



WESTERN RECORDER

NEWSPAGE EDITION

June 27, 1995
Vol. 169, No. 26

FOR THE RECORD

This week's Recorder is devoted to coverage of the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Atlanta last week:

- Billy Graham message, page 1
- Restructuring proposal, page 1
- Resolution on racial reconciliation, page 1
- SBC President's sermon, page 2
- Convention sermon, page 2
- Southern Seminary alumni officers resign, page 3
- Diana Garland at Ministers' Wives Luncheon, page 3
- Editorial, page 5
- Pre-convention meetings, page 6
- SBC officer elections, page 9
- Sesquicentennial celebration, page 10
- Kentuckians at Crossover Atlanta, page 11
- Kentuckians elected to leadership posts, page 13



KENTUCKIANS AT SESQUICENTENNIAL EVENT A group of Kentucky Baptists chats with a representative of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, dressed in period costume to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Southern Baptist Convention's founding. The Kentuckians attended a June 20 reception for churches founded prior to 1845. Shown are Jim Hume (left) of Kings Baptist Church in Mount Washington, founded in 1798; Daniel Brown of Plum Creek Baptist Church in Waterford, founded in 1810; and Jay and Becky Stewart of Dover Baptist Church in Shelbyville, founded in 1812.

Graham: 'Light a candle in the darkness'

ATLANTA—In perhaps his last address to the Southern Baptist Convention, Billy Graham called for fellow Baptists to "light a candle that will banish moral and spiritual blight in America and around the world."

Against doctors' orders, Graham kept his commitment to close the 150th annual meeting of the SBC in Atlanta's Georgia Dome June 22. Just two weeks earlier, Graham had been hospitalized after collapsing while preaching in Toronto.

Graham's presence electrified the convention crowd. Messengers and guests interrupted a hymn to give Graham a standing ovation as he stepped onto the platform.

Graham, who has preached at the SBC 15 times since 1951, said he wanted to preach one more time at the SBC "if it's the last breath I've got."

SBC Executive Committee President Morris Chapman, his voice choking with emotion, presented Graham a resolution from the Exec-

utive Committee honoring Graham's 50 years of worldwide crusade evangelism. The resolution affirmed Graham as "a model of integrity, exhibiting the humility, grace and courage of our Lord Jesus Christ."

After special music by George Beverly Shea, SBC President Jim Henry introduced Graham as a Baptist hero who consistently demonstrates integrity, vision, inclusiveness and an unequivocal commitment to God's word.

Henry said Graham "seems to put all together our hopes, our dreams and our prayers of what we can be and what we ought to be as God's people."

He drew a huge round of laughter from the crowd by quoting a Florida

newspaper columnist who said of the evangelist: "Mr. Graham is as far above those big-haired, money-grabbing preachers as is God."

Standing firmly at the pulpit, though looking somewhat pale, Graham spoke for nearly an hour. He began his message with a lengthy section of personal comments, almost fatherly in nature.

He commended convention messengers "for your unity and for the tremendous spirit of this convention ... and especially for the resolution that you passed on the race question."

"Thank God," he said. "That will help my ministry all over the world."

Graham also said he was glad



SBC passes reorganization with amendments

ATLANTA—Southern Baptists approved the most massive overhaul ever of their 150-year-old denomination June 20, intended to "streamline the structure and to maximize the ministry" of the nation's largest Protestant body.

The reorganization plan was approved on a 64 percent to 36 percent margin in a ballot vote after messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention accepted two amendments—one to clarify the role of Woman's Missionary Union and another to fine-tune the work of the new North American Mission Board.

The restructuring plan does not

change the SBC's overall mission or message but updates the methods used to spread the gospel, said Mark Brister of Shreveport, La., chairman of the seven-man committee that developed the restructuring report, called "Covenant for a New Century."

"What this committee has heard clearly is that Mr. and Mrs. Southern Baptist want less funding of bureaucracy and more fueling of ministry," said Brister, pastor of Broadmoor Baptist Church in Shreveport.

The plan was the product of an 18-month study commissioned by the SBC Executive Committee,

which approved the results in February.

The report dominated business during the opening session of the three-day SBC annual meeting in Atlanta's Georgia Dome. About 18,000 messengers were present for the vote—about 7,000 fewer than expected.

Several challenges to the report failed during the hour-long debate.

A motion to postpone the vote until a feasibility study could be done was ruled out of order. And a motion to retain the Historical Commission, one of several SBC agencies, failed.

See "SBC approves..." page 8

SBC repents of racism in 150th year

By Bob Allen
Associated Baptist Press

ATLANTA (ABP)—Southern Baptist Convention messengers overwhelmingly adopted a resolution renouncing the convention's racist roots June 20.

The convention altered its planned order of business in order to deal with the statement of repudiation and repentance on the convention's opening day, prior to a celebration of the SBC's 150th anniversary that evening.

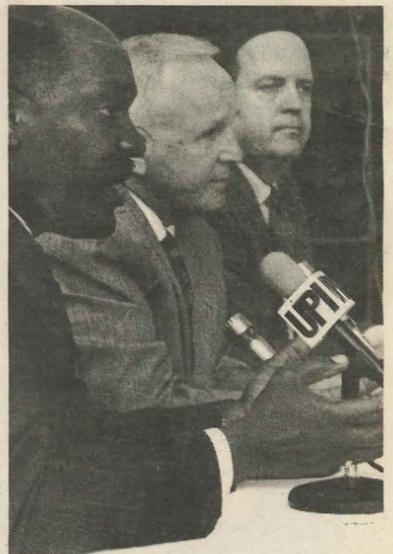
The resolution says messengers "unwaveringly denounce racism, in all its forms, as deplorable sin" and "lament and repudiate historic acts of evil such as slavery from which we continue to reap a bitter harvest."

It offers an apology to all African-Americans for "condoning and/or perpetuating individual and systemic racism in our lifetime" and repentance for "racism of which we have been guilty, whether consciously or unconsciously."

The statement seeks forgiveness "from our African-American brothers and sisters" and pledges to "eradicate racism in all its forms from Southern Baptist life and ministry."

The SBC was founded in 1845 in Augusta, Ga., by Baptists in the South seceding from the national Triennial Convention after that body decreed it would not appoint slaveholders as missionaries.

See "SBC repents..." page 7



RECONCILIATION Three Southern Baptist leaders meet with reporters to introduce a resolution on racial reconciliation June 19, a day before the resolution was adopted overwhelmingly by messengers to the 150th annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention. Shown at the news conference are Gary Frost, SBC second vice president; Charles Carter, chairman of the resolutions committee; and Richard Land, executive director of the SBC Christian Life Commission. (BP photo by Van Payne)

Moving? See page 4 (0627)

SBC president calls for covenant for new century

ATLANTA—The Southern Baptist Convention may recall the past, but it must race toward the future, SBC President Jim Henry urged during the 150th anniversary of the nation's largest Protestant denomination.

Henry delivered the annual president's address June 20, moments after messengers to the meeting approved the "Covenant for a New Century," a reorganization plan intended to streamline the convention.

The SBC must continue another "sacred covenant" begun 150 years ago by its founders, he said. That in-

cludes missions, Baptist identity, openness to change and devotion to God—themes he often voiced during his year as the SBC's elected leader.

But Henry, pastor of First Baptist Church in Orlando, Fla., also warned against both "the slippery slope of compromise" and "the lasso of legalism."

"We should not be so inclusive as to compromise the great basics of the faith, nor so exclusive that we become ingrown, and inbred, keeping deserving people away from the table of fellowship and service," he said.

Recalling the covenant the ancient Israelites made before moving into the Promised Land, and quoting from the SBC purpose statement, Henry cited five conditions necessary for the covenant to be extended:

- A commitment to missions. "This is our noblest and most unifying commitment," said Henry, noting that almost every SBC president's address over the past quarter-century emphasized this priority.

Failure to do missions would make the SBC's other successes "empty relics in the dusty museum of missed opportunity."

- An awareness of Baptist heritage.

"One of the major challenges facing the SBC is passing on a Baptist identity to future generations. This we must do," he said.

Citing concerns about the vote that eliminated five agencies, including the SBC Historical Commission, Henry pledged the reorganization will not diminish the denomination's emphasis on history.

- An openness to change. "The status quo will not do in a rapidly changing world," said Henry, who had voiced strong support for the SBC reorganization. He called for Southern Baptists not to be "cautious servants of what is" but "shapers of what might be."

- We have a principle, and the principle is to be on the cutting edge," he added.

- Alert to potential dangers. "Trials will come," warned Hen-

ry, who used more than one-third of his 32-minute address to describe the "perils" that face the SBC. He cautioned against diversions, inertia, the tendency to "depend on Caesar to Christianize our earthly colony" and a "dedication to narrowness."

Recent conflict has divided the SBC, he acknowledged, comparing opponents of the conservative movement with the Israelite tribes who chose not to cross the Jordan River into the Promised Land.

Applause interrupted his comments three times as he affirmed conservatives' devotion to "biblical integrity" as "a guarded commitment never to be relinquished," then admonished messengers against "the tendency to be biblically correct but reflect a spirit that is not of our Lord Jesus Christ."

But messengers' strongest applause came when Henry warned them "to resist the tendency to pit conservative against conservative."

- A devotion to God. Southern Baptists survived 150 years of conflict and crisis because God is in control, he insisted. "If we keep choosing the way of the unstoppable King of the universe, nothing can stop him, and nothing can stop us."

Compiled from Associated Baptist Press and Baptist Press reports



LOOKING AHEAD SBC President Jim Henry urges messengers to race toward the future with expectation. (BP photo by Van Payne)



Mohler calls SBC to remember five 'stones'

ATLANTA (ABP)—Like the ancient Israelites who credited God for bringing them to the Promised Land, Southern Baptists should look on their 150-year history and proclaim, "God did this," Al Mohler said during the annual sermon at the Southern Baptist Convention.

"The fact that the Southern Baptist Convention exists 150 years after its founding, much less the fact that it has been so remarkably blessed, is a testimony to God's faithfulness and his goodness to us," insisted Mohler, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

Like the Israelites, who erected 12 stones as a memorial to the occasion, Southern Baptists are called to remember from where they have come, said Mohler. He suggested "five stones," or imperatives, that should shape Southern Baptists' memory and commitment.

Mohler said Southern Baptists must:

- Renew passion for God. "We are not much marked by passion," Mohler noted. "In the midst of our building and leading, our coming and going, and the frantic pace of our over-scheduled lives, we have seen our passion dissipate in our busy-ness."

"This happens to denominations as well. Passion can be lost in programs and progress reports and calendars. In doing what is good, we may fail to do that which is best."

- Reclaim theological heritage. Southern Baptists are at their best when they stand firm on the truth of God, Mohler said. "And yet we live in an age which denigrates, rejects

and compromises God's revealed truth. ... We see in our own midst the development of denominational amnesia which will quickly issue into theological compromise and doctrinal declension. ...

"When a denomination begins to consider doctrine divisive, theology troublesome and conviction inconvenient, consider that denomination on its way to a well-deserved death," he warned.

The tendency of denominations, like other human creations, is to drift away from truth, Mohler said. Southern Baptists, therefore, should pray for "a recovery of conviction and confession."

- Recover zeal for the gospel. The belief in salvation only through Jesus "is among the most compromised truths in the contemporary church," Mohler charged. Those who hold that belief are called intolerant, insensitive and imperialistic, he said.

Yet such a commitment characterized Southern Baptists from the beginning and accounts for their success, he added. Contemporary Baptists must hold fast to the one clear purpose of the SBC's founders—to spread the gospel.

- Recognize the times and task. The world has changed dramatically since the SBC was founded in 1845, Mohler said.

"We live in a thoroughly secularized culture which is crumbling at the foundations," he said. "The great fixed truths of the Christian worldview have been displaced and rejected by rampant relativism, subjectivism, secularism and even paganism. ... We are living on the brink of what

may be a new dark age."

The 20th century has produced a "death culture" characterized by the Nazi extermination camps, rampant street violence, abortion and assisted suicide, Mohler said. "A society which would abort tens of millions of unborn infants while celebrating its growing prosperity is a culture set for divine judgment."

- Refocus their mission and mandate.

Mohler, who served on the committee that designed a simplified, smaller structure for the SBC—approved by the convention a day earlier—said the new SBC properly focuses on the work of churches.

"The Southern Baptist Convention is a means, and not an end in itself. ... The Southern Baptist Convention has no mission but the Great Commission ministries of Southern Baptist churches."



Al Mohler

Mohler declares his beliefs in line with Abstract

By Mark Wingfield
News Director

ATLANTA—Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's Abstract of Principles, which has been interpreted as a Calvinist document by President Al Mohler, contains truth that all Southern Baptists can agree on, Mohler said June 20.

Mohler, who affirms a theology known as five-point Calvinism, spoke about his commitment to theological truth several times during the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Atlanta June 20-22.

Mohler spoke about his belief in Reformed theology, or Calvinism, in a breakfast meeting of the Southern Baptist Founders Conference June 20. He also made reference to his theological convictions while delivering the convention's annual sermon June 21. Earlier that day, during Southern Seminary's report to the convention, two messengers spoke from the floor about Mohler's theological positions.

Calvinism is a theological system based largely on the teachings of the 16th century theologian John Calvin. In full form it asserts five points: to-
□ See "Mohler..." page 12

"When a denomination begins to consider doctrine divisive, theology troublesome and conviction inconvenient, consider that denomination on its way to a well-deserved death."

Al Mohler

Three seminary alumni officers resign in protest

By Marv Knox
Editor

ATLANTA—The president and past president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's alumni association have resigned, citing their disagreement with changes brought upon the Louisville school by President Al Mohler.

Alumni president Walter Nunn of Huntsville, Ala., and immediate past president Howard Cobble of Elizabethtown resigned their posts moments after the seminary's annual alumni luncheon June 21.

They also reported that Susan McBride of Fredericksburg, Va., who was to have been named president-elect at the luncheon, also refused to go through with the nomination.

"Some of the changes being implemented in our alma mater grieve us," Nunn told reporters, reading from a statement he and Cobble prepared.

Nunn is pastor of University Baptist Church in Huntsville, and a former president of the Alabama Baptist Convention. Cobble is pastor of Severns Valley Baptist Church in Elizabethtown and former president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention. Both men are former officers of the Southern Baptist Executive Committee, and their churches are leading contributors to the convention's Cooperative Program unified budget.

"The school which nurtured us spiritually and challenged us intellectually caused our faith to become stronger and the Bible to become more meaningful to us," their statement said.

"From our perspective, the institution is being transformed into a school we do not know. We cannot love that which we do not know. We cannot support that which we do not love. The present Southern Seminary is not the school we attended nor from which we graduated."

The pair cited a litany of reasons why they believe the seminary has changed for the worse.

"A lack of compassion and a heavy-handed administrative style are not consistent with the gospel of love and fellowship," they said in the statement.

"The narrowing of theological parameters for faculty, the lack of concern for the feelings and needs of seminary employees and students, the move by the president to impose his theological biases on the institution and an unwillingness to extend the hand of collegiality and fellowship to all the school's alumni bring us to a position where we can no longer in good conscience provide leadership for the school's alumni."

Mohler has been a controversial figure among Southern Seminary alumni since he succeeded Roy Honeycutt two years ago, vowing to return the seminary to its "historical roots." He was put in place by a majority of trustees elected during the Southern Baptist Convention's rightward shift.

Mohler has stirred acute controversy during the past year. Storms have swirled around his forced termination of theology professor Molly Marshall, the firing of social work Dean Diana Garland, his refusal to hire any professor who thinks God could call a woman to be a pastor and implementation of a policy for firing any faculty or staff member who publicly disagrees with him.

Cobble and Nunn said they did not specifically disagree with Mohler over his decisions regarding the social work school and the role of women in the pastorate.

However, they cited Mohler's readiness to impose the specifics of his theology on others.

"A big problem for us" is Mohler's decision to hire professors based not only on what they will teach, but what they privately believe, Nunn said. He stressed that both he and Cobble firmly "believe the Bible is God's word," so their disagreement with Mohler is not a question of liberalism versus conservatism.

However, "there's a difference between thought and teaching," he added. "This is not an indoctrination center. Graduate theological education is not for kids just out of high school. Students and faculty alike must be allowed freedom to think."

Cobble added he has a problem with Mohler's strong adherence to Calvinism, the theological structure built by 16th century church reformer John Calvin.

Some critics of Calvinism insist it places so much of an emphasis on God's work in salvation that it does not support the evangelistic and missionary notion that "whosoever will" may come to salvation through faith in Christ.

Although Mohler claims to follow the path struck in 1859 by the founders of Southern Seminary, Cobble said the essence of the seminary also has been shaped by a more recent "shift" in theology that emphasizes missions more dramatically.

"I see theology moving to a totally different era than that in which we've been comfortable" for most of the 20th century, Cobble said. The "blended theology" that has characterized Southern Baptists during this century is one "which has given the convention energy," he added.

In addition, Cobble said Mohler's "dictum of no disagreement"—the trustee-approved policy that threatens firing for seminary employees who publicly disagree with Mohler—is a major concern. He also faulted the president for his "unwillingness to reach out to pastors who affiliate with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship," a new organization of moderates disaffected by the SBC.

In addition to Cobble, Nunn and McBride, six presidents of the seminary's 32 state alumni chapters have resigned, Nunn reported.

Asked if their concerns were limited to the seminary or if they included the SBC in general, Cobble painted a larger picture.

"I've been coming to the Southern Baptist Convention a long time, and I find myself increasingly uncomfortable at the annual meetings," Cobble said. He describe an "ill-at-ease feeling with what is happening at the seminary and with what's going on in the Southern Baptist Convention."

Seminary spokesperson Mike Dudit called the alumni leaders' protest "much ado about nothing."

Incoming alumni president Gary Redding, pastor of First Baptist Church of North Augusta, S.C., did not resign, he noted, claiming Nunn and Cobble—whose terms will end in September—did not have "formal responsibilities" left to complete.

Mohler "does not have any response," Dudit said.

In an interview, Cobble said he was not certain an alumni revolt would be enough to fuel plans for an alternative seminary in Kentucky.

"Dissatisfaction is the basis" for the attempt to start a new seminary, he acknowledged.

But he added: "I don't think Kentucky can afford to start another seminary. Georgia Baptists needed \$3 million to start a seminary affiliated with Mercer University. It takes a lot of money to get a good school going."

Seminary spokesperson Mike Dudit called the alumni leaders' protest "much ado about nothing."

RESIGNED Howard Cobble (left), pastor of Severns Valley Baptist Church in Elizabethtown, and Walter Nunn of Huntsville, Ala., announce their resignations as alumni association officers of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. (BP photo by Stanley Leary)



Garland calls for 'pro-life' agenda for children after birth

By Marv Knox
Editor

ATLANTA—America needs "an imperative pro-life agenda for children after birth," family specialist Diana Garland told the Southern Baptist Ministers' Wives' Luncheon June 20 in Atlanta.

"In His Sight" was the theme for the luncheon, held during the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Atlanta. Garland is director of the Gheens Center for Family Ministry and professor of church social work at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

"It is not enough only to get born," Garland said of the plight of

the nation's children. Sixty percent of them will live at least part of their young lives with only one parent, 25 percent live in poverty and 10,000 are homeless, she reported.

Those figures—and the lives they represent—present an indictment against the moral climate of the nation, Garland said. "Children are neglected in our country because our country has lost its spiritual bearing. The kind of help children need will cost us money and require our involvement. ...

"However, social services are only half the answer. The other half is much more costly. It will cost you and me. We must be willing to care, to reach out and offer children en-

couragement and hope.

Unfortunately, the nation is selfish, she said. "We only want to care for 'me and my own.'"

In such a society, poverty is "the unforgivable sin," she declared, adding that poverty flies in the face of society's expectations and casts suspicion on the poor.

In the United States, many of the poor are single-parent families, she said, noting the average monthly welfare check for a single mother of two children is \$367, and food stamps average about 50 cents per person per meal.

"The most common reason for women to be on welfare is that their husbands have left them and provid-

ed no child support," she said. "Do we really believe people choose such a life because it is easy?"

"We must stop punishing women for being poor, for feeling hopeless and helpless to get their lives together. If there is one thing we know from Scripture, it is that God values poor folks. God is with poor folks. And if God is there, where are we?"

Christians must take God's side and aid poor people by debunking the myth that "poor people are poor and we are not because they deserve it and we are better than they are," Garland urged. "None of us deserves what we have. It is only by the grace of God that we have what we have, □ See "Garland calls..." page 11

OPINION

WESTERN RECORDER

P.O. Box 43969
Louisville, Ky. 40253
(ISSN 0043-4132)

MARV KNOX
Editor

MARK WINGFIELD
News Director

MAURI SMITH
Marketing & Business
Manager

C. R. DALEY
Editor Emeritus

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

Western Recorder is published weekly by Western Recorder Inc., an agency of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, Box 43969, Louisville, Ky. 40253, except for one week in July and December. For general information, call (502) 244-6470. Fax: (502) 244-6474. Second class postage paid at Louisville, Ky.

To subscribe: Send \$10.60 for a one-year, individual subscription. Group subscriptions on the church budget plan are \$8.50 per year. An additional church newsletter service is available for churches of all sizes. All subscriptions are payable in advance, except church accounts, which require a tax-exemption number.

To register change of address: Send the mailing label from page 1, along with your new address, to the subscription department at the Western Recorder address.

To give news tips: Call (502) 244-6472, fax to (502) 244-6474 or write the editor or news director.

To submit a letter: Letters on any subject will be considered for publication, provided they do not make a personal attack on anyone. Letters are limited to 250 words and may be edited for length.

To place an advertisement: Rates are available upon request by calling (502) 244-6470. Institutional columns on an inside page are paid space. Claims made by advertisers are not necessarily those of the Western Recorder's staff and directors.

Directors: Don Mantooh, Morehead, chairman; Tom Curry, Louisville, vice chairman; Jim Abernathy, Covington, secretary; Mark Boes, Cecilia; Rusty Ellison, Benton; Frank Hatfield, Shepherdsville; Sherry Hignite, London; June B. Rice, Paintsville; John Searcy, Franklin; William Thurman, Lexington; James Weaver, Madisonville; Kenneth Wells, Somerset.

Christian labels

What do conservative and liberal born-again believers have in common? Each has been redeemed by the sacrificial death of Christ on Calvary's cross. How can you tell? By the way we love, nurture and support one another? Right!

We enjoy basking in the limelight, even if it hurts the cause of Christ. Have we the luxury of wasting precious time and resources on controversy? Shouldn't our priority be to "rescue the perishing?"

Did the victims of the bombing in Oklahoma City ask their rescuers what label each wore before allowing themselves to be saved?

Nonsense. Each trapped and dying person fervently prayed to be set free.

We have the message of salvation, plus the means to voice it to the world's lost, trapped and dying. What are we doing to put that mandate into effect? Can we afford to sit in our cliques arguing about who has clearer truth or exercises more clout in the kingdom of God?

When we face Jesus Christ and he asks if we fed his sheep, what will our answer be? "Before we could do that, Lord, we had to label each person. That became a priority. We couldn't feed the sheep until we knew where we stood in the scheme of theological politics. You ran into that yourself Lord, and you understand how it works. We know you're the way, truth and life, and just before you come for your body, we'll preach that."

In the meantime, do we have enough labels?

BAPTIST FORUM

*Kathy Cundiff
Louisville*

Apology accepted

I have read about the Southern Baptist Convention's resolution apologizing for racism with great appreciation and deep thanks.

I am happy and encouraged to see a statement by this great denomination being so greatly used by God that says, "Southern Baptists renounce racism 'in all its forms' and 'genuinely repent of racism' in our lives." I stand with SBC Vice President Gary Frost,

whom I know and love, who accepted that apology on behalf of us black brothers and sisters.

I writing to document my appreciation to Kentucky Baptist Convention Executive Secretary-Treasurer Bill Marshall, the KBC Executive Board and the Ken-

tucky Baptist constituency.

Kentucky Baptists have worked diligently, consistently and continuously to cooperate with black Baptists in a Christian, fraternal way. I recognize all our fallibility and frailty. We have not been perfect, but we have worked at it. Time and space won't allow me to discuss the particulars of this cooperation, but I must say Dr. Marshall's commitment to cooperation puts Kentucky at the nation's top in example.

I met with the African-American Fellowship June 18-19 and want to assure Kentucky Baptists of our joys of being a part of the SBC family and on mission with Christ together.

*Lincoln Bingham
KBC Cooperative ministries
consultant
Louisville*

Charity's face

Recently in the Western Recorder, articles, editorials and letters to the editor have been very negative towards the goals of the Christian Coalition. Though not a member, I am certainly in accord with their objectives. It would seem that much of their negativism is directed at welfare reform.

Welfare is charity. When charity becomes faceless, there is no moral imperative to become self-sustaining. Indeed, many view this socialist charity as being their right or even something they've "worked" for. Time after time, we see children being born outside of marriage because this faceless system subsidizes their parents' sin. This is hardly uphold-

ing godly principle.

Charity needs a face. That face should be the face of Christ through his church, not the government. Who gets the glory when the government does it other than some politician? When done through the church, God gets the glory. Unfortunately, I've heard some preachers who literally can't tell the difference between Father God the provider and big government. In whom do we place our faith, God or government?

We need to face the whole person, body, soul and spirit. I agree that it does no good to preach the gospel and let the body starve. Neither does it do any good to only feed the body and let the soul starve.

*Chuck Estridge
Williamstown*

SBC '95: Some reflections

Never mind that early-goers to the Southern Baptist Convention got a glimpse of Arnold Schwarzenegger and Whoopie Goldberg outside a new nightspot in the heart of downtown Atlanta's hotel district. Hearing the noise from our hotel room, we switched on our "sleep-sound" and headed for dreamland. It was enough to see the celebrity photos in Sunday morning's Atlanta Constitution.

Aside from that, and a visit to an interesting Russian exhibit in north Atlanta, we focused our time on the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention and some of the related auxiliary meetings, including among others, the Woman's Missionary Union annual meeting, the SBC Ministers' Wives' Luncheon (for which Alice was this year's president), and the Baptist World Alliance breakfast (I serve on the BWA's world evangelization committee.)

Since the Western Recorder was well-represented at the convention and will cover the news in their usual thorough way, I will offer only a few reflections for Kentucky Bap-

tists, 99.8 percent of whom do not attend this annual meeting.

First, some feel more positive about SBC President Jim Henry's selection of persons to serve on the 1995-96 Committee on Committees. My counterparts in some of the other states believe his selection more fairly represents the larger constitu-

ON MISSION TOGETHER



William W. Marshall

encies within the state conventions than in the past. The strongest criticism of this year's appointments has been the noticeable lack of women, a regrettable reality in a year when WMU has been under the gun. In summary, however, Jim Henry deserves commendation for attempting to be sensitive to the complaints about one-sidedness in SBC appointments of recent years.

Second, while the controversial "Covenant for a New Century" finally passed by a vote of 9,590 to 5,357, it did so only after significant amendments were passed, especially the one to include WMU in the final document. Some question whether it really means anything, but the vote on the amendment was so overwhelming it made clear that

SBC messengers didn't like the original document, which excluded WMU's historically vital role in our SBC mission.

The several amendments, especially the one related to WMU, took enough "sting" out of the original covenant to secure passage by the messengers, even though more than a third still voted against it.

Left unchanged is the putting together of the Home Mission Board, Brotherhood Commission and the Radio & Television Commission, locating ultimately in Atlanta as the North American Mission Board. While for many the concept sounds appropriately futuristic, the cost in dollars has not been calculated nor the cost in morale of more than 600 employees, none of whom, not even the three presidents, have a clear picture as to how this will be facilitated. The months ahead for these SBC entities will be laden with uncertainty and job insecurity. They deserve and need our prayer support.

As the Kentucky border appeared, although still more than three hours from Louisville, a feeling swept over me that I was coming home. And I was glad. I happen to love my home state!

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



FAMILY FORUM: MARRIAGE

Gifts to each other

By Diana Garland

I jumped in the car to race to work, and the fuel light glowed; I needed gas. My first thought was: "Why didn't he fill it up yesterday? He drove last!"

Have you felt exasperation with your spouse when he or she did not do something you thought should have been done? Of course, I found it convenient not to recall that I drove the car the day before, too, and noticed it was down to a quarter of a tank. He drove it last, however, and it would have been such a loving thing for him to leave a full tank. If he had, though, I probably would not have even noticed.

Marriage is full of small gifts. In the fresh flush of new love, newlyweds often take delight in little gifts—the love note, the flower picked from the yard, the lovingly prepared meal, the ironed shirt, the full tank of gas.

Over the years, however, the gifts become duties. We are no longer delightfully surprised by gifts of kindness. In fact, we come to expect them and feel deprived when they are not forthcoming.

Consequently, it becomes harder to find gifts for one another. We find ourselves simply fulfilling expectations. The more faithful and dependable and loving we are, the harder it becomes to create joyful surprise. Some partners even find themselves reluctant to do something nice, for fear that the gift of kindness will become one more duty on the chore list.

Paul describes the spouse as being like one's own body (Ephesians 5:28-29). When is the last time you felt gratitude for your toes and how well they help you maintain balance, or for how well your neck allows you to turn your head? Those body parts get undivided attention only when they hurt or are injured. Otherwise, we must be deliberate in giving attention to the gift of a healthy body.

Marriage, too, requires deliberate attention if we are not to take one another for granted. For 24 hours, focus on the ways your life is better or easier because of your spouse's presence. Write them down, or even better, tell your spouse of your gratitude.

Diana Garland is director of the Gheens Center for Christian Family Ministry at Southern Baptist Seminary.

EDITORIALS

Walk, not talk, will prove the SBC has changed

Southern Baptists celebrated our 150th anniversary by holding an annual meeting that will go down in history. We repented of the racism that has plagued our convention for seven generations, and we adopted a reorganization plan that will guide it far into the future.

The Southern Baptist Convention was born amid racism in 1845, after Northern Baptists refused to appoint slave-holding Southerners as home missionaries. The stigma of slavery and racism marked Southern Baptists long after the Emancipation Proclamation abolished the evil institution. Although some brave souls championed racial reconciliation and full equality, many Southern Baptists supported segregation and continued to repress African-Americans.

Finally, the power of righteousness carried the day. From many sources, Southern Baptists insisted we should celebrate our sesquicentennial by repenting of racism "in all its forms." The SBC resolutions committee agreed, presenting a strongly worded statement which, for the first time, acknowledged racism played a role in the convention's birth. Messengers to the annual meeting overwhelmingly approved the resolution, apologizing to all African-Americans for "condoning and/or perpetuating individual and systemic racism in our lifetime." The resolution validates and strengthens Southern Baptists' efforts to minister to people of all races.

On a different front, a majority of messengers proved they are willing to alter the SBC's structure in pursuit of an updated mission.

By a 2-to-1 margin, messengers approved the "Covenant for a New Century," a reorganization plan that will reduce the size of the SBC structure and theoretically streamline its function. The proposal created the most pre-convention controversy since moderates quit battling for control of the SBC presidency in 1990. Most notably, opponents criticized the plan's exclusion of Woman's Missionary Union and its intent

to eliminate the Historical Commission.

As the proposal was presented, messengers overwhelmingly approved an amendment affirming WMU. The amendment did not change the substance of the proposal's stance on WMU (since WMU is an auxiliary and not directly accountable to the convention, it cannot receive convention assignments), but it put the convention on record recommending a continued strong relationship with WMU. Another amendment, which would have preserved the Historical Commission, was defeated soundly. And a third amendment, which preserved key elements of home mission work in the new North American Mission Board, also passed.

The SBC reorganization, which will be implemented during the next five years, completes conservatives' makeover of the convention. They gained control of the convention's political apparatus under the banner of biblical inerrancy and a call to purge the SBC of liberalism. In so doing, they secured the creation of strongly political statements, such as the resolutions opposing Henry Foster for surgeon general and promoting a "religious liberty" amendment to the U.S. Constitution. With the reorganization, they have restructured the convention under the banner of economic efficiency. In so doing, they have centralized denominational authority, particularly in the hands of the Executive Committee. This will simplify supervision and implementation of the denominational agenda.

Now, the stage is set for proving the racism resolution and the reorganization plan really mean anything. Through the words of both proposals, Southern Baptists have "talked the talk." As the convention moves into the future, individual Baptists and churches will show whether they are willing to "walk the walk."

Marv Knox

During their sesquicentennial meeting in Atlanta, Southern Baptists affirmed a strong statement of racial reconciliation and approved a reorganization plan for their convention. Now, the way they live will prove whether they really buy into all those words.

An Independence Day question: Is America 'Christian'?

Is America a Christian nation? Yes and no.

America is a Christian nation because some citizens involved in the political process are Christians. Quakers supported abolition, while Protestants and Catholics participated in civil rights marches.

America is a Christian nation if you define that as Christian involvement in the duties of citizenship. Patriotism and religion meld in America.

Due to the influence of Christian icons from the Puritan "lighthouse set on a hill" to Kate Smith's rendition of "God Bless America," separating the Christian vision of the Kingdom of God from the political entity of America has proved ardu-

ous. By the measure of political involvement, America is not a Christian nation. America is also a Buddhist nation and an Islamic nation. The adherents of these faiths exercise their rights and responsibilities as citizens. That makes America their nation too.

According to Jesus, we cannot establish the Kingdom of God within a political structure on earth, because that would violate one of his foremost teachings. He never forced people to accept his position, follow his lifestyle or mold their government to fit his precepts. If we are to be "little Christs," we cannot coerce anyone to our position. The Christian's vocation of working for justice

and equity in the political arena does not make America a Christian nation.

Is America a Christian nation? Yes! As long as no one is forced to accept a particular religious perspective or a certain interpretation of Scripture in order to be an American.

It is a Christian nation if persons who accept that label live as Christ, if they follow Jesus' example and willingly accept the consequences of refusing to use force to make their belief system "the" system for all.

Living with the tension between what we believe to be godly and what can be accomplished with integrity and freedom through the American government grows increasingly difficult. Around us good people cry for the creation of a Christian state. But the state they

advocate is one peculiar to their interpretation of Scripture and denies the basic tenets upon which this nation was founded.

To balance the demands of Christ with the duties of citizenship proves a difficult task, but one worth doing well.

What a difference we can make if we accept our responsibilities as Christians and our duties as Americans, recognizing they are not identical. May we hold both in creative tension as we work to be responsible Christians and responsible Americans.

Rosalie Beck, associate professor
Baylor University
Waco, Texas

Reprinted with permission from Baptist Center for Ethics

GUEST EDITORIAL

If I dove into the sea like those little birds, I wouldn't survive vacation

The small white bird flapped its wings furiously, holding its position above the crashing waves as it eyed its prey. In a blink, it pointed its sharp black beak straight toward the surf, pulled its wings to its side and dove-bombed into the water.

No more than a second later, it broke the surface again. As it soared sunward, a glint of silver indicated the fearless bomber had speared its supper.

"Man, I wish I could fish like that," I said as the bird flitted overhead, gulping its lunch. As birds had lips, this one would have been smiling.

"You've got to be crazy," my buddy Brent replied. "You'd smash your brains if you dived into the water that hard. And as slow as you swim, you'd starve to death

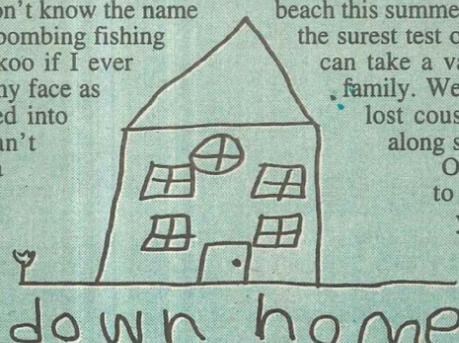
before you caught a fish."

Ouch. Reality does bite, and Brent was right. Although I don't know the name of those little dive-bombing fishing birds, I'd be a cuckoo if I ever hit the water with my face as fast as they dropped into the sea. And I can't catch fish with a hook, much less my teeth.

Still, the diversion of imagination is one of the most relaxing aspects of summer vacation. That, and sleeping late, eating seafood and not even thinking about work.

We met our friends the Adamses—Brent, Jackie, Alayna and Andrea—at the beach this summer. Someone once said the surest test of friendship is if you can take a vacation with another family. Well, we must be long-lost cousins, because we got along swimmingly.

Of course, it's hard not to get along when you've got miles of white sand, crashing waves, exciting novels, dive-bombing birds, playing children, great food, plenty of laughter, lots of sleep and too much sun.



Pre-convention meetings highlight special interests

"We need the Lord high and lifted up so we can get things in perspective."
John MacArthur, speaking to the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference

■ **Research Fellowship.** The church stands at a "hinge of history," David Schmidt told the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Research Fellowship June 17. "God has called the church to take risks," said Schmidt, owner of a Wheaton, Ill., research firm, in presenting the results of a study of churches throughout the southeastern United States. Seventy percent of the churches in the survey were Southern Baptist.

"Most of the things affecting the growth of the local church are under the control of that church," he said. "The church must take risks to reach people. It is a matter of change or die."

■ **Association of Campus Ministers.** Christians must chart an authentic course for their spiritual pilgrimage into the 21st century, members of the Association of Southern Baptist Campus Ministers were told during their annual meeting June 16-18.

Lloyd Allen, head of the department of Christian studies and philosophy at Mississippi College, asked the campus ministers to consider how they would find their way on such a course. "A central avenue of spirituality is our denominational identity," he said.

Traditional Baptist distinctives, such as soul freedom and the separation of church and state, must be taught and maintained, he insisted.

Second, Allen urged Christians, and especially ministers, "to see the eternal in the temporary, to see Christ within our routine." But he advised such vision "takes attention and intention."

Finally, he noted, Christians must know themselves. "If you do not, you can't know God's will for you."

Michelle Tooley, a former campus minister who will become an assistant professor of religion at Belmont University in Nashville, Tenn., this fall, spoke on ethical challenges for the 21st century.

"Baptist people are eager to serve God and have a genuine concern for the needs of the world," she said.

"But most churches spend the majority of their time maintaining regular programs—whether it's filling committee assignments or planning special events or studying about needs—not engaging in programs that meet basic human needs."

■ **Associational Directors of Missions Conference.** Associations of churches are uniquely positioned to help Southern Baptists, members of the Conference of Associational Directors of Missions were told during their annual meeting June 18-19.

Directors of missions must "shoot with the precision of a rifleman" as they help their churches deal with challenges such as the technological revolution and the need for revival, said T.O. Spicer, the group's president.

"All of you have witnessed the irony of seeing a church in a graying community call a youth minister," he said, urging the associational missionaries to gather information from community leaders and share it with

churches to help them recognize and adapt to age-group shifts.

Missions directors also need to help churches develop giving, he noted. America is facing the greatest transfer of wealth in the history of the world, he said, when money now held by the largest generation of seniors in American history is passed to the next generation.

Since most church giving comes from this group of seniors, it is important for churches to recognize that estate stewardship is the greatest untapped resource for churches and missions, he said.

■ **Chaplains Convocation.** Southern Baptists must understand the roots of their differences to have any hope of resolving them, a senior statesman of the denomination told chaplains June 19.

James L. Sullivan, a former president of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, a past convention president and a veteran of denominational life, spoke twice to Southern Baptist chaplains in their annual convocation.

Sullivan conducted a three-hour tour of Southern Baptist history and polity, tracing the roots of the 150-year-old denomination and explaining the forces that continue to shape its life and work.

The controversy that has troubled Southern Baptists since 1979 is almost as old the convention itself, Sullivan said.

"I've watched this disagreement develop since 1933," said Sullivan, a Mississippi native who recently celebrated 69 years of ministry. "It's been going on since 1851. It just didn't surface until 1979."

"If we don't understand this, we won't ever find a solution" to the controversy, he said.

■ **Church Music Conference.** If the church is to accomplish its great mission in the world, God must be its first priority, a 24-year music ministry veteran told Southern Baptist church musicians.

Speaking at a seminar titled, "Worship Planning: Staying Fresh," Lynn Madden, minister of music at Immanuel Baptist Church in Little Rock, Ark., said worship is the highest form of love—a love given to God.

Worship planning should be a direct outgrowth of a person's relationship to Christ, Madden said.

"The church is the bride of Christ, and as ministers, we've been charged to lead that bride in worship," he said. "It may be nothing more than a still, small voice, but many in the church are hearing a clear call to the recovery of God as first priority over everything and in everything."

Madden offered a definition of worship as "a personal, human expression of that relationship by

which we honor and praise God as supreme."

■ **Hispanic Fellowship.** Hispanic Southern Baptists should accept new responsibilities, but they need a hearing from Southern Baptist Convention leadership in order to reach their full potential within the convention, ethnic leaders said before the start of the SBC's 150th anniversary meeting.

A vote to incorporate and become a fellowship of churches, rather than a major step in achieving such goals, Hispanic leaders said.

Members of the Hispanic Southern Baptist Fellowship approved the action in their June 18 meeting.

■ **Pastors' Conference.** "I am here to encourage you, to tell you there is a reason to be encouraged despite the extreme difficulty you may be facing," John MacArthur told 13,000 people attending the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference. "We need a vision of the glorified Christ."

MacArthur, pastor of Grace Community Church in Sun Valley, Calif., told the conference: "We need the Lord high and lifted up so we can get things in perspective ... We are called to minister in a sense of awe, of reverence, of holy fear."

The future of the United States is contingent upon Christians proclaiming Christ high and lifted up, Fred Luter warned.

"I believe America's greatest problem is she's suffering from a severe case of spiritual malnutrition," said Luter, pastor of Franklin Avenue Baptist Church in New Orleans. "And the only remedy, the only antidote, the only hope is for the church to stand up and be the church and lift him up and proclaim the name of our Lord and Savior to a dying world."

Other Pastors' Conference speakers included Ravi Zacharias, an Atlanta-based speaker and author; evangelist Junior Hill from Hartselle, Ala.; Ronnie Floyd, pastor of First Baptist Church of Springdale, Ark.; Paige Patterson, president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C.; Gene Getz, senior pastor of Fellowship Bible Church North in Plano, Texas; Jerry Vines, co-pastor of First Baptist Church of Jacksonville, Fla.; John Phillips, author and minister from Memphis, Tenn.; Adrian Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, Tenn.; Jerry Sutton, pastor of Two Rivers Baptist Church in Nashville; Danny Akin, dean of students at Southeastern Seminary; Jack Graham, pastor of Prestonwood Baptist Church in Dallas; and Charles Colson, founder of Prison Fellowship.

■ **Preaching and Worship Conference.** A crowd of 300 to 400 people heard words of encouragement and calls to spiritual holiness and servanthood during the "Building His Church" preaching and worship Conference June 18-19 at Wieuca Road Baptist Church in Atlanta.

The meeting was held simultaneous to the Southern Baptist Pastor's Conference to give a national platform to "great Southern Baptist preachers" who do not have such an opportunity to preach before one, said Don Letzring, conference coordinator.

Letzring, pastor of Wellwood Baptist Church in Tampa, Fla., said the SBC Pastors' Conference was created originally "to represent the wide spectrum of preaching in the Southern Baptist circles. But in the past dozen years or so, leaders of the Pastors' Conference have chosen to narrow" the spectrum of preaching, he said.

■ **WMU Annual Meeting.** A standing ovation greeted the report of Woman's Missionary Union Executive Director Dellanna O'Brien from the estimated 3,500 registrants at the WMU annual meeting. O'Brien told the group WMU was "not born by vote of this convention, nor will we die by it."

The reference was to the omission of WMU's role from the proposed restructuring of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The value of WMU was echoed by numerous comments from speakers during the June 18-19 WMU meeting at the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta.

During a commissioning service for 37 home missionaries, Ron Lewis, appointed as a church planter in Calabash, N.C., told of his release from a 15-year drug habit when he trusted Christ and of his subsequent call to missions after being dragged to a WMU meeting.

"Don't forget where you were when God found you," Lewis said.

William Estep, church history professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and author of a history of the Foreign Mission Board, told the women, "The SBC would not be what it is today without the WMU."

■ **Evangelists' Conference.** The storms of life provide opportunities to demonstrate God's strength, Charles Stanley told the annual conference of Southern Baptist evangelists June 21.

Stanley, pastor of First Baptist Church of Atlanta for more than 20 years, challenged the evangelists to control responses to storms to "demonstrate that God is the source of strength."

During an afternoon of evangelistic preaching and singing, Ron Pledger of Stone Mountain, Ga., said there are three kinds of people—people who have just come through a trial, people who are currently going through a trial and people whose trials are coming.



SBC repents of racism on its 150th anniversary

Continued from page 1

The resolution acknowledges that because of the SBC's links to slavery, "our relationship to African-Americans has been hindered from the beginning."

In more recent history, it adds, Southern Baptists "failed in many cases to support and in some cases opposed legitimate initiatives to secure the civil rights of African Americans." Many Southern Baptist congregations have "intentionally and/or unintentionally excluded" blacks from worship, the resolution says.

Messengers debated the resolution only briefly before voting overwhelmingly to adopt the statement.

"Nothing that I know of that has occurred in the sessions of this convention has been bathed in more prayer and more deliberation and more caution and more sincere spiritual effort than what we share with you at this time," Charles Carter, resolutions committee chairman, told messengers.

Gary Frost, SBC second vice president, urged messengers to adopt the resolution. "Our nation is being ripped apart by hatred," Frost said. "I believe it's up to the church of Jesus Christ to begin the process of true reconciliation," said Frost, the first African-American to serve as an SBC officer.

Three messengers spoke against the resolution. Two said it was inap-

propriate to apologize only to African-Americans for acts of racism. The third, Cary Kimbrell of Baton Rouge, La., said the resolution imposed too broad a condemnation on the "great men who founded this convention." He proposed the resolution be referred to the SBC Historical Commission for more study.

Committee Chairman Carter opposed the referral, acknowledging that the SBC's founders were "godly, Bible-believing persons, but they were not infallible."

"We are not judging; we are simply acknowledging our wrong," said Carter, pastor of Shades Mountain Baptist Church in Birmingham, Ala.

Convention messengers defeated the motion to refer and then voted to approve the resolution.

After the vote, SBC President Jim Henry remarked, "The body has spoken clearly and definitively on this very important issue." Henry then embraced Frost.

"On behalf of my black brothers and sisters, we accept your apology and we extend to you our forgiveness in the name of Jesus Christ," Frost responded. "We pray that the genuineness of your repentance will

be demonstrated in your attitude and your action."

Before the vote, Richard Land, executive director of the SBC's Christian Life Commission, told reporters the resolution represents "one of the most historic things that has happened in the Southern Baptist Convention in my adult lifetime."

The statement on reconciliation "clears the deck for us to work for a more multi-racial future," Land said.

The resolution emerged from a grass-roots movement begun last year. A group of urban directors of missions tried to get a resolution before last year's convention but failed. A number of Baptist state conventions passed statements of repentance last fall.

In May, the SBC Historical Commission adopted a "Declaration of Repentance and Rededication," acknowledging the sin of racism.

Also in May, Land and Frost organized a "Racial Reconciliation Consultation" comprised of an equal number of black and white leaders to draft a statement.

All three statements were sent to the resolutions committee.



Text of racial resolution

Whereas, since its founding in 1845, the Southern Baptist Convention has been an effective instrument of God in missions, evangelism, and social ministry; and

Whereas, the Scriptures teach that "Eve is the mother of all living" (Genesis 3:20), and that "God shows no partiality, but in every nation whoever fears him and works righteousness is accepted by him" (Acts 10:34-35), and that God has "made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on the face of the earth" (Acts 17:26); and

Whereas, our relationship to African-Americans has been hindered from the beginning by the role that slavery played in the formation of the Southern Baptist Convention; and

Whereas, many of our Southern Baptist forebears defended the "right" to own slaves, and either participated in, supported or acquiesced in the particularly inhumane nature of American slavery; and

Whereas, in later years Southern Baptists failed, in many cases, to support, and in some cases opposed, legitimate initiatives to secure the civil rights of African-Americans; and

Whereas, racism has led to discrimination, oppression, injustice and violence, both in the Civil War and throughout the history of our nation; and

Whereas, racism has divided the body of Christ and Southern Baptists in particular, and separated us from our African-American brothers and sisters; and

Whereas, many of our congregations have intentionally and/or unintentionally excluded African-Americans from worship, membership and leadership; and

Whereas, racism profoundly distorts our understanding of Christian morality, leading some Southern Baptists to believe that racial prejudice and discrimination are compatible with the Gospel; and

Whereas, Jesus performed the ministry of reconciliation to restore sinners to a right relationship with the Heavenly Father, and to establish right relations among all human beings, especially within the family of faith.

Therefore, be it resolved, that we, the messengers to the sesquicentennial meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, assembled in Atlanta, Georgia, June 20-22, 1995, unwaveringly denounce racism, in all its forms, as deplorable sin; and

Be it further resolved, that we affirm the Bible's teaching that every human life is sacred, and is of equal and immeasurable worth, made in God's image, regardless of race or ethnicity (Genesis 1:27), and that, with respect to salvation through Christ, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for (we) are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28); and

Be it further resolved, that we lament and repudiate historic acts of evil such as slavery from which we continue to reap a bitter harvest, and we recognize that the racism which yet plagues our culture today is inextricably tied to the past; and

Be it further resolved, that we apologize to all African-Americans for condoning and/or perpetuating individual and systemic racism in our lifetime; and we genuinely repent of racism of which we have been guilty, whether consciously (Psalm 19:13) or unconsciously (Leviticus 4:27); and

Be it further resolved, that we ask forgiveness from our African-American brothers and sisters, acknowledging that our own healing is at stake; and

Be it further resolved, that we hereby commit ourselves to eradicate racism in all its forms from Southern Baptist life and ministry; and

Be it further resolved, that we commit ourselves to be "doers of the word" (James 1:22) by pursuing racial reconciliation in all our relationships, especially with our brothers and sisters in Christ (1 John 2:6), to the end that our light would so shine before others, "that they may see (our) good works and glorify (our) Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:16); and

Be it finally resolved, that we pledge our commitment to the Great Commission task of making disciples of all peoples (Matthew 28:19), confessing that in the church God is calling together one people from every tribe and nation (Revelation 5:9), and proclaiming that the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is the only certain and sufficient ground upon which redeemed persons will stand together in restored family union as joint-heirs with Christ (Romans 8:17).

Resolutions against Foster, for amendment

ATLANTA (ABP)—The Southern Baptist Convention went on record June 21 opposing Henry Foster's confirmation as U.S. surgeon general and calling for a constitutional amendment to protect religious expression.

Messengers to the 1995 SBC, meeting in the Georgia Dome in Atlanta, adopted the resolution on the Foster nomination the same day the Senate planned a key three-hour debate on the confirmation.

The nomination died the next day, with Senate Democrats unable to garner the necessary votes to end debate and put the nomination to an actual vote.

SBC resolutions are non-binding statements that express the opinion of messengers attending the annual meeting.

The SBC resolution urged senators to oppose Foster for the nation's top health-care post and pledged support for "any filibuster which may be waged against the nomination." It urged President Bill Clinton to appoint for the post "a health professional who will advocate principles consistent with the Judeo-Christian ethic."

The resolution said Foster holds positions on controversial issues similar to those of his predecessor, Dr. Joycelyn Elders, who resigned from the post under pressure from conservative groups.

"There is little or no difference between Joycelyn Elders and the current nominee," Drew Hayes, pastor of First Baptist Church in Shel-

byville, Tenn., told messengers during discussion.

The SBC statement opposes Foster's position on abortion, his advocacy of "safe-sex" pregnancy prevention and his support for the sterilization of mentally impaired women in the 1970s.

It acknowledges Foster's "impressive academic and professional credentials," but says Foster's "credibility has come into question" because of confusion over the number of abortions he has performed and his record of support for Planned Parenthood.

Two messengers, including a Kentuckian, spoke against the resolution, which passed overwhelmingly. Jay Robison, pastor of Central Baptist Church in Paris, said the resolution "could be perceived as racist" because Foster is an African-American.

Jeff Lowe, pastor of Druid Hills Baptist Church in Atlanta, argued the statement violated the separation of church and state by "entering into the realm of politics."

Later, the SBC's second vice president responded to those charges. "There's a clear distinction between racial issues and moral issues," Gary Frost, an African-American, told reporters.

"Abortion is an abomination before God," added Frost, pastor of Rising Star Baptist Church in Youngstown, Ohio. "What we have here is where politics has entered into the realm of morality."

Richard Land, head of the SBC's

moral concerns agency, the Christian Life Commission, said it would be improper for the convention to oppose a political candidate, but Foster is a nominee, which is "very different from a candidate."

"This is a public policy and morality issue, not a political issue," Land said. "Dr. Foster is unacceptable to the vast majority of Southern Baptists based on his views."

Another resolution adopted by messengers called on Congress to adopt a constitutional amendment to protect religious exercises, including voluntary prayer and religious speech by students in public schools.

The resolution cites "confusing and contradictory rulings" by the U.S. Supreme Court on religious freedom questions, requiring that religious speech "be treated discriminatorily in the name of strict separation of church and state."

It calls for a constitutional amendment to overturn those rulings, while preventing the government from "composing, compelling or subsidizing prayer or religious expression by any person."

Other resolutions:

- Protested religious persecution around the world.

- Opposed the patenting of animal and human genes.

- Expressed appreciation for the American Baptist Theological Seminary, an African-American school in Nashville.

- Offered prayerful support for victims of the Oklahoma City bombing.

SBC approves restructuring with amendments

"It was my desire to say, 'WMU has been an integral part of what we've done, and I certainly hope we keep doing it a long, long time.'"

John Bisagno

Continued from page 1

cies eliminated in the plan, failed on a show-of-hands vote.

The reorganization—the first since 1959—commits the SBC to reduce the number of denominational agencies from 19 to 12. It includes a first-ever overarching mission statement for the denomination and arranges the convention's work under five broad ministry groupings—missions, church enrichment, facilitating ministries, theological education, and Christian ethics/religious liberty.

It combines the resources of three existing entities—the Home Mission Board, the Brotherhood Commission and the Radio & Television Commission—into the North American Mission Board, a new agency to be based in the HMB's new facility in suburban Atlanta.

The new board will emphasize evangelism nationwide, with particular emphasis on starting churches in areas where Southern Baptists are new or numerically weak.

The work of the SBC's other mission agency, the Foreign Mission Board, will continue basically unchanged. It will be renamed the International Mission Board. Southern Baptist work in Canada, now done jointly by the home and foreign mission boards, will become the sole responsibility of the North American Mission Board.

The restructuring eliminates five Nashville-based agencies—the Stewardship Commission, Education Commission, Historical Commission, the Southern Baptist Foundation and the Commission on the American Baptist Theological Seminary—transferring their work to other denominational entities.

The Nashville-based Sunday School Board will take on new assignments for ministries to women, stewardship education and capital fund-raising.

The six SBC seminaries will manage the denomination's archives and historical library, which are currently housed at the Historical Commission.

Financial management services currently performed by the Foundation will move to the SBC Executive Committee, which already handles

budget development and disbursement of funds.

The Education Commission, which services and promotes colleges and universities sponsored by Baptist state conventions, will be phased out, along with the Southern Baptist Commission on the American Baptist Theological Seminary, an African-American school which the SBC helps support. Growth and changes in theological education make those agencies no longer necessary, the committee said.

Since the plan was unveiled last February, much of the debate focused on what appeared to be a reduced role for Woman's Missionary Union, the 107-year-old mission-support auxiliary, which is not given an assignment in the restructured SBC.

Dellanna O'Brien, WMU executive director, told the group's members a day before the vote that the plan was unacceptable without some recognition of the work of the auxiliary. Later that day, the SBC Executive Committee turned back such a proposal, opting instead to affirm WMU in a resolution.

When the report was introduced to messengers June 20, Brister affirmed WMU and its continued work in the SBC. But, he noted, WMU was not given a ministry assignment because its executive board is not elected by the SBC. "They expressed their desire to remain an auxiliary. We honored their request," Brister said.

Although the plan assigns WMU's traditional task of promoting the SBC's mission offerings to other agencies, Brister said those agencies are free to ask WMU for help.

Two Baptist leaders offered an amendment to include an affirmation of WMU as a footnote to the report.

The amendment, offered by Roy Smith, executive director of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, said the SBC "welcomes the continued role of WMU in supporting missions." John Bisagno, pastor of First Baptist Church of Houston, endorsed the amendment.

WMU's O'Brien later told reporters she was "very satisfied" with the amendment to the report. The amendment "affirm(s) WMU's partnership and presence" in the convention, she said.

The omission of any mention of WMU in the original report "was rather disturbing to us," O'Brien said, even though convention leaders assured WMU the restructuring would not change the way the auxiliary has related to the convention's mission boards.

"If WMU were not included in that report and only mentioned as one not accountable to the convention, we were not sure what that

would mean five or 10 years from now. We wanted to secure a future for WMU," she said.

O'Brien said WMU would not have been satisfied with just a resolution of support, such as the one passed by the Executive Committee.

"Our concern was that while there were many published statements of support for WMU, what would be part of history was the document itself," she said.

Bisagno later said he hoped the amendment would alleviate

the concerns. "It was my desire to say, 'WMU has been an integral part of what we've done, and I certainly hope we keep doing it a long, long time.'"

Bisagno said both he and Smith earlier suggested the amendment to the Program and Structure Study Committee, which "looked favorably upon the idea."

"The committee suggested I join with Roy in making the amendment, and I was only happy to do so," Bisagno said.

"There had to be some public acknowledgement of Woman's Missionary Union's role in our convention," Smith said. "We needed an invitation for that relationship to continue."

Another amendment, introduced by HMB President Larry Lewis, asked for three minor changes in the wording of the report regarding home missions:

■ "Direct mission strategies," the focus of the new North American Mission Board's assignment, was changed to "cooperative mission strategies," emphasizing the traditional joint relationship of the mission board with state and local missions efforts.

■ A reference to "career" missionaries was deleted from the North American Mission Board's ministry statement. Three-fourths of current HMB missionaries, such as mission pastors, serve as term missionaries, typically for three-to-five years, Lewis said. Having only career missionaries "would devastate our mission strategy," he said.

■ The proposal to make the larger state Baptist conventions totally responsible for funding home missionaries in their states was softened. Instead, those old-line states will be asked to assume "a greater portion" of that funding. Cutting out the mission board's role in the larger states would reduce the agency's national presence and eliminate its control over the doctrinal integrity of missionaries, Lewis warned.

Lewis' three-part amendment was approved overwhelmingly.

A motion to keep the Historical Commission as a separate agency was defeated by a margin estimated at 2-to-1. Slaydon Yarbrough of Shawnee, Okla., a trustee and interim executive director of the Historical Commission, said the elimina-

tion of the commission would be unwise. He noted the commission's administrators and trustees were not consulted by the restructuring committee.

Messengers tried twice to get the vote on the restructuring plan postponed but were ruled out of order.

"We can vote it up or down, but it cannot be postponed beyond this convention," said John Sullivan of Jacksonville, Fla., one of the SBC parliamentarians.

Chief parliamentarian Lester Cooper, a pastor from Jonesboro, Ga., later explained: "Robert's Rules of Order state that in any organization that does not meet within a quarterly time frame—such as our convention, which meets only annually—the motion to postpone definitely may not be used to postpone an order of business beyond the end of that session."

Cooper noted, however, that a different sort of motion, such as a proposal to postpone the recommendation indefinitely, would have been allowed. "Yes, a motion to postpone indefinitely would have been appropriate," he explained. "As it was, a motion to postpone definitely was an attempt to kill (the recommendation) outright."

In a news conference after the report was adopted, Brister said the committee was pleased the report passed. He declined to elaborate on the committee's feelings about the amendments to the report other than to say, "The amendments were consistent with our report."

Committee member Ronnie Floyd of Springdale, Ark., told reporters the restructuring plan "puts the local church back at the center of the Southern Baptist Convention." The changes should place a greater emphasis on missions and increase giving from local churches, he predicted.

The committee deferred all questions about the cost of implementing the restructuring. Prior to the report's adoption, many questions had been raised about the financial ramifications of the report, especially the cost of merging three existing agencies into a new North American Mission Board.

Committee member Bob Sorrell of Memphis, Tenn., reiterated the committee's position that their work was "a spiritual decision" rather than a business decision. However, he admitted the changes do carry "business implications."

The committee has predicted overall cost-savings will result from the changes but has provided no estimates or analyses to back up the claim.

Also in the news conference, the committee attempted to fend off criticism that their plan centralizes more power in the hands of fewer people.

"This really is a decentralization of power," Sorrell said. "It puts more decision-making back in churches. To my knowledge, we really have not centralized any power."

Written by Greg Warner of Associated Baptist Press with additional reporting by Editor Marv Knox and News Director Mark Wingfield



APPRECIATIVE Dellanna O'Brien, executive director of Woman's Missionary Union, speaks to reporters after the Southern Baptist Convention's adoption of a major restructuring plan, to which an amendment was added noting WMU's contributions in missions. O'Brien said she appreciated the affirmation. (BP photo by Van Payne)



Restructuring will take up to five years to implement

By Mark Wingfield
News Director

ATLANTA—Although the Southern Baptist Convention has adopted the most massive reorganization in its 150-year history, rearranging the denominational building blocks will take up to five years.

Messengers to this year's SBC annual meeting laid the foundation June 20 by approving the restructuring report, called "Covenant for a New Century." The blueprints, spelled out in the "Covenant" document, were drawn by a seven-member Program and Structure Study Committee.

Now the SBC Executive Committee will take on the role of general contractor to determine how the reconstruction will proceed. During the next year, the Executive Committee is charged with developing a "transition plan" to present to messengers at next year's convention in New Orleans.

In a news conference soon after adoption of the restructuring plan, members of the Program Structure and Study Committee deferred most questions about the timeline of changes to the Executive Committee.

"It's in the Executive Committee's purview," Chairman Mark Brister said in answer to one such question.

The one issue already scheduled to come back to the SBC for approv-

al is an amendment to Bylaw 15, which lists the names of the SBC's agencies. Bylaw changes require approval at two subsequent conventions. The change to Bylaw 15 was approved for the first time this year.

However, the Executive Committee apparently will not have to wait on the second approval of Bylaw 15 changes to begin implementing the reorganization. James Guenther, a Nashville attorney and legal counsel to the SBC, has said the convention's positive vote on the "Covenant for a New Century" report is sufficient action to adopt the restructuring plan. The second vote on the bylaw change appears to be a technicality.

Some aspects of the reconstruction will be easier to implement than others. For example, changing the name of the Foreign Mission Board to International Mission Board is mainly a matter of filing legal papers and reprinting letterhead.

The process of dissolving five agencies entirely will be more complicated.

But perhaps the most complex action will be merging the Home Mission Board, Brotherhood Com-

mission and Radio & Television Commission into the new North American Mission Board.

The first step will be to create a new trustee board for the North American Mission Board. This 75-member board is to be comprised initially of some trustees who have served the three existing agencies.

Restructuring committee members have said the first responsibility of this new trustee board will be to hire a chief executive and then vice presidents for each of the board's three major divisions.

In the news conference June 20, restructuring committee members were asked whether the current presidents of the Home Mission Board, Brotherhood Commission and Radio & Television Commission would have jobs in the new structure. That decision will be made by the new trustee board, the committee answered, indicating neither Larry Lewis, James Williams nor Jack Johnson has any guarantee of continued employment.

While convention observers have predicted an overall staff downsizing as the three agencies merge, the restructuring committee declined to predict how many jobs might be eliminated.

According to the "Covenant" document, all aspects of the restructuring are to be in place by the year 2000.



BRISTER COMMITTEE
Members of the Program and Structure Study Committee, also known as the Brister Committee, lined up for an interview after their report was adopted by SBC messengers. From left, they are Rex Terry, Robert Sorrell, Ronnie Floyd, Mark Brister, William Hall, Greg Horton and Al Mohler. (BP photo by Van Payne)



Henry seeks 'rallying point'

ATLANTA—Jim Henry plans to be a "rallying point" for unity during his second year as president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

And that's a good place to be, as the convention enters a period of reconstruction after a 16-year denominational civil war, added Henry, pastor of First Baptist Church of Orlando, Fla.

Henry was re-elected without opposition to a second term as head of the 15.6-million-member SBC.

Several states have experienced a record number of baptisms and a record increase in giving during the past year, he noted, interpreting that to mean the SBC has experienced "some coalescing, some healing, some unifying."

While conservatives have succeeded in steering the convention onto a more conservative theological path, "that doesn't mean everything is right yet," he said. "But we may have one of our best years in front of us."

The SBC is like a large ocean liner that "can't turn around fast," he added. "But the longer it's in the turn, the more you sense that there's a different spirit and a different attitude."

Among other topics Henry covered in a wide-ranging news conference:

■ The SBC resolution on racial reconciliation, which was approved in Atlanta, ranks as "one of our finest moments in Southern Baptist

life," he claimed.

The resolution is "a huge statement to the African-American community of who we are and what we're about," he stressed. "Some of our greatest growth in recent years has come in African-American churches. I believe this (growth) will accelerate because they have seen our heart. We didn't heal everybody's prejudices, but I think we took a large step."

Henry pledged to appoint an increasing number of ethnic minorities to SBC committees.

■ A "concerned, but not contentious" tone described the majority of letters and phone calls he had received regarding the reorganization of the convention, which messengers approved during the first morning of the annual meeting.

"If we listen to what we're really saying to each other and get past the emotional part, we'll continue to make progress," said Henry.

Regarding the controversy over Woman's Missionary Union's role in the reorganization plan, Henry promised, "We will continue our historic relationship with the WMU."

Elimination of WMU's role in prayer, fund-raising and education for missions would create a "vacuum we would be hard-put to find any substitute for," he said. That relationship should become "tighter and not looser in the days ahead," he added.

Jim Henry re-elected SBC president

ATLANTA—Florida pastor Jim Henry was elected without opposition to a second term as president of the Southern Baptist Convention June 20.

Johnny Hunt, pastor of First Baptist Church of Woodstock, Ga., nominated Henry, pastor of First Baptist Church of Orlando, to the post.

First-term SBC presidents are traditionally not challenged for a second term. During political wrangling between moderates and conservatives over the last 15 years, however, contested races were common even during the traditional off years. The president is limited to two one-year terms.

Henry, a conservative, won the SBC presidency last year over Louisiana pastor Fred Wolfe, breaking a string of presidents backed by the inerrancy party which used the president's appointive powers to help them gain control of the nation's largest non-Catholic religious group.

Three of the SBC's four other officers were re-elected.

The only new face among the officers is Larry Wynn, pastor of Hebron Baptist Church near Atlanta, who was elected first vice president. Wynn, 42, is immediate past president of the Georgia Baptist Convention. He was nominated by James Merritt, pastor of First Baptist Church, Snellville, Ga., and faced no opposition.

Other officers re-elected include:
■ Gary Frost, pastor of Rising Star Baptist Church in Youngstown, Ohio, second vice president. Frost won election over Fort Worth,

Texas, music evangelist John McKay, 4,390 votes to 2,263.

■ David Atchison, recording secretary, director of Turning Point, a Nashville-based discipleship ministry.

■ Lee Porter, registration secretary, a retired Sunday School Board editor. Porter was elected to his 19th consecutive term, in a race with Clayton Spriggs, administrator at First Baptist Church of Edmond, Okla., 4,664 to 2,208.



OFFICERS The Southern Baptist Convention's top three officers for the coming year are President Jim Henry (center), pastor of First Baptist Church of Orlando, Fla.; First Vice President Larry Wynn (right), pastor of Hebron Baptist Church in Dacula, Ga.; and Second Vice President Gary Frost, pastor of Rising Star Baptist Church in Youngstown, Ohio. (BP photo)

150th anniversary marked with pageantry & history

ATLANTA (BP)—Heated debate, as well as missions, has been part of the Southern Baptist Convention's history from the beginning, according to a 150th anniversary theatrical pageant.

Southern Baptists from across the nation observed two evenings of drama, music and passionate appeals as they celebrated the SBC sesquicentennial June 20-21 in Atlanta.

The living example of their continuing commitment to soul-winning drew a sustained standing ovation the first night. The crowd watched Bernard Miller, pastor of First Missionary Baptist Church in Griffin, Ga., a primarily black new church start, baptize his son Brian.

Brian Miller's baptism presented an opportunity to celebrate a historic event that had taken place hours earlier. In the afternoon session, the convention overwhelmingly approved a racial reconciliation resolution, repudiating the slavery which played a part in the SBC's founding

and asking forgiveness of African Americans for racism in the lives of Southern Baptists.

Actors and actresses in period costumes, as well as narrators, told the story of Southern Baptists. Video showed how Southern Baptists continue to fulfill the Great Commission and the objective of the convention's founding. Choirs, orchestra, soloists and congregation sang and played the story of salvation and missions.

The primary goal of the celebration was "to focus attention on our founding purpose"—doing mission work in the United States and around the world, said Marshall Walker, chairman of the sesquicentennial committee.

The founders "were just normal people trying to find God's will and work together," said Walker, special events coordinator at the SBC Sunday School Board.

Narrators recalled how Baptists from eight Southern states and the District of Columbia gathered in Augusta, Ga., in May 1845 to decide how to improve their missions effectiveness. Slave holders had been rejected as missionaries by Baptists in the North. The assembly voted to become the Southern Baptist Convention.

Southern Baptists may be the largest Protestant missionary-send-

ing body today, but their start certainly didn't foreshadow such an end, according to events portrayed in the pageant.

Eight days after the SBC started, Foreign Mission Board trustees had elected six corresponding secretaries—and none had accepted. After that rocky start, board finances doubled between 1846 and 1849 and again by 1853.

The Board of Domestic Missions, later called the Home Mission Board, was established

to "preach the gospel to the black people, and to Indians." It also had trouble finding good help—going through a president, two corresponding secretaries and a treasurer before it finished its first year.

The Sunday School Board was launched in 1891, only after strong disagreement about its founding had been settled by the leading proponent and opponent, who wrote a joint resolution calling for it.

Despite nostalgia of the historical presentations, an emphasis on today's successes brought the strongest response from the convention audience.

Following Brian Miller's baptism, Marine chaplain Mike Langston told about seeing 51 military personnel come to know Christ as Savior. He described how he used metal coffins as temporary baptismal

pools aboard ship during the Gulf War. Filled with water, they worked fine for baptizing a Navy doctor, a Marine major, a fireman from the engine room and a gunnery sergeant.

The SBC audience watched the baptisms on a video screen as Langston gave his testimony. The coffins, Langston noted, never were used for their intended purpose.

Next came the baptism of Dan Harper, a 13-year-old who made a profession of faith in Christ the previous Sunday in First Baptist Church in Augusta, Ga., where the SBC held its founding meeting.

The first night's pageant ended with a challenge to continue to reach the millions of people in the world who have never heard the message of Jesus Christ.

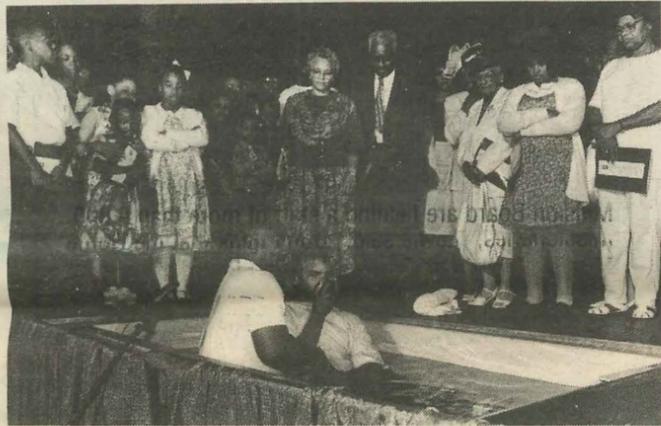
Actors representing historic leaders J.B. Gambrell, R.G. Lee, Annie Armstrong, Arthur Flake, B.B. McKinney and Lottie Moon gave monologues summing up their contributions and asking who would fill their shoes. Then they stepped out of their shoes, leaving them on the stage.

SBC President Jim Henry praised God for the past and challenged Southern Baptists to look to the future. As he stepped out of his shoes and left the stage, a harmonica began playing "Amazing Grace."

The next night, Southern Baptists were challenged to step into the empty shoes to complete the unfinished task of winning the world to Christ. The service concluded with six symbolic Southern Baptists stepping into the shoes to dramatize commitments to pray, give and go.



SYMBOLIC BAPTISM Brian Miller, 13, of Griffin, Ga., is baptized June 20 during a Southern Baptist Convention sesquicentennial celebration. (BP photo by Morris Abernathy)



Theme interpreters see strength for unfinished task

ATLANTA—Southern Baptists face an unfinished task for which they can draw power from a rich 150-year history, said a host of speakers who interpreted the theme of this year's Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting.

"Empowered for the Unfinished Task" was the theme of the June 20-22 meeting in Atlanta's Georgia Dome.

Robert Naylor, president emeritus of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, emphasized the miracle of the New Testament church.

Naylor said the church's work is an unfinished task that will end in victory. "We can stand in our generation of ruin, of despair, of failing character, and talk about the potential of the people of God, and about that which God can and will do through us to bring about his promised victory," he said.

"We talk about our churches in terms of the secular society in which we live," he pointed out. "We talk about little churches, big churches, important churches, mega-churches, failing churches. But we are empowered to confront our generation. ... We're to confront our world, not to accommodate ourselves to the world."

The unfinished task requires

Southern Baptists to "abandon self" for the sake of cooperation, said Morris Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee.

"The mortar which seals together the building blocks of cooperation is conviction," the belief the Bible is the totally trustworthy word of God, Chapman said.

Legendary preacher W.A. Criswell echoed Chapman's emphasis on the Bible, saying the SBC's future is bright because of its affirmation of biblical inerrancy.

This commitment "on the part of our forefathers and upon our leaders of our convention at this present moment is a harbinger of portent and a promise of the direction of our convention and our churches in these years that are yet to come," he said.

Baptists also are empowered by the doctrine of soul competency, said Herschell Hobbs, pastor emeritus of First Baptist Church of Oklahoma City.

Baptist churches and conventions have a right to define their membership, but Baptists historically have emphasized the right of every individual to work out his or her own faith before God, Hobbs said.

Soul competency doesn't mean a person can believe anything he wants and still be a Baptist, he explained. "What it means is that ev-

ery soul is made in the image of God—not as a puppet, but as a person with a right of choice—and is capable of having direct dealings with God without the benefit of any intermediary."

Soul competency "means that I can be a Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Jew or a Muslim—but I am responsible to God for my choice," he added. "It doesn't mean that there is an equality of all of these so-called faiths, but it means simply that I am free."

Southern Baptists also are empowered by Sunday school, said James Sullivan, former president of the Sunday School Board. Sullivan recalled the influence of his own Sunday school teachers, saying he still could name them "one by one."

Evangelistic fervor also has characterized Southern Baptists, said Roy Fish, evangelism professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Southern Baptists are the only major Christian denomination to consistently preach a "relatively pure gospel of a crucified Savior who becomes one's Savior by grace through faith," Fish said.

But Baptists "must be open to new things," he continued. "We cannot afford the fossilization which inevitably occurs when we become

firmly locked into tradition. We're witnessing to the people of this generation, not to their great-grandfathers.

"Our world around us is being swept by the stream of sin and death over the precipitous falls into a pit that has no bottom," Fish said. "Southern Baptists must lower every possible kind of rope to save them."

Paige Patterson, president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, spoke about empowerment through theological education. Greg Horton, a layman from South Carolina, spoke about empowerment through the laity.

Among all these assets, though, missions has been the reason for the SBC's existence, said Alma Hunt, retired executive secretary of Woman's Missionary Union. "One hundred fifty years ago, our purpose was to take the gospel to all the world," she said. "That purpose has not changed."

She added: "Missions is an unfinished task. This should not discourage us. Rather, it should challenge us."

"Let us—with all the enthusiasm of those who followed Jesus in the first century, of those who established our Southern Baptist Convention—pick up our heritage and add our chapter."

Kentucky teams pitch in for SBC witness

ATLANTA—Kentucky Baptists helped inscribe the gospel on the buckle of the Bible Belt as they participated in Crossover Atlanta immediately prior to the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting.

Crossover is an evangelism emphasis held each year in the convention's host city. It involves volunteers from across the country in a variety of ministries designed to lead people to faith in Christ.

This year, at least 1,389 Georgians made professions of faith in Christ as a result of Crossover Atlanta efforts.

The opportunities to share the love of Jesus and play softball were enough like heaven for Mark Mangum to drive all night to participate.

Mangum, a member of Buckner Baptist Church in LaGrange and a shortstop for the Sports Reach softball team, was exhausted by Saturday night, June 17.

But he was not disappointed after an eight-hour drive, two hours of sleep, four games of softball and witnessing to more than 150 inmates at youth detention facilities.

Sports Reach is part of the National Fellowship of Baptists in Missions and sponsored by the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission.

"The two things I love most in life are sharing the love of Jesus and playing softball," Mangum said. "When you can do both, that's pretty much heaven for me."

Mangum and 11 other members of the team made the trip from the Louisville area to Atlanta for the project. For Mangum, that required working at his job until late Friday night and getting two hours of sleep before grabbing his bat and glove at the Fulton County Youth Detention Facility at 9 a.m. June 17.

His effort was appreciated by James Fraley, director of the facility, which lies in the shadow of Atlanta-Fulton County Stadium, home of the Atlanta Braves.

"These kids need to be around people like these guys—normal working people who care enough to do things like this with their free time," Fraley said. "Too many

times, the only people they look up to and want to be like are either the pimps and the drug dealers or the superstars in music and sports.

"We don't want them to grow up to be the dealers, and their chances of being the superstars are pretty remote. So, we want to show them good, normal people, so they can be like them. Otherwise, they're going to be lost souls."

Matt Axline, a former starting guard for the University of Louisville Cardinals football team, did his part to make sure the youth he talked with didn't end up in that category. The 6-foot-5, 285-pound Axline showed Dylan and Noel, two 15-year-old admirers from the Fulton County facility, how to improve their hitting.

"I've been where these guys are," Axline said. "I never got locked up, but I did some things when I was young that God didn't approve of. I'm trying to do all I can to make sure they know God loves them and has a plan for them."

Robbie Spear, Sports Reach coordinator and planner of the softball exhibition, had no doubt his teammates accomplished their goal.

"These guys are committed," said Spear, a member of DeHaven Memorial Baptist Church in LaGrange. "They love the Lord, and they show it. I know they did that today."

Another long road led to a vital mission for five members of Rich Pond Baptist Church in Bowling Green, who also participated in Crossover.

They spent more time on the road than in their witnessing assignment in Crossover Atlanta. But the results were worth the trip, they reported.

They drove five hours June 16 to participate in Crossover. The next day, they spent four hours helping Beaver Ruin Road Baptist Church conduct evangelistic surveys. Then

they returned to Bowling Green that afternoon.

"It's a refueling thing for us," said layman Don Sutherlin.

"We'll go back enthused," added another layman, Johnny Hunt. "It benefits our church as much as any church we help."

They know what they're talking about. This is the fourth year Rich Pond has participated in Crossover, which was begun in 1989, when Southern Baptists held their annual meeting in Las Vegas.

The pre-convention evangelistic emphasis helps church members prepare for Crossover Bowling Green, a local evangelism emphasis in the fall, said Tracy Smith, associate minister of college students and discipleship.

People in the Atlanta area were open to hearing the gospel, Smith said. "We only got chased by one dog."

Among other Crossover experiences, Shawn Madden, pastor of Freedom Baptist Church in Mount Vernon, was attending his first block party when a divine encounter changed his plans.

Madden was walking toward one woman, planning to witness, when another woman said: "Excuse me. I'm ready to hear now."

"I said, 'Well, that's why I'm here,'" said Madden, still grinning from the encounter, in which the woman made a profession of faith in Christ.

"There's people that we've talked to today that you can tell God has brought them here," he said.

Madden added he hopes to take this experience back to his church. "I've heard about block parties for a long time, but man, this works," he insisted.

Based on reports from Baptist Press



Lewis & Rankin tell of open doors during missions rally

ATLANTA (BP)—Southern Baptists must pray, give and go if they expect to take advantage of unprecedented opportunities for sharing Jesus Christ with an unbelieving world, Larry Lewis and Jerry Rankin proclaimed just prior to the 1995 Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting.

And Southern Baptists must act now, while the doors of opportunity for spreading the gospel are wide open, said Lewis, president of the SBC Home Mission Board, and Rankin, president of the SBC Foreign Mission Board.

The duo highlighted the first-ever pre-SBC joint missions rally, held at Second Ponce de Leon Baptist Church in Atlanta.

"I see the hand of God moving so that all the world may know Jesus Christ," Rankin said. "It's not our mission, but God's mission. We see God moving to fulfill his purposes. And Southern Baptists are part of that movement."

Rankin cited examples of countries, such as Albania and Mongolia, that only a few years ago were closed to Christian witness but today are experiencing strong church growth. He also cited strong Christian growth in regions, such as Africa and South America, where missionaries have worked for decades.

Lewis cited as part of that trend strong Southern Baptist growth in U.S. inner cities and northern rural areas where denominational missions traditionally has not been effective.

"Together, the Home Mission Board and Foreign Mission Board are fielding a staff of more than 9,000 missionaries," Lewis said. "Don't think that the Home Mission Board and Foreign Mission Board are competitors. We are completers; we are enablers."

He also told rally participants: "You cannot practice selective evangelism. God said, 'You will be my witnesses in every part of the world,' and he meant that."

Rankin urged Southern Baptists to respond when God calls them to serve on the mission field. "God is answering our prayers. He is calling out the laborers, but many are answering with closed minds."

Christians must open their hearts and minds to the possibilities of being on mission with God and heeding his call to mission opportunities, he urged.

The pre-convention missions rally was held during two Sunday morning worship services and a joint Sunday school program at the Atlanta church. Both Rankin and Lewis said they hope the rally becomes a tradition on Sunday mornings prior to future conventions.

Garland calls for 'pro-life' agenda for children after birth

Continued from page 3

and we are called to be God's grace in the lives of others."

That sense of Christians becoming "God's grace" in other's lives echoed throughout Garland's presentation.

She told the Bible story about seven-week-old Jesus, who was blessed by two elderly worshipers when his parents took him to the Temple to be committed to God.

Anna and Simeon, the people who offered those blessings, were part of a caring community that helped Mary and Joseph raise young Jesus, she said. And the church today must provide that kind of community to help parents bring their children up well.

"Parents need other adults who will love their children and hold them," Garland insisted. This espe-

cially is true for children of single parents, but it's also imperative for all children in today's stressful and challenging society, she noted.

"Parents have paid substitutes, but the children need more," she said. "They need aunting and uncling and grandparenting."

She told about surveys of children who were raised in traumatic circumstances but went on to "lead satisfying, healthy lives with careers and strong families of their own." Those successful adults who grew up out of abuse and decay had one thing in common in their lives, she reported.

"They had an adult friend—a neighbor, an aunt or uncle or grandparent, a teacher or a coach—some adult somewhere who loved them with big doses, who thought they were very, very special," she said.

"These people were prophets—people who called out the very best in these children," she said.

And that's a role churches must provide to bring out the best in America's children, despite the nature of their own circumstances, she added.

Garland exhorted churches to take on three tasks that will support a "pro-life" agenda for the nation's children.

First, churches must provide strong communities that build and support strong families, she said.

"Every child and parent in our churches needs to be adopted by caring adults who are committed to be in their church family," she said. "Every child needs several adults who know that child's name and gifts and interests."

"Children need to be folded into

the life of the church with adults, not just in age-graded programs."

Second, churches must reach out to the vulnerable families in their communities, offering the parents "love and family-like support."

"This is one of the most effective ways of living and spreading the good news of Jesus Christ—that every child is precious in his sight, even his grown-up and despairing children," she said.

Third, churches must challenge the "values and myths of our society about poverty and violence and the needs of children," she stressed. That challenge also will lead to a shift in national values, she predicted.

"In the end, the question must be, 'How can we place children first in our priorities?'" she said. "Children should be the first concern for the government and the church."



ROLE PLAY Diana Garland, social work professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, presents herself as Mary the mother of Jesus during her speech to the Southern Baptist Ministers' Wives luncheon June 20. (BP photo by Dan Bryan)

BAPTIST BITS

■ **Louisville** has been chosen as the site for the 1998 National Acteens Convention. Woman's Missionary Union announced the site selection during the WMU annual meeting in Atlanta last week. The convention for teenage girls will be held July 1-4, 1998.

■ **Ronnie Floyd** was elected to preach the annual sermon at next year's Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in New Orleans. Floyd is pastor of First Baptist Church of Springdale, Ark. He also will serve this year as chairman of the SBC Executive Committee. Alternate preacher is Leroy Gainey, associate professor of Christian education at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary.

■ **Alan Culpepper** has been named founding dean of Mercer University's new school of theology in Atlanta. A Baylor University religion professor, Culpepper will assume the new post July 1. Before joining Baylor's faculty in 1991, Culpepper taught 17 years at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

■ **Ronnie Floyd**, pastor of First Baptist Church of Springdale, Ark., narrowly defeated Virginia's T.C. Pinckney June 21 to become chairman of the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee. Floyd was elected chairman by a four-vote margin, 31-27. Other Executive Committee officers elected June 21 are James Merritt, pastor of First Baptist Church of Snellville, Ga., vice chairman; and Rex Terry, an attorney from Fort Smith, Ark., secretary.

Mohler defends his beliefs as in line with Abstract

Continued from page 2

tal depravity of humans, unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace and perseverance of the saints.

Together, these doctrines assert that God has preordained, or elected, only certain people to salvation and thereby also has preordained some to damnation.

Mohler has declared his beliefs are in line with those held by the founders of Southern Seminary and the founders of the SBC. The theme of his two years at Southern Seminary's helm has been returning the school to its theological roots.

This effort has drawn praise from some quarters, condemnation from others and befuddlement from others. Several officers of the seminary's alumni association resigned their posts June 21, citing Mohler's belief in Calvinism as one reason for their action.

However, Mohler told the Founders Conference breakfast the seminary's trustees support him and intend to "continue the course and will see it through."

Mohler said his leadership is based on the Abstract of Principles, the seminary's doctrinal statement: "I am devoted to biblical truth, and the Abstract of Principles contain(s) and describe(s) biblical truth that all Southern Baptists can agree on and at one time did."

In his speech to the Founders Conference, Mohler implied that those who object to his theological leadership at the seminary do not understand the complete truth of the

Bible.

"The turning point of what is happening at Southern Seminary came out just a few months ago, and when Southern Baptists finally get the word of that, they will accept biblical truth," he declared.

Mohler cited recent comments by Frank Stagg, a former professor at Southern. Stagg "finally told people what many of us knew all along," Mohler said. "When the founding fathers of Southern wrote the Abstract of Principles, there were no arguments about it because everybody believed what was in the Abstract of Principles because the Abstract of Principles is biblical truth.

"Dr. Stagg said that those who are complaining about the controversy at Southern are not debating the interpretation of the Abstract of Principles but now are saying that they believe it to be wrong and that they didn't believe it to be true when they signed it," Mohler said. "I am not going to defend a certain theological system or heritage, but biblical truth, because I am accountable to that word of God that is sharper than any two-edged sword."

In the convention sermon, Mohler said he takes a stand "with the founders of this convention, who preached the gospel without fear and

without compromise."

"When a denomination begins to consider doctrine divisive, theology troublesome and conviction inconvenient, consider that denomination on its way to a well-deserved death. We take our stand upon the great essential truths of biblical faith, even when the world is at war with those truths."

The denial of these theological truths and a lack of fear of God are the two perils facing modern society, Mohler told the

David McNair of Jackson, Miss., said he couldn't find Calvinism in his Bible and couldn't understand what Mohler believed.

Mohler responded, "I stand upon the theological convictions upon which my seminary was founded and what the Abstract of Principles says."

He said he would be glad to explain his theological convictions in a one-on-one conversation but could not make a sufficient explanation from the platform in a brief time.

Later that day, a messenger made a motion that the SBC "affirm our belief that Jesus Christ died for the sins of the entire world and offers salvation to every human being," a clear reference to refuting the influence of Calvinist theology.

With additional reporting by Daniel McCrosky through Baptist Press



Founders Conference.

Such "compromise" has taken place "because we are sinners and sinners always rebel against the truth of God," Mohler said.

Mohler found a warm reception from the Founders Conference and from SBC messengers.

After the seminary report, messenger Garry Harred of Mobile, Ala., went to a microphone to commend Mohler. "You continue to stand upon the truth of the Scripture, and we as a Southern Baptist Convention will affirm you," Harred said to loud applause.

But another messenger also went to a microphone to question Mohler's belief in Calvinism.

Paying too much for Health Insurance?

This scriptural concept of burden sharing is the alternative to expensive insurance.

- People helping people.
- Pay \$300 + 20% of first \$5,000.
- \$122 per mo. average family burden share.
- Assistance with maternity expenses.

All Saints
SPECIAL SERVICE PLAN

Call All Saints
1-800-259-0095



Available in 20' to 33' Models
(12 to 38 passengers)

Church Buses Rental Buses

(New & Used)
Call **Henry Headden**
Carpenter Bus Sales Inc.
Brentwood, Tenn.
1 (800) 370-6180
1 (615) 371-6180



Life Action Ministries presents "Bring Back the Glory"

A live multimedia presentation calling
America to a spiritual awakening

September 22 • 7 p.m.

First Southern Baptist Church of Greater Louisville

2627 Crums Lane • (502) 447-9544

Free Admission

Nursery provided through 3 years of age

Unconditional love

Not every child who comes into the care of Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children comes because he is unloved or unwanted. Often parents do care but simply need help in solving difficult problems.

Mark (not his real name) is a case in point. Over the past two years, we have worked in partnership with Mark's family to help him find hope and healing. Mark had been adopted by the family after being removed from his own family due to chronic neglect. He experienced emotional problems early on, and this finally reached a point where, as a young teen, he needed to receive help at a psychiatric hospital.

He then came into treatment care at the Baptist Youth Ranch in Elizabethtown.

It had been assumed that Mark's difficulties were a result of the neglect he had suffered. But as he came to trust the caring Baptist Youth Ranch staff, Mark revealed that he had been sexually abused by a man outside his family not long after he had been adopted. Out of a misplaced sense of shame and guilt, he had kept this secret for years. But it

ate at him day after day, resulting in emotional problems.

Once the abuse was revealed, Youth Ranch staff were able to help both Mark and his family understand more about abuse and its long-ranging effects. Over time, through the love of his family and the professional caring of the staff, Mark began to work through his turmoil. He began to visit home regularly on weekends. Then he progressed to being ready to go to public school off campus. Finally, the day came for him to return home.

Mark has now been back home for several months. He has shown good progress in public school and within the family. The whole family still comes to the Baptist Youth Ranch for family therapy sessions once a month.

Our Lord provides us with unconditional love. It is normally through our family relationships that we understand what unconditional love truly means. Mark's family is an example of unconditional love in action.

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

HOMES FOR CHILDREN



Curtis C. Mooney

Graham urges Baptists to 'light a candle' in the dark

Continued from page 1
messenger "put your arms around WMU," a reference to an amendment attached to a major reorganization proposal passed two days earlier. The amendment recognized the contributions of Woman's Missionary Union to the SBC's missions efforts.

Declaring that founders of the SBC "believed in the blood of Christ and they believed there was a hell and they believed there was a heaven and they believed the Bible was fully inspired of God," Graham added, "Thank God we are staying with our roots. As long as I live, I stand with you."

Concluding the convention's focus on the sesquicentennial theme, "Empowered for the Unfinished Task," Graham preached from 2 Corinthians 4 about "the person God will use for the unfinished task."

"What kind of a world will the 21st century be?" he asked. "Will the third millennium usher in a golden age of progress and happiness as

some people are projecting, or will it be a time of political chaos or social upheaval or economic collapse or ecological disaster as others speculate?"

"We are living in a world beset by problems and upheaval," but all people have the same deep needs, Graham said.

The Christian faith offers answers to problems of emptiness, loneliness, guilt, insecurity and fear of death, he asserted. "In every area of life something is happening that is frightening. The pieces are not fitting together, and they never will until people discover faith in the Christ who died for us."

In such a world, the person God will use must first be certain he or she knows Christ personally, Graham said. "I've met too many peo-

ple in the church and in the pulpit who have never been born again, in my opinion."

Graham also emphasized the need to boldly preach the gospel without apology. "The apostle Paul said, 'Woe is me if I preach not the gospel.' Let's preach it and declare in with authority—and the authority comes from this book," he said, holding up his Bible.

Graham further stressed the need to preach with simplicity, urgency and to a decision.

Another key is to be men and women of prayer, he declared. "I am convinced that no evangelism can be accomplished without prayer, deep prayer and supplication. Prayer will have a far greater effect on bringing people to Christ than anything else."

The evangelist predicted that even though "no one except God knows the future, I believe the Lord is coming, and he's coming soon."

He called on Christians to light a candle in the darkness to point the way to Christ.

"I do not believe that we should spend our time cursing the darkness; I don't believe we ought to spend our time pulling up the weeds. Let's let our light shine, and let's let the wheat grow and overcome the weeds."

"Let's light a candle that will banish moral and spiritual blight around the world," Graham urged. "Let's light a candle that rolls back racism and social injustice."

"Let's light a candle of renewed faith in the authority of Scripture and a new dedication to missions and evangelism that will cause the devil to tremble and the saints to be encouraged and the lost to trust in Christ," Graham concluded. "Let's light a candle that by God's grace will never be put out."

"Let's light a candle that will banish moral and spiritual blight around the world. Let's light a candle that rolls back racism and social injustice."
Billy Graham



16 Kentuckians elected to leadership posts

ATLANTA—Sixteen Kentucky Baptists were elected to positions of leadership during the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Atlanta last week.

Nine Kentuckians were approved to serve first terms on SBC boards and committees.

The other seven were re-elected to second terms.

Elected to first terms were:

■ Byron Boyer, a layperson and member of Walnut Street Baptist Church in Louisville, Southern Seminary.

■ Wilford Dorroh, a layperson and member of Temple Baptist Church in Central City, Southern Baptist Foundation.

■ Roy Faulkner, director of missions for Laurel River Baptist Association and member of Corinth Baptist Church in London, Foreign Mission Board.

■ Ron Felleme, pastor of Gardendale Baptist Church in Lexington, Southern Seminary.

■ Ferrill Gardner, pastor of Carlisle Avenue Baptist Church in Louisville, Committee on Nominations.

■ Mark Medlin, a layperson and

member of First Baptist Church of Paducah, Committee on Nominations.

■ Mike Melloan, a layperson and member of Yellow Creek Baptist Church in Owensboro, Brotherhood Commission.

■ William Shutt, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Central City, American Baptist Seminary Commission.

■ Ray Werline, pastor of Cuba Baptist Church of Mayfield, Annuity Board.

Re-elected to additional terms were:

■ Charles Barnes, a layperson and member of Hurstbourne Baptist Church in Louisville, Southern Seminary.

■ Charles Cloyd, a layperson and

member of Hickory Baptist Church in Hickory, American Baptist Seminary Commission.

■ James Garland, a retired pastor and member of Bellview Baptist Church in Paducah, Foreign Mission Board.

■ Jewel Pruitt, pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church in Glasgow, Executive Committee.

■ Gary Southard, associate pastor of Rose Hill Missionary Baptist Church in Ashland, Home Mission Board.

■ Thomas Taylor, a layperson and member of Mount Elmira Baptist Church in Shepherdsville, Southern Seminary.

■ Kent Workman, pastor of Second Baptist Church in Hopkinsville, Sunday School Board.



TESTIMONY Carrie Bell of Murray tells what Acteens has meant in her life in a testimony given during the Woman's Missionary Union annual meeting in Atlanta. Bell was one of six young women honored as national Acteens Panelists this year. In addition to speaking during the WMU meeting, she served as a page during the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting.



PRAYER TIME Daniel McCrosky, pastor of First Baptist Church of Arlington, leads the SBC in prayer during the Wednesday morning session.

CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR SALE: Klipsche KP320 loudspeakers. Bill Thomas, FBC Shepherdsville, (502) 955-7372. Asking \$950/pair. Used in sanctuary speaker cluster.

SEEKING: Lexington Avenue Baptist Church, Danville, Ky., is currently receiving applications for a minister of youth/college students/singles. MDiv preferred but not required. Salary and benefits commensurate with qualifications and experience. Send resumé to: Dr. Tim Noel, Lexington Avenue Baptist Church, 339 W. Lexington Ave., Danville, KY 40422.

FOR SALE: 1981 Ford Super- van, 15-passenger, 6-cylinder. Only 61,529 miles; no AC. \$2,675. (502) 451-7220.

FOR SALE: 1984 Dodge Maxivan, 15-passenger, front & rear AC. Only 76,242 miles; \$3,575. (502) 451-7220.

SEEKING: Part-time music director for Sunday services and adult

choir at this time. Warm, music-loving church. Crescent Spring BC. Northern Kentucky association. Send resumé to: Crescent Springs BC, 627 Buttermilk Pike, Crescent Springs, KY 41017-1301. Attn: Ben.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of music for Baptist church. If interested, send resumé to: Evergreen Baptist Church, 2698 Evergreen Rd., Frankfort, KY 40601.

WANTED: Caregivers to assist elderly. Full-time, part-time and live-in. Call (502) 499-7777.

FOR RENT: Sanibel Island, Fla. 2-bedroom, 2-bath condo available for vacation rental. Large pool, tennis courts, bikes, canoe, screened porch, lovely secluded beach. Weekly rates May-December 16, \$550. Call Pat Owen (502) 895-8752.

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

LOUISVILLE PRESBYTERIAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

"There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus."
Galatians 3:28

- Celebrating the diversity of the Body of Christ
- Up to 100% tuition grant for all first-degree Masters students based on need
- Excellence in biblical, theological, and practical disciplines preparing you for ministry

Contact the Office of Admissions • Louisville Seminary • 1044 Alta Vista Road
Louisville, Kentucky 40205 • (502) 895-3411 or toll-free (800) 264-1839

BUILDING UP THE BODY OF CHRIST

PEOPLE

PRAYER PARTNERS

Pray for these specific needs related to Kentucky Baptist Convention partnerships with Baptists in Russia, Utah/Idaho and Boston:

- The safety of missionaries and volunteers as they work in Russia.
- Financial backers for the more than 200 Russian home missionaries under appointment by the Russian Baptist Union.
- Yury Sipko, vice president of the Russian Baptist Union, as he directs the ministry of the churches.
- Effective ways to reach Mormons for Christ.
- Pastors and their families as they minister in areas of Utah where the presence of Southern Baptists is resented.

Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Ann Tatum

■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Campbellsville Church called **Wally Vinson** as youth/college minister. He will begin his new ministry in mid-August.

■ **EDDYVILLE**—**Philip Yancy** resigned as pastor of Lamasco Church. He will be available for pulpit supply, interims, revivals and Bible studies. Call (502) 362-4251 for information.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—**Eric Lethco** resigned as pastor at Parkwood Church to become pastor at Old Fort Church in Summersville, S.C. He will begin his new ministry July 10.

Raymond Bailey resigned as pastor at Lyndon Church to become pastor at Seventh and James Church in Waco, Texas. He will begin his new ministry Aug. 1.

West Broadway Church called **Charles White** as interim pastor to complete the term of John Kruschwitz.

■ **NANCY**—Okalona Church called **John Wilson** as interim pastor June 4.

■ **RUSSELL SPRINGS**—Poplar Grove Church called **Donald Arthur** of Catlettsburg as pastor.

■ **SLOANS VALLEY**—Sloans Valley Church called **Donnie Baker** as pastor.

■ **SOMERSET**—Slate Branch Church called **C.E. Hansford** as interim pastor.

■ **SPRINGFIELD**—Temple

Church called **Philip Small** as pastor. He previously was pastor at Macedonia Church in Bountstown, Fla. Small began his new ministry June 18. Also, **Jim Heneisen**, previous pastor at Temple Church, retired after 40 years of Christian service.

■ **UTICA**—Glenville Church will celebrate its 130th anniversary July 30. **Ray Cummins** is pastor.

■ **WILLIAMSBURG**—Cumberland College presented **Monica Haydon**, member of Temple Church in Springfield, with this year's Kentucky pastor recommendation scholarship award.



HMB AWARD Enoch David Nyakoon (center), pastor of Means Avenue Baptist Church in Hopkinsville, receives an award from Willie McPherson, director of black church extension with the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board last week. Nyakoon's wife, Rose, is shown at left. Nyakoon received the HMB black church extension department's church planting award. (BP photo by Mark Sandlin)



GETTING REACQUAINTED President Bill Whittaker (right) of Clear Creek Baptist Bible College greets Tim and Meme Perdue and their children Jana, Aaron and Timmy at the Clear Creek booth in the Southern Baptist Convention exhibit hall. Meme Perdue is an Ashland native. The Perdues live in Stafford, Va., where Tim is a pastor.

It's volunteer time again!

One of the many blessings of the Oneida ministry is the number of people who support us through finances, prayer and volunteer work.

I received a letter this past December from a lady in Louisville. She said she and several members of her singles' Sunday school class wanted to do some volunteer work.

Neither this lady nor anyone in her class had ever been to Oneida, but they had heard of the many wonderful things our school has done for young people. The church from which this group was coming was not even a Baptist church. They were not concerned only about helping others of their denomination.

I told them they would not be able to do much until summer. I explained that when all of our students are here there is no place to house volunteers, and they could not work with 550 young people under foot. They wanted to come at the earliest date.

Without giving it much thought, I told them the day after school was out, May 18.

I did not expect them to take me literally, but I soon received a call stating they would be here May 18. To my knowledge we have never had a group of volunteers come so soon after school ended. The building they would be staying in would have to be cleaned and prepared for guests. I told them they may have to help clean their own rooms. Their reply was simple: "We want to help. If that means doing some cleaning to get the rooms ready, fine!"

We had been wanting to replace the carpet in the library for several years. We also wanted to paint the walls, but the biggest obstacle was

moving all of the books, shelves, and cases. This could only be done when students were not here.

As the members of the Sunday school class began to arrive, we put them to work in the library. We were hoping to make much progress that first night. By early evening they had everything moved and wanted to know if they could paint the library.

I said we would love for them to, but carpet layers were coming the next morning. I felt it was asking too much for them to finish painting in such a short time. They agreed to work until it was done, and work they did!

They painted until nearly midnight, and finished the project.

The next day some of the volunteers painted an apartment, while the rest painted the chapel. They also vacuumed, cleaned and washed windows.

The second evening these folks asked if I would tell them about the Oneida ministry. A big smile crossed my face as I said "Sure, I would love to!" I did not promise to be brief, and I wasn't! Two hours later I forced myself to stop talking.

I was not finished, but knew they needed to rest.

They requested a tour Saturday morning. I asked them if they were trying to get out of work. They laughed and said "No!"

I took them through various buildings, across the swinging bridge and to the farm. There they saw our newborn pigs and others just a few weeks old. Then, it was back to work.

Nearly 300 volunteers are scheduled to come this summer. "Thank you Lord, for supplying this need!"

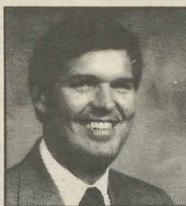
W.F. "Bud" Underwood is president of Oneida Baptist Institute, Oneida, Ky. 40972

THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

The decision to go to Clear Creek

John J. Smith attended Clear Creek from 1944 to 1946 and was in the first graduating class. The following is from a collection of stories he and his son Andrew have written in their Clear Creek memoirs.

At a revival meeting the visiting preacher said to me, "What you need, Mr. Smith, is more training and education." I said, "Well, I've tried; I have talked to the president of Moody Bible Institute. He wanted me to come to Chicago, leave everything, and move my family into an apartment. I just don't think the Lord wants me to do that. I have talked to Bob Jones College and to Bob Jones himself, but I didn't feel right about that either. This preacher said, "I know a school in Kentucky you might be happy with. They will let you pastor while you're going to school."

I started at Clear Creek Mountain Preachers School Jan. 3, 1944. That was the biggest step I ever took. They had been having a six-week summer school for several years, but this was the first time they had a year-round school. The first year we had 33 students but only five of us graduated.

The first six months I came

back home every weekend but one. Most of the time I rode the bus. That was the middle of World War II, and you couldn't get enough gas to make trips like that.

Clear Creek was a very special school, though I must admit it was a far cry from Cincinnati, Ohio, where I had lived for the past 18 years and where we had raised our family for the past 12. When I quit

my job and told my wife the Lord had called me to preach, she said, "John if you are going to be a preacher, I want you to be the best preacher you can possibly be." Clear Creek Bible School was the one place I found that was open to a man, 36 years old with a ninth grade education, a wife and three children. When we sold our new house in Ohio and moved to Clear Creek, I was as sure that I was in the will of God as I had ever been in my entire life. The next three years at Clear Creek were the most unique and the most enlightening years of my life.

Clear Creek continues to help God-called servants to be the best they can possibly be.

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

Summary of SBC motions and their disposition

ATLANTA (BP)—A call for the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Atlanta to set aside time to pray for Southern Baptist churches that did not baptize anyone last year was one of 44 motions offered from the floor during the SBC annual meeting June 20-22 in Atlanta's Georgia Dome.

Clift Brannon, a messenger from First Baptist Church of Longview, Texas, offered the motion, voicing concern that "10,000 Southern Baptist churches failed to report a single baptism last year."

Brannon, a 46-year vocational evangelist, said this "startling fact" should prompt "godly concern and ... real compassion in our hearts" for these churches.

SBC President Jim Henry later called the convention to prayer for this matter and announced the committee on order of business will consider scheduling a similar prayer time at future conventions.

Here's a summary of other motions presented and their disposition:

■ Floyd Battles Sr. of Silver Creek, Ga., moved that no business or educational institution that "condones the selling or serving of alcoholic beverages on its campus or at its social functions" be allowed to exhibit at any SBC meeting or convention. The motion was referred to the SBC Executive Committee.

■ Steve Aubuchon of St. Louis called for creating scholarship assistance for African-American students at SBC seminaries, the funding to come from monies not expended due to the convention's action to discontinue a relationship with the American Baptist Theological Seminary. The motion was referred to the Executive Committee.

■ Butch Tanner of Oneonta, Ala., asked for a review of the financial and ministry impact of the "Covenant for a New Century" restructuring proposal. The motion was referred to the Executive Committee.

■ Larry Blackmon of Hearne, Texas, asked that SBC agencies provide feedback to the originators of motions pertaining to the agencies as to their disposition. The motion was referred to the Executive Committee.

■ Terry Townsend of West Palm Beach, Fla., asked to amend SBC Bylaw 25 pertaining to the composition of the SBC's inter-agency council. The motion was referred to the Executive Committee.

■ James Fowler of Winston-Salem, N.C., asked the Executive Committee to seek a means "to include in fellowship and work all Southern Baptists." The motion was referred to the Executive Committee.

■ Jerr Smith of Wylie, Texas, called on the convention to no longer use the identifier "black" to refer to African-American churches and programs. The motion was referred to the Executive Committee.

■ Robert Kelley of Colerain, N.C., asked that messengers be given more opportunity to discuss matters brought to the convention floor. The motion was referred to the Ex-

ecutive Committee.

■ Gene Wilson of Springfield, Ill., asked the convention to seek "alternate ways of providing adequate funding for Golden Gate Seminary to meet the missions challenge" of the western United States. The motion was referred to the Executive Committee.

■ Bill East of Taft, Calif., asked for the publication of a free devotional prayer calendar incorporating the names of all convention personnel. The motion

was referred to the Executive Committee.

■ Rudy Yakym of Osceola, Ind., offered two motions, one dealing with the reporting to the convention of matters previously referred to the Executive Committee, the other requesting a bylaw addition which classifies spouses of church and denominational employees as church and denominational employees. Both were referred to the Executive Committee.

■ Wyndham Cook of Waldo, Ark., asked for a revision of SBC bylaws "to prohibit SBC agency heads and elected staff from suggesting specific individuals for service on their own board of directors." The motion was referred to the Executive Committee.

■ Pat Garland of Peytona, W.Va., asked that funding for the Home Mission Board be increased by 5 percent. The motion was referred to the Executive Committee.

■ Chuck William of Washington, Mo., asked that a national Southern Baptist newspaper which is affordable and provides "the true message of the great positive things" taking place in the convention be created. The motion was referred to the Executive Committee.

■ Larry Blackmond of Hearne, Texas, requested a report concerning procedures for trustee removal. The motion was referred to the Executive Committee.

■ Paul Brady of Tulsa, Okla., called for a revision to the SBC's new mission statement. The motion was referred to the Executive Committee.

■ Ray Coleman of Georgia asked to amend Bold Mission Thrust with a specific reference to rural Southern Baptist churches. The motion was referred to the Executive Committee.

■ Walt Carpenter of Houston asked for trustees of the Annuity Board to conduct an investigation and audit into the purchase of all electronic data equipment over the past five years. The motion was referred to the Annuity Board.

■ Charles Waller of Bumpass, Va., asked the Sunday School Board to update its study course book on the Baptist Faith and Message. The motion was referred to the Sunday School Board.

■ Robert Burch of Knoxville, Tenn., asked for denominational as-

sistance in helping churches develop policies for ministerial sabbaticals. The motion was referred to the Sunday School Board.

■ M.G. "Dan" Daniels asked the HMB to provide informational materials on Catholicism and the Reformation to agencies, state conventions and local churches. The motion was referred to the HMB.

■ Wanda Kay Wigley of Raymond, Miss., asked to establish a new missionary status called "prayer missionaries." The motion was referred to both the Home Mission Board and Foreign Mission Board.

■ Mike Womack of Erwin, Tenn., asked the convention to provide portable medical insurance for all foreign missionaries and other convention employees. The motion was referred to the Foreign Mission Board and Annuity Board.

■ Simon Tsoi of Phoenix and Gary Frost of Youngstown, Ohio, asked to have the Home Mission Board, Brotherhood Commission and Radio & Television Commission plan a televised "national convocation on revival and awakening." The motion was referred to those agencies.

■ Wanda Kay Wigley of Raymond, Miss., called for the first Thursday of every May to be named a National Day of Prayer among Southern Baptists. The motion was referred to the denominational calendar committee.

■ Carrol Johnson of Brownfield, Texas, asked that SBC agencies become knowledgeable about the canonization of Scripture. The motion was referred to all agencies.

■ Deborah Bramlet of Durand, Mich., asked that SBC agencies provide closed-captioning on all video materials. The motion was referred to all agencies.

■ Fred Smith of Fort Worth, Texas, asked that particular convention materials be published in Spanish. The motion was referred to all agencies.

■ Ron Wilson of Thousand Oaks, Calif., called for investments of SBC assets to be in line with Christian moral views. The motion was referred to all agencies.

■ Leslie Hollon of Louisville asked that the Program and Structure Study Committee join with Woman's Missionary Union in developing an auxiliary statement to the convention's "Covenant for a New Century." The motion was ruled out of order.

■ Gary Stillwagon of Atlanta asked the Executive Committee to "clarify and delineate the role and interrelationships in SBC churches" between WMU and Brotherhood programs. The motion was ruled out of order.

■ Mark Mangrum of Whiteville, Tenn., asked that the staff of Southern Baptist seminaries "be active

members of Southern Baptist churches that support and actively give to the Cooperative Program and are not affiliated with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship." The motion was ruled out of order.

■ Tom Belcher of Dillwyn, Va., asked that the convention set aside time for "public individual and corporate repentance." The motion was ruled out of order.

■ L.D. Brown Jr. of Greenwood, Miss., asked that the convention affirm its belief that "Jesus Christ died for the sins of the entire world." The motion was ruled out of order because it should have been submitted earlier as a resolution.

■ Christopher Jacobs of Orlando, Fla., asked that SBC agencies identify to the convention "any significant problems being encountered" by these entities. The motion was ruled out of order.

■ Michelle Stephens of Jennings, La., asked that the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference not be scheduled on Father's Day. The motion was ruled out of order.

■ Rudy Yakym of Osceola, Ind., offered a motion regarding qualifications for nominees to the committee on nominations which was ruled out of order.

■ Howard Simpson of Roper, N.C., asked for removal from the convention hall of all material calling Masonry "a cult, anti-Christian or satanic." The motion was ruled out of order.

■ Wayne Harrison of Roanoke, Va., called for a committee to study the feasibility of "absentee voting by messengers." The motion was ruled out of order.

■ Jesse Russell of Saratoga, Texas, asked that "single Christians be labeled 'unclaimed blessings' and accepted within that status by the convention." The motion was ruled out of order.



YOUTH CHOIR The Hymnody Heritage Youth Choir sings for the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Atlanta June 20, the day before the group left for a singing tour of England. Choir members come from Southern Baptist churches in every state. (BP photo by Morris Abernathy)

