, Northern Kentucky and Eastern Kentucky.

The same advertising materials are available for use in church-sponsored ads to reach specific communities. For information, call Jagers at (502) 245-4101 or the Home Mission Board's customer service center at (800) 634-2462.

Still under construction

1994 saw the completion of several major construction projects on our campus.

In October we began using our new waste water treatment plant that has three times the capacity of the previous one. The old site was between the Larry and Linda Gritton Gym and the Chester Sparks building. Students, staff and visitors had to walk right past it on their way to the cafeteria. The sewer's new location takes the sights and smells far away from our routes!

We are also now using Campbell Hall, named for Hiram and Curtis Campbell of Hamilton, Ohio, who have donated electrical work to our school. Each year we receive thousands of donated items, but we have not had adequate space for storage. Last year we received donated items worth nearly \$250,000.00. Campbell Hall will provide 9,000 square feet of storage, where these things can be kept clean and dry until they are needed. This new facility will also be used as an area to wash our buses and vans. A third use of Campbell Hall will be storage of work program supplies.

Our campus ministry/counseling department is excited about the near-completion of Rush Hall, named for Dennis Rush, chairman of our board of trustees. Our business department has moved to the top level of this new building. The second level will be the Martha Bain Rice Campus Ministry/Visitor Center, named for a teacher at Oneida from 1950-1964. She was responsible for starting our BSU in 1950, which was the first of its kind on a high school campus. It houses a counseling office and two counseling rooms, as well as a large room that will double as a Baptist Student Union site and a visitors' center. One of the most attractive features of Rush Hall is a front

porch that stretches the width of the building.

The farm's new swine complex, our new campground and these three projects have all been paid for as they have been built.

OBI has had a new construction department for the past 10 years. John Ohe heads this area, assisted by Tom Holmes. Ohe is a carpenter by trade, and Holmes is a master cabinet maker.

Some of our buildings have been constructed by our own staff. Others have been done by outside contractors. The deciding factor is generally the amount of time it will take to complete the project. Many times we use a combination of paid and volunteer labor. Even when outside workers do the job, Ohe oversees the project.

Rush and Campbell halls have been built by combining OBI labor with outside help. Barkley Moore and John Smith, drafting teacher, worked together on the initial design before turning it over to an architect. Ohe supervised the contracted workers in construction and plumbing. Hiram Campbell is doing the electrical work in Rush Hall and in the building that bears his name.

We save thousands of dollars each year because of the work we are able to do through Ohe, Holmes and many wonderful volunteers.

What's next in construction at Oneida? As soon as our trash compound is relocated, plans will be underway for a new daycare. In the meantime, Ohe and Holmes have plenty of odd jobs to keep them busy—blacktopping, bridge repairs and much more.

Written by Denise Spencer, publications, and W.F. "Bud" Underwood, president of Oneida Baptist Institute, Oneida, Ky. 40972

THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

11 things to remember

A brochure distributed by Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children cites 11 things to remember if you plan to remember us in your will:

1. Remember, it does require a will. Over half of adult Americans die without having a will. Most probably plan to, but just put it off too long. So, get the will written, and do it soon.

2. Remember to consult an attorney. The cost usually is low. One of our largest estate gifts this year came from a basic, two-page document drafted by an attorney.

3. Remember to update your will regularly. Life is full of changes, and an old will is often as bad as no will at all. Robert Kennedy's will was 15 years old when he died—he had named his brother John as executor.

4. Remember to name an alternate executor. A good idea because your executor may die, move away, become ill or be too involved with other business to serve. Someone younger than you is not always the best choice for an executor. Many wills stipulate a bank trust department as the executor.

5. Remember that some states limit charitable giving.

6. Remember tithing. Your will is the last testimony of your spiritual

commitments. Many people tithe their estate.

7. Remember to keep it flexible. It is better to keep your gift flexible and leave the details to the good judgment of future leaders. Generally, more restrictive gifts are less helpful.

8. Remember that property gifts are welcome too.

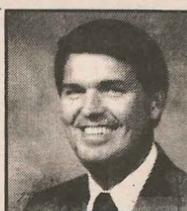
9. Remember to name the final beneficiaries. After you have listed all the people you want to remember, decide who would receive your estate if none of them were still alive. The work of Christ will be around after your friends are gone.

10. Remember to tell us your plans. Surprises are nice, but it is better for us to know. We can make you aware of specific needs or a particular way to memorialize your gift.

11. Remember to use our proper legal name.

A final Word: Making your will is the primary task. If you don't remember that—and do it, there is no point in remembering the other 10 things.

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

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

Seminarian is a friend of Jesus—and of Barney

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—Dan Merrell is learning much about ministry as a student at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, but he says Barney the purple dinosaur has taught him an important ministry lesson as well.

In addition to being a part-time master of divinity student at Southwestern, Merrell works full time as director of marketing for the home video division of the Lyons Group, producer of Barney. He also works with Lyons' toy division in marketing Barney dolls and related products.

Merrell said his work as Barney's most avid promoter has heightened his sensitivity to reaching the secular world with the gospel. Just as Barney attracts children to a wholesome message, so the church must strive to attract people to the message of Jesus, he suggested.

"There seems to be a new sense in Christendom that we are going to have to go out and get these people," he said. "For every 12 or 15 members in my singles class at church, there are thousands of people who aren't coming."

Since coming to Lyons in April 1993, Merrell has designed covers and arranged advertising promotions for six Barney videos, 8 million copies of which have sold nationwide. He

also has taken a lead role in developing and marketing Barney toys.

One of his best-sellers has been the soft, cuddly Barney doll that plays the fun-loving character's trademark song, "I love you. You love me. We're a happy family ..." when its palm is squeezed.

"I'm totally at peace with myself spiritually about my work," Merrell said. "I have no problem standing behind the products as a Christian."

"I know some Christians have attacked Barney, but if anyone takes the time to watch the show they'll realize there's no evil or New Age intent," he said.

What Barney's popularity sadly says about American society is that "something like this has to bring home the value of love to families when the Christians should be doing that," Merrell added.

"The thing that Barney stands for is to let kids just be kids. Don't introduce them to violence. Don't introduce them to sexual education. Don't make them older than they're supposed to be."

After graduating from Baylor University in Waco, Texas, with a communications degree, Merrell moved to Dallas and began part-time work in a video store. The job allowed him to gain some skills in marketing and pur-

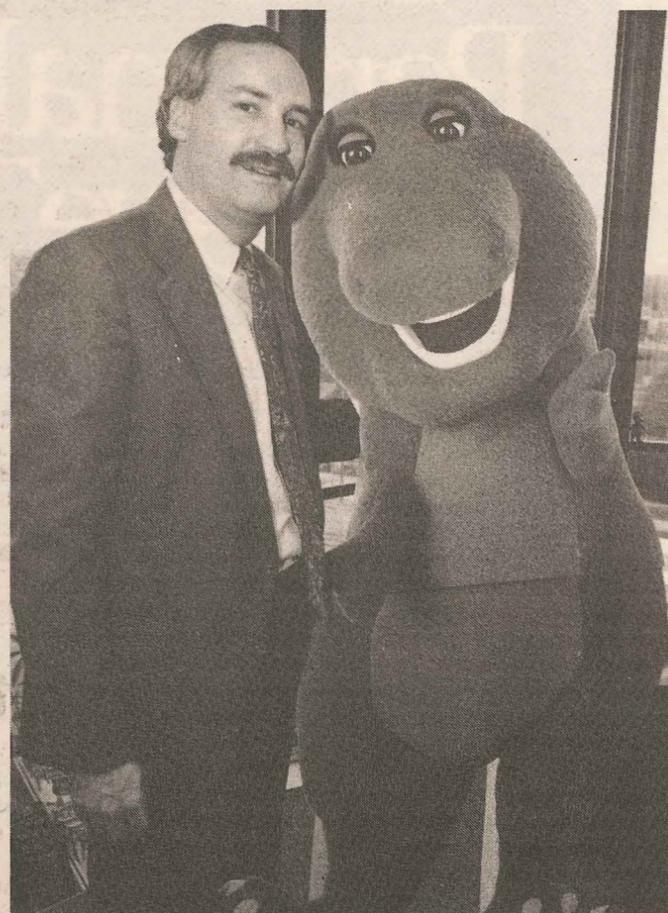
chasing of videos, and eventually he was promoted to marketing director for the 17-store Dallas chain.

Later, he moved into video distribution for the fifth largest distribution company in the country. He was promoted to vice president of marketing and purchasing and was responsible for an \$8 million inventory and the purchase of \$100 million to \$200 million worth of films from Hollywood per month.

But something was changing in his life. He felt a call to attend seminary and began evaluating his job.

"As I began to get more sensitive spiritually, I began to realize that about 80 percent of what Hollywood was sending out was something I couldn't live with as a Christian," Merrell said. "I had to market these movies and then leave work, sit down in a chair in class and listen to prayer requests. I started to feel a whole lot like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde."

A friend working for the Lyons Group approached him about a marketing job. Merrell took the opportunity, although it meant a pay cut. At the time, Lyons was excited about Barney as its newest children's entertainer. Several years later, the Dallas-based company is the third-largest supplier of children's videotapes in the country.



FRIEND OF BARNEY Dan Merrell, a night student at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, works by day as a marketing executive with the Lyons Group, creators of Barney. (BP photo by Morris Abernathy)

Raised in a mobster's family, pastor knows God's grace

By David Winfrey
SBC Home Mission Board

HENDERSON, Nev. (BP)—Pastor Rene Houle may have the most vivid sermon illustrations in the state.

As the son of a former mob member, Houle is never at a loss to explain God's grace.

"God's unconditional love is remarkable," said Houle, pastor of First Baptist Church of Henderson, Nev. "His love doesn't start after salvation. It starts before we are ever created."

Houle praises God for both protection from his dad's enemies and the gang fights and shootings that occurred in the rough neighborhood where he grew up.

"I look back and see how God's hand was in my life," he said. "He was my father even when I was lost."

Houle describes himself as a

"curb-kid," being dropped off every Sunday at church. "I had a knowledge of who God was and the essentials for salvation, but no one ever explained the difference between knowing about God and receiving him as your Savior."

His father, a Vietnam war veteran, got involved with the mob through a transportation union, Houle said. "My dad was hired to take care of the scabs," he said, referring to workers hired during a union strike.

His father also was involved in pimping, drug sales and "heavy work."

"If you owed me money and you hadn't paid it, he'd be the guy who would get the money or break your legs," Houle said. "He could probably tell you where bodies are buried all over this town."

"He had a pretty wild way of life,"

Houle said, referring to his father's temper and lifestyle.

"If somebody flashed their brights at him, he would get out and smash their headlights out with a baseball bat," he said.

Another sign of God's presence, Houle said, is that neither he nor his siblings got involved in drugs. He said his father's work was disrupted when leaders of the two families he worked for were killed.

Meanwhile, Houle became a Christian in high school and was called to preach shortly before he planned to enter the military.

One summer while in college, he witnessed to his father. Despite initial objections, his father eventually made a profession of faith, Houle said. "His basic thing was, 'How could God forgive me when I can't even forgive myself?'"

Although his father now owns a painting company, he still has occasional contacts from the past.

"Every once in a while he gets a call to do something. He tells me he tells them he's not interested," Houle said. "There's that fear in his mind of who might be out there to hurt him."

Houle, who has ministered in Oregon and Florida, returned to Nevada in 1993. Since his arrival at First Baptist, the church has grown in attendance from about 25 to more than 100.

"We've had 300 saved in the past year," he said, adding the church had 101 baptisms last year—the second highest in the state.

The credit for this success must go to God, he said. "I want people to understand no matter what their background or family life is like, when and if they turn their lives over to the Lord, God can use that for his glory."

Ministry logs 600th car loaned to furloughing missionaries

By Mark Kelly
SBC Foreign Mission Board

HOUSTON (BP)—A Southern Baptist group organized to meet a pressing transportation need of furloughing missionaries has assisted its 600th family.

The Macedonian Call Foundation was organized in 1979 to provide automobiles for Southern Baptist foreign missionaries on furlough, according to one of the group's founders, Harvey Kneisel of Houston. Missionary Don Phelps became the group's 600th beneficiary when he accepted the keys to a 1981 Oldsmobile 98 this fall in Houston.

"We thank the Lord for Macedonian Call," said Phelps, who serves

with his wife, Linda, and four daughters as a church planter in the Philippines. "On a short-term basis these cars meet a vital need for furloughing missionaries."

Missionaries in the United States on furlough need dependable transportation for the extensive travel often involved in their speaking schedules, Phelps said. Yet most missionaries can't afford to buy a car and then resell it at a loss a few months later when they return to the field.

"Macedonian Call takes a lot of worry off the missionary," he said. "The cars help us spread the message about the work the Lord is doing all over the world. It's not only a vehicle for travel, but it's also a vehicle for missions encouragement and sup-

port."

The car Phelps received was donated by Jim and Norma Pickett, who for 10 years have been members at First Baptist Church of Houston, where Kneisel, the foundation president, is minister of missions.

Kneisel and two friends, Jack Edwards of Tupelo, Miss., and Lane McCartney of Montgomery, Texas, organized the foundation in 1979 when Kneisel was pastor of Oak Ridge Baptist Church in Houston.

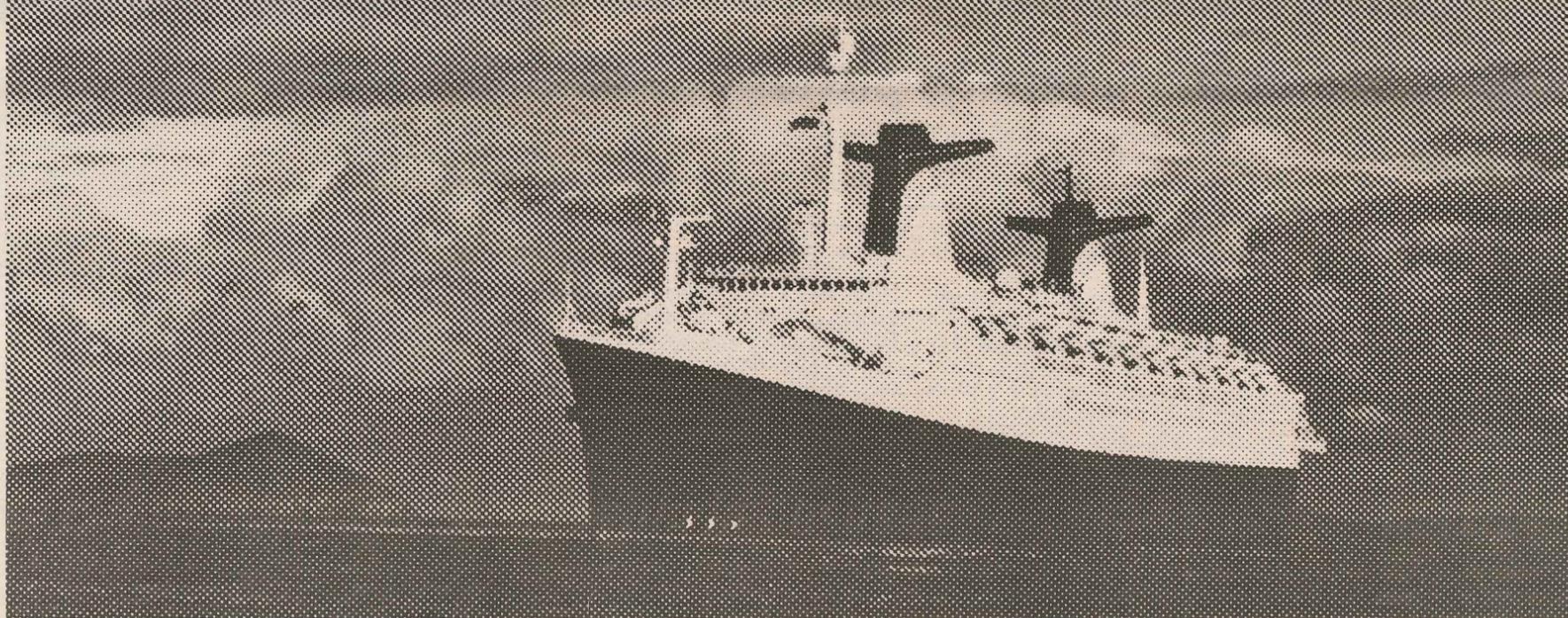
The group receives cars, repairs them and licenses them before turning them over to missionaries, who are responsible for insuring and maintaining them, said Kneisel, formerly a Southern Baptist missionary in Guyana and India.

Missionaries return the cars to the group when they go back to their fields of service. Serviceable cars are reassigned to other furloughing missionaries.

Some of the cars serve several missionaries before being retired, Kneisel said. One such automobile, a Chevrolet Caprice, was donated with 32,000 miles on the odometer. Five missionaries have used the car, and it is still going strong, he said.

Macedonian Call Foundation serves a five-state area—Texas, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Louisiana and New Mexico—Kneisel said. A Baptist Men's group in Georgia operates a similar project under the same name, and Kneisel hopes other groups also will adopt the idea.

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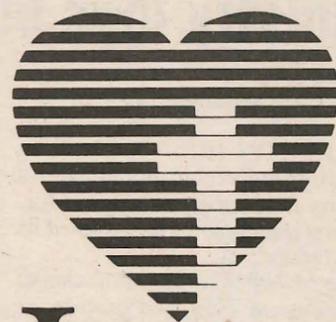


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