



# WESTERN RECORDER

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## FOR THE RECORD

### Is God missing?

An Oklahoma pastor contends the Southern Baptist Convention's new mission statement is incomplete because it lacks reference to God the Father. *See page 2.*

### Seniors event

Keep on learning, and stay active, senior adults were told during a one-day event sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention. *See page 3.*

### Family Forum

The difficulties of becoming a dad to stepchildren. *See page 4.*

### Editorial

Can any committee be this perfect? *See page 5.*

### Platform shaky

The Republican Party's platform plank calling for a human life amendment has come under scrutiny, causing a division among some evangelical leaders. *See page 6.*

## Focus and assimilation called keys to church growth

By Terri Lackey  
SBC Sunday School Board

NASHVILLE (BP)—If you're lucky enough to be a member of one of the 30.2 percent of Southern Baptist churches that are growing, you are part of a congregation probably doing at least two things right, according to a church consultant.

Focus and effective assimilation are the two most important ways to grow a church, said Ralph Hodge, contemporary church consultant with the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

Lost focus is the most common reason established churches quit growing, and poor assimilation is why many lose the new members they do get, Hodge said.

"Focus on lost people is what it takes to reach the unchurched, but once you've reached them, what do you do with them? Assimilation is part of it, you know; there's more than just reaching them."

Established churches that are growing, he said, have not only readjusted their focus, but they are assimilating their new members effectively.

According to 1994 figures culled from the Southern Baptist annual church profile, 30.2 percent are growing. Growing churches are congregations with membership growth greater than 10 percent within a five-year period.

Getting new members involved in church takes sociological strategy, Hodge said.

Most churches Hodge consults with believe themselves to be friendly congregations, he said. When a church touts itself as being friendly, then it had better deliver, he said.

"A church that is friendly promises that this will be a place where you will easily make friends, but not every friendly church makes it easy for you to do that. Most admit, when asked, that it takes a while for new members to break into an established Sunday school class."

Hodge's suggested solution: start new Sunday school and discipleship training classes with the new members.

"New people bond best with new people. That's just social dynamics," he said.

Churches, like society, are made up of small groups of acquaintances, Hodge said, adding that research shows if a person does not bond in a small group

□ See Focus and ..., page 8

## Former UK star carves art out of life

LOUISVILLE—When LaVon Williams was a University of Kentucky Wildcat forward, some probably described him as an artist on the court. In his senior year, he averaged more than 11 points and seven rebounds per game.

That artistry made him part of UK history when the Cats won the NCAA championship in 1978. He went on to play pro basketball in Europe, but when he injured an Achilles tendon, things changed.

Art off the court is what Williams

shared recently with a group of children at Spring Meadows Children's Home in Louisville. He told the youngsters that his journey from woodcarving apprentice to artist has kept him out of trouble.

He now has his own students at the Living Arts and Sciences Center in Lexington who are on similar journeys, he said.

Woodcarving is a skill Williams learned from his family, particularly his great uncle and older brother, Dave Henry. But just as important as

his apprenticeship in carving was the art he observed in his mother, he said.

"My mother's a storyteller," Williams said. From her he has learned to tell stories through his carving.

"The master storytellers came out of the church," he said. "So I do a lot of religious themes."

A native of Florida, Williams' roots are in a Southern African-American culture. Thus his art reflects spirituality, jazz, strong women and basketball, he said.

He showed the Spring Meadows residents an unfinished cane that one of his students is working on. Both ends featured carvings of a woman's face with differing expressions. In the middle, fish were carved to represent the woman's faith in Christ.

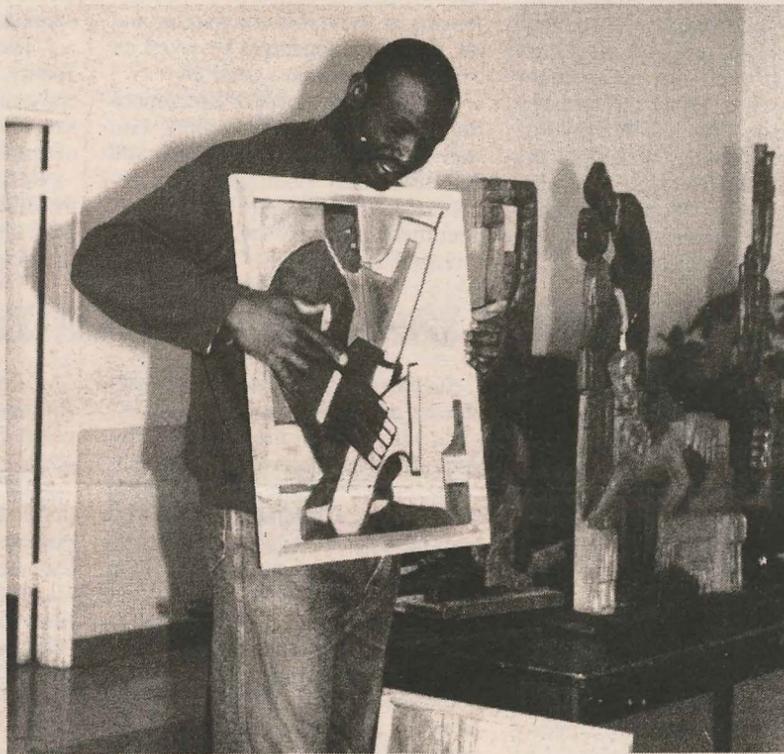
"The guy who carved this had just lost his mother," Williams explained. "He came to class every day and cried until he could carve. This was the way he was able to get his feelings out."

Williams said he works to help young people learn there are ways to make money other than selling drugs and other "foolishness."

That lesson is more important to him since the death in a drug-related shooting of two young men he had been coaching in basketball.

When coordinators of a local art show asked him to submit a work depicting angels, he found sorrowful inspiration in these tragic deaths.

He learned that after the shooting, a local woman took on the task of cleaning the sidewalk where the bodies fell. At the art show—in the midst of white cherubic faces and snowy billowing robes—was Williams' angel, an African-American woman wearing an apron and holding a broom. The faces of the children were carved into her wings.



ART LESSON Former University of Kentucky Wildcat LaVon Williams tells a group of young people at Spring Meadows Children's Home about his work as an artist. Williams encouraged the Spring Meadows youths to find their own form of art in which to excel.

## Kentucky churches changed by mission

By Ken Walker  
State Correspondent

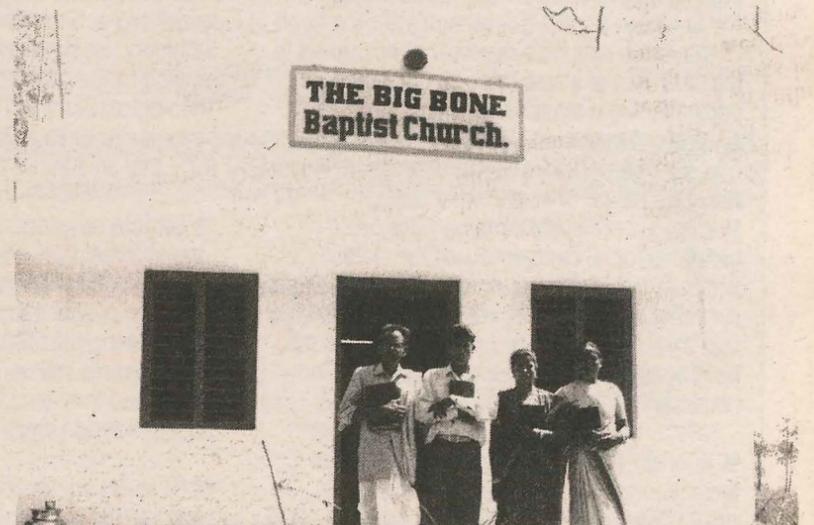
FLORENCE—A pair of Southern Baptists whose trips to India have led to building three new churches there say their lives have been changed by the experience.

"I'm not the same person I was," said Monty McElfresh, a dentist and minister of music at Beaver Lick Baptist Church near Florence. "Anybody who goes to India comes back different. I have a deep love and compassion for the people there."

"If you're afraid of touching people who are dirty and smelly, it's not for you," added Mike Jones, pastor of Big Bone Baptist Church, also in Northern Kentucky. "But I keep thinking, 'As you've done it to the least of these, you've done it unto me (Matthew 25:40).'"

Both Kentucky churches are modest-sized country congregations. But together they have made a big impact in India.

Members of Big Bone donated \$3,000 to buy the materials for the first church the Kentuckians built in India, named Big Bone Baptist



INDIA OUTREACH Big Bone Baptist Church in Northern Kentucky has been instrumental in starting Big Bone Baptist Church in Thalaualsa, India. Shown here is the Indian family which provides leadership for the congregation, including Pastor Srino and his wife (center). The older couple (far left and far right) donated the land for the church.

Church of India.

The 20-by-30-foot block building, which has a concrete floor and ceiling, was dedicated last February. It is a little larger than most churches built there; normally, construction costs

run about \$2,000.

Built in the village of Thalaualsa near the Bay of Bengal, Big Bone of India was an outgrowth of the local Hindu priest professing faith in Jesus

□ See Mission work ..., page 3

Moving? See page 4 (0521)

# BAPTISTS

## Pastor says God the Father missing from statement

**"The Scripture is adequate enough to speak on this matter. To suggest that the SBC mission statement in any way neglects the role of God the Father is simply not true."**

*Mark Brister, chairman of Program and Structure Study Committee*

**By Dave Parker**  
*Oklahoma Baptist Messenger*

TULSA, Okla. (ABP)—Is someone in the Southern Baptist Convention trying to change the traditional concept of the Trinity?

One Oklahoma pastor believes so, and he is trying to amend the SBC mission statement adopted in 1995. His attempts, however, have not been well-received by Southern Baptist leaders.

Paul Brady, pastor of Ranch Acres Baptist Church in Tulsa, said he became concerned last year when he noticed the new SBC mission statement leaves out any reference to God the Father.

The statement reads: "The Southern Baptist Convention exists to facilitate, extend and enlarge the Great Commission ministries of Southern Baptist churches, under the lordship of Jesus Christ, upon the authority of Holy Scripture, and by the empowerment of the Holy Spirit."

Brady said the statement teaches bad theology. Trinitarian belief is in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,

he said, not the Son, the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit as implied in the mission statement.

Brady introduced an amendment to the mission statement at last summer's Southern Baptist Convention meeting, but it was referred to the SBC Executive Committee. The committee declined to act.

Morris Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the Executive Committee, said committee members felt "that to act 'under the Lordship of Jesus Christ,' who declared that he and the Father are one and to know him is to know the Father, adequately affirms God the Father."

Chapman assured Brady he has the right to bring his concerns to the messengers at the 1996 convention and ask that the amendment be voted on in one of the business sessions.

Mark Brister, pastor of Broadmoor Baptist Church in Shreveport, La., was chairman of the Program and Structure Study Committee that recommended the changes in the SBC documents. Brister said the report "contains no oversight."

Brister said belief in the Trinity stems from belief "in the resurrection and the centrality of Jesus Christ in your life. That settles the issue."

Brister then quoted John 14:6-10, where Jesus repeatedly tells his disciples that he and the Father are one. "The whole premise of our mission is that people come to God through Jesus Christ," Brister said. "Hence, in no way does the SBC mission statement remove the role of God the Father from the Bible."

"The Scripture is adequate enough to speak on this matter," Brister said. "To suggest that the SBC mission statement in any way neglects the role of God the Father is simply not true."

Brady said he does not agree with the committee's decision or Brister's opinion.

"The SBC has always affirmed the Trinity," he said. "In fact, the 1992 convention in Indianapolis approved a resolution affirming the importance of emphasizing God the Father."

Responding to attempts to rewrite the Bible in sexually neutral terms, the 1992 resolution affirmed "the biblical teaching concerning God the Father,"

calling upon Christians to understand that "the revelation of God as Father is central and essential to trinitarian faith."

It further resolved that Southern Baptists "join in an unapologetic confession of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit by the authority of his revealed word and for the sake of his own glory."

Just three years later, Brady said, the mission statement omitted this "central and essential" truth.

"Our current mission statement does not affirm biblical teaching concerning God the Father because we have omitted him," Brady said. "Since this mission statement does not reflect our fundamental theological affirmations, we must correct this error."

This decision could have long-term consequences for the future of the SBC, Brady said. "Currently we have two-thirds of the Trinity in our mission statement, but 66 percent is not good enough. Remember, this mission statement may be a reflection of our theology for the next 100 years."

## Implementation task force finalizes report for New Orleans

NASHVILLE (BP)—The task force coordinating the restructuring of the Southern Baptist Convention will provide a generalized cost analysis and updated timeline in its report to the SBC annual meeting next month.

The 10-member implementation task force met May 14-15 in Nashville to finalize the report.

The report will be given first to the SBC Executive Committee at its pre-convention meeting June 8 in New Orleans, said Robert Reccord, task force chairman and pastor of First Baptist Church of Norfolk, Va.

Copies of the report will be available for messengers June 9 in the SBC registration area of the Louisiana Superdome. The report will be presented to the convention June 11 during the Executive Committee report. Motions dealing with legal documents required to accomplish the dissolution and merger of affected SBC entities will follow.

Reccord also said the task force discussed candidates to serve as "incorporators" for the North American Mission Board, a merger of the present Home Mission Board, Radio

& Television Commission and the Brotherhood Commission. Six incorporators already have been nominated by the three agencies.

Reccord said the task force will nominate an additional seven incorporators, including the chairman, but the names will not be released until all of them have agreed to be nominated. That information, Reccord said, may come as early as the end of May. The names of the 13 incorporators and a description of their assignments will be included in the North American Mission Board's charter.

In a May 2 meeting in Dallas, several members of the task force and state convention executive director representatives discussed the relationship between state conventions and the SBC, particularly the future relationship with the North American Mission Board, Reccord said. The executive directors made suggestions and asked questions about cooperative agreements, definition and promotion of the Cooperative Program, the proper balance between emphasis on new-work and old-work states and other matters.

### BAPTIST BITS

■ **Brotherhood action questioned.** Action by state Brotherhood leaders to create a new organization to carry on the disaster relief work of the Southern Baptist Convention's Brotherhood Commission was "not necessary," according to the chairman of a task force charged with implementing a massive restructuring of SBC agencies. Disaster relief will be handled by the new North American Mission Board, said Robert Reccord, pastor of First Baptist Church of Norfolk, Va. "It would certainly have been beneficial for all concerned had the state Brotherhood leadership communicated their concerns and intentions with the implementation task force," Reccord said. "I think they would have agreed that the new association was not necessary."

■ **Literacy leads to faith.** Southern Baptist literacy missions volunteers recorded 836 professions of faith in Jesus Christ during 1995, according to a report from the Home Mission Board. Literacy ministries also produced at least 99 church starts during the past 10 years, said Gayle Leininger, a national missionary for such work. Most churches were ethnic congregations, resulting from new Christians who took conversational English lessons, she said.

■ **Southeastern names dean.** Allan Moseley has been named vice president for student services, dean of students and professor of pastoral leadership at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. He replaces Danny Akin, who is moving to the staff of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. Moseley has been pastor of First Baptist Church in Durham, N.C., and an adjunct professor at Southeastern.

■ **Zambia missionaries get permits.** After almost three years of difficulty, all Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board missionaries in Zambia have been granted work permits by the government, the FMB reported. A dispute among local Baptists that spilled over into government affairs had threatened the future of Southern Baptist mission work in Zambia.

■ **Hospital opens.** Two days of ceremonies recently marked the opening of Kigoma Baptist Hospital in Kigoma, Tanzania. The hospital opened with only a \$10,000 subsidy from the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. It is projected to generate operating income through a bus service, the hospital restaurant and by manufacturing intravenous fluids for other hospitals in the area.



## Senior adults urged to keep growing

By Melanie Childers  
Staff Writer

CRESTWOOD—Today's senior adults should accept the adage "it ain't over 'til it's over" and seek holistic ways to grow during their later years, Kentucky Baptist senior adults were told during a recent conference.

Older adults should adopt the attitude that each day is a gift, and seek ways to make life both meaningful and enjoyable, Pat Cole said.

The senior adult celebration conference—the fifth of six regional events for senior adults sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention family ministries department this spring—drew about 185 people from 25 churches to Crestwood Baptist Church in Crestwood May 14.

"Every 20 seconds, someone turns 65," explained Cole, former minister of music and senior adults at Melbourne Heights Baptist Church in Louisville. And 25 percent of the Southern Baptist Convention is comprised of senior adults, she added.

During the celebration, Cole led a seminar on "Living Longer and Loving It." She encouraged older adults to be intentional in caring for their bodies, minds, spirits and emotions.

■ **Body.** Although people have little control over the shape of their face or their eye color, "consider what you do control," Cole said. "Our bodies are God's temple, and we should ... keep them in good repair."

Keeping the body fit includes eating healthy foods, drinking plenty of water each day and exercising regularly. Cole recommended some type of exercise at least three times a week: walking, swimming, water aerobics or working in gardens or flower beds.

Attending to the body's needs also includes proper checkups for vision, hearing and teeth and proper care of the skin, Cole added.

■ **Mind.** Although it is true that the brain shrinks as humans age, "the brain has the capacity to change and grow even in later years, if stimulated," Cole said. She demonstrated this by questioning the group with logic puzzles.



**FOOD FOR THOUGHT** Retired pastor John Laida chats with participants during lunch at one of the 1996 Senior Adult Celebrations, at Crestwood Baptist Church in Crestwood. Laida was the event's featured speaker.

Cole recommended reading, especially humorous books. And she encouraged the senior adults to commit to learn one new thing every year, such as playing the piano or painting.

■ **Spirit.** Regardless of their age, all Christians should seek to grow in Christ-likeness, Cole said. "We have never become enough like Christ."

Growing spiritually includes faithfully attending worship as well as contributing gifts and talents to the church's ministry, Cole said. She noted that too many older adults take the attitude that they've done their share of church responsibilities and it's time to "sit back and take it easy," letting others carry the load.

"I don't know where you find that in Scripture," Cole responded, emphasizing that senior adults should take active roles in the church's ministries.

Spiritual growth also takes place through reading books by Christian authors, joining Bible study groups and becoming prayer warriors, Cole said.

■ **Emotions.** A person's emotional state encircles and impacts the body, mind and spirit, Cole said. Therefore, it is important for senior adults to surround themselves with laughter, positive relationships and beautiful music, she added.

In addition, senior adults also should think about what they can leave for their children and grandchildren, and accent their grandparenting role, Cole said. She encouraged writing down or recording family stories, histories and memoirs, as well as exploring creative grandparenting ideas.

Other seminar topics at the day-long event included program ideas; beginning a senior adult ministry; destroying the myths of AIDS; fitness and nutrition; mending relationships; traveling safety; and ministry opportunities near home.

At the conference's opening and closing sessions, senior adults heard a message by John Laida and a musical presentation by the Swordsmen. Laida, interim pastor at Severns Valley Baptist Church in Elizabethtown, has served churches in Mayslick, Auburn and Fulton and was pastor of First Baptist Church in Clarksville, Tenn., for 28 years.

The Swordsmen, an a capella quintet whose mostly Southern Baptist members met at Georgetown College, blend five-part harmonies in original contemporary Christian selections and traditional hymns.

Total attendance for six regional senior adult events, held in cities from Hopkinsville to Prestonsburg, was expected to top 1,500.

## BLUEGRASS BURGEO

■ **Mission statement adopted.** The board of directors of the Western Recorder approved a mission statement for the newspaper May 13. The statement says: "The Western Recorder is a Christ-centered, service-oriented ministry providing practical resources for Christian living. Our mission is to publish a relevant weekly newspaper for Kentucky Baptists and to produce other forms of communication that serve churches, laypeople, pastors and other partners in ministry."

■ **Honorary degrees given.** Georgetown College awarded honorary doctor of letters degrees May 11 to Terry Otten, professor of English at Wittenberg University, and Wayne Johnson, retired music professor at Georgetown.

■ **Holder gets president's honor.** Robert Holder II of Lexington received the 1996 President's Honor Award at Georgetown College. The prestigious annual award recognizes a senior who excelled academically and demonstrated outstanding leadership.

■ **Cumberland honors five.** Three honorary degrees were awarded during commencement exercises at Cumberland College May 18: James and Joan Cook of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., received honorary doctor of administration degrees, and Harry English, a New York City attorney, received the honorary doctor of jurisprudence degree. During Honor's Day ceremonies May 6, the honorary doctor of humanities degree was given to David Dick, journalism professor at the University of Kentucky, and the honorary doctor of administration degree was given to Oscar Hornsby Jr., a Somerset businessman.

■ **Mobley retires.** Russ Mobley, Campbellsville University's "Voice of the Tigers" for the past 20 years, is retiring from that role. Mobley began broadcasting games of the Campbellsville Tigers in 1975. He also serves as associate professor of theater and speech.

■ **Clark honored.** Clear Creek Baptist Bible College presented Earl Clark of London with the Alumni Award from the Delta Epsilon Chi Honor Society May 3. The award is given to alumni who have demonstrated outstanding intellectual achievement, Christian character and leadership.

■ **Correction:** The April 30 issue of the Western Recorder incorrectly reported a technical name change adopted in the bylaws of Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union. The correct new title is Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union.

## Mission work in India changes two Kentucky churches

Continued from page 1  
Christ last year.

The priest immediately closed the Hindu temple and at his baptismal ceremony tossed his priestly jewelry into the bushes, Jones said.

"They've had 150 people cram into that building because they're so anxious to hear the Bible," Jones said. "It's nothing elaborate. But when you live in a mud hut, it is."

Moved by the ministry of Big Bone Baptist Church, McElfresh began sharing the needs with members at Beaver Lick Baptist Church.

Not only did a fund-raising drive at Beaver Lick raise enough money to build a church, a member who prefers to remain anonymous donated \$2,000 to build a second.

Both churches are under construction in villages in the Neelayama Choultry area, and should be finished by late summer, according to McEl-

fresh. He said \$700 left over is the seed money for a second campaign aimed at building a church in 1997.

In addition to the construction, the Boone Countians are supporting Indian feeding programs. Big Bone contributes \$250 a month to buy rice, milk and other staples for the elderly and orphans. Members at Beaver Lick sponsor people individually.

"That also gives the local church credence with the people," Jones said of the outreach. "It helps a lot with credibility."

Jones said it is surprising how many people in the Indian villages are eager to identify with Jesus Christ, especially since many of them risk much to do so.

"We take ridicule and criticism, but they may have to leave their home," he said. "And it's not uncommon for them to walk seven or eight miles to attend church."

## Indians teach Kentuckians what matters

FLORENCE—They toil in boiling-hot sugar cane fields, earning 25 cents for a 10-hour work day. They use cow dung for heating and cooking, then fashion the ashes into a crude form of toothpaste. Before baptismal services, they may have to run water buffaloes out of the pond—and later pick leeches off their bodies.

Despite these primitive conditions, village dwellers in India are happy if they have a meal and a roof over their heads, Mike Jones said. He sees more contented people in India's villages than on the streets in Northern Kentucky, he said.

"One thing God has shown me is how he has blessed America, materially, above and beyond our wildest imagination," said Jones, pastor of Big Bone Baptist Church near Florence. "But the Lord has also shown me a lot of America's problems are wrapped up in materialism."

The lack of proper dental care is the reason Monty McElfresh's expertise is mostly restricted to pulling teeth during his annual visits to India.

McElfresh, a Kentucky dentist and bivocational music minister, has extracted 750 teeth the past three years, using a lawn chair to seat his patients and a battery-powered light for illumination.

"We have to depend on the Lord for getting teeth out," he said. "It's hard doing dentistry in the bush."

Both Jones and McElfresh agree that India is extremely fertile mission soil. Not because of the poverty, though. They say it's because of the fervent response to the gospel.

"The majority of them have never heard of Jesus," Jones said. "The monkey god, which looks like part monkey and part man, is the big god in that area."

## WESTERN RECORDER

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

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## BAPTIST FORUM

### Go to Russia

I thank God for Calvin Wilkins and our partnership missions department of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

I want to give an unsolicited endorsement for volunteer missions and a challenge to pastors. When the idea of going on a mission trip to Russia was presented, I somewhat reluctantly agreed to head a team. I never knew what it would do for me and for our church.

Since our team has returned, a revival of missions emphasis has taken over our church. Our deacons who went to Russia have not been the same.

One of the themes of "Experiencing God" is to "find out where God is working and get in on it." God is working through our missions programs, and I'm glad we are in on it. Fellow pastors, I challenge you to take the revival time your church allows you and go preach where no man has preached. Remember what Paul said: "And thus I aspired to preach the gospel, not where Christ was already named, that I might not build upon another man's foundation." (Romans 15:20) It will change your life and the life of your church.

Paul Blizard  
Paducah

### Well-read issue

Your May 7 issue contained so many articles presenting the issues that amuse, confuse and bemuse us Southern Baptists (make that Christians) that I couldn't put it down. I didn't agree with every opinion espoused, but that's not surprising. ...

Jon Berger "On homosexuality"—If you leave Paul out of Scripture, Jon,

you can attempt to justify many things and behaviors that are contrary to God's natural laws. Don't leave him out; you lose, not Paul.

But quoting Paul without considering his actions also is much worse, and that brings us to Mark Coppenger's "Women Pastors Dangerous." I know nothing of his personal background, but he must have been a professor of "tunnel vision" somewhere.

I have no credentials comparable to President Coppenger; I have taught Sunday school since 1947. I read the same basic textbook that he does, the holy Bible, but I think I have recognized some things he has overlooked.

I seek only to see Jesus glorified and women treated equally as they certainly deserve.

I would feel very ill at ease at first with a woman pastor. That's my offense, not hers. Then I would love her and judge her by her capabilities, not her sex.

Raymond C. Peck  
Nicholasville

### Musical theology

I was fascinated by your editorial "Let's put an end to musical snobbery."

We sing, "Bring in the day of brotherhood and end the night of wrong" with "deeds of love and kindness, Thy heavenly kingdom comes" and "For the darkness will turn to dawning and the dawning to noonday bright, and Christ's great kingdom will come on earth, the kingdom of love and light." Do we really believe this pre-millennialist philosophy?

And what do we mean when we sing "I love thy kingdom, Lord, the church of thine abode" or "The King is Coming?" Isn't "Joy to the World" about the second advent rather than the Incarnation? Isn't it referring to the millennial reign? Do we assume when we sing "Break Thou the Bread of Life" that Christ is physically present in the bread and the cup? What in the world (most of us would ask) is "Ebenezer" which we sing that

we will raise up? By using "mild" to rhyme with "child" so often, don't we make Christ seem soft or weak?

Doesn't nostalgia triumph over truth in many of our old hymns, as does sentiment over emotion? Where in the Bible does it say we will "cling to a cross rather than the Savior?" How many "powers" can we squeeze into "Power in the Blood?" Do we "plunge into a flood of Christ's blood?"

And pitfalls of theology are even more prevalent, they tell me, in the new Christian music, if we can hear the words over the drum rolls and loud guitars on the "canned" music we are being subjected to.

Singing too often becomes an emotional experience rather than an expression of worship—and theological truth.

Oscar Davidson  
Somerset

### Read it again

In response to Jon Berger's article in Baptist Forum (May 7, page 5).

Maybe there are others who haven't read Matthew 10:10-15 and Matthew 11:20-24. These are the words of our Lord and Savior, and when he speaks, we had better listen. We should examine chapter 10:15 and chapter 11:24.

We have to look at Genesis 19:24-28 to understand what Jesus was referring to. A sodomite by definition is a sexual pervert. We must also look at Genesis 18:20-33 for the righteous judgment of God. Abraham pleaded with God not to destroy it. We must also look at Genesis 19:1-23. We can see from this Scripture that God does protect as well as pass righteous judgment on those who deserve the hand of God.

If we truly believe that the Bible is the word of God, we will know that God created woman for man as his help meet.

I close with Mark 8:38 and Romans 1:16.

Jim Adams  
Morganfield

### Jesus: Democrat or Republican?

There is probably no more provocative speaker and writer in the "Baptist circuit" than Tony Campolo. A frequent keynoter for student groups, he leaves no dark corner of one's Christian faith unchallenged. No one departs from one of his messages completely unruffled.

It is exciting that he will be one of the main speakers for our annual convention Nov. 12-13 at Bowling Green's First Baptist Church.

His most recently published book, "Is Jesus a Republican or a Democrat?" couldn't have been more timely. A recent review of the book by Baptist Joint Committee intern Philip Kingston may tempt the reader, as it did me, to purchase the book.

Kingston says about the book: "Never one to shrink from a difficult issue, Campolo now gives us the sequel to his controversial 'Twenty Hot Potatoes Christians Are Afraid to Touch.' The structure is fairly simple.

Each chapter is an analysis of the type of question that causes people to switch churches, withhold tithes or holler in Sunday school. Prepare to take offense. The first book got him

in more hot water than a Baton Rouge shrimp boil. I, too, was so deeply shaken by his examination of Christian BMW ownership that I did not read him for several years. (I had an excuse; I grew up watching "Dallas.") However, with age I have gained some measure of control over my materialistic tendencies, and I enjoyed the new book thoroughly. If your mind is

as open as mine (not difficult), you will, too.

"Also, prepare to take notes. While I am convinced that only Tony Campolo can agree with everything in this book, the more important effect of reading it is to set one's mind in motion (or commotion) on the questions he asks. Campolo asks honestly; he expects genuine debate. In fact, the

#### ON MISSION TOGETHER



William W. Marshall



### Becoming a dad to stepchildren

By Diana Garland

*Q. I am marrying a woman with two children from her first marriage. I think the children need more discipline, but when I try to be the dad they need, it creates conflict with my fiancée.*

*A. Second marriages that involve children present a real challenge. The older the children are, the less likely it is that you can take over the role of a dad.*

Whatever the ages of the children, it will take a lot longer than most people imagine before you can really help the children by disciplining them. They did not choose for you to become part of the family; their mother did. You do not have the history with them, and probably not the same style, that their mother has.

They have a father somewhere who is surely involved in their lives to some extent, even if only in their fantasies and hopes. You may certainly become their friend, and in time, even relate to them like an uncle. Only with very young children do stepfathers ever eventually take on the role of dad.

You need to court the children, in some ways as you courted their mother. Spend time with them; learn to enjoy their company. Include them in your activities. In other words, become an adult friend, someone they can trust. Over time, you will earn the right to guide and discipline.

In the meantime, encourage and support your partner as she provides discipline, guidance and love. Back her up. When you must discipline because you are the only parent around, do so as their mother has "deputized" you as the "one in charge," not because you are the dad.

This seems strange because we want second marriages to look like first marriages—mom, dad and kids. Mom may even want you to take the role of disciplinarian because she is tired of handling things alone. Even so, be careful, and try to support her rather than taking on the kids yourself.

Above all, recognize that because this is a "blending" family rather than a first family, you and your new partner have some real challenges ahead of you.

You haven't had time to establish your own relationship with your spouse before you take on caring for children. Therefore, you have to make time for the marriage.

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

most valuable part of the book is not his conclusions but the fact that he's willing to discuss the issues at all. He rails against those Christians who avoid controversial stances in order to protect their "ministries." He encourages us to be true to our convictions and let God provide for his work. He equally disparages those who are quick with a dogmatic, knee-jerk answer for problems that merit examination. Quoting Romans 1:22-25, Campolo declares that those who claim Jesus as a supporter of their agendas are guilty of idolatry.

"This book will challenge you, it will probably rile you, and it may even win your agreement."

Incidentally, Kingston's review prompted me to purchase the book. I have discovered that I am not comfortable with everything Campolo says either ... especially the parts where it is clear I am not living up to the kind of Christianity he calls for.

Still, uncomfortable or not, I will finish the book. I suspect I will be the better for it.

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

## HE SAID/SHE SAID

### Home improvement fiasco offers lesson in 'counting the cost'

#### HE SAID



Mark Wingfield

I have developed a severe aversion to the sight of pastel-colored floral patterns. This is not just a minor irritation. I break out in a cold sweat, my heart races and my stomach churns when I catch even a glimpse of such a pattern.

The reason is simple: That's the wallpaper pattern that engulfed our small kitchen for less than 24 hours one recent weekend.

Alison and the boys were away visiting her parents, and I determined to surprise them by painting the kitchen while they were gone. To paint the kitchen, I first had to remove the old wallpaper. To my home-improvement-impaired mind, that seemed an easy enough task. After all, how was I to know that a quarter of the wallboard covering was going to rip off with the old wallpaper?

So here I am with stripped down kitchen walls not smooth enough to receive the paint I already had bought. I sure didn't want Alison to come home and find that I had created such a mess.

I had to wallpaper. And I needed a wallpaper that would disguise bad wallboard. The pastel floral pattern seemed just the ticket—when viewed in a small sample, of course.

Once on the wall, though, the flowers took over the room and made the appliances appear like giant planters. The man at the paint store, who contained his laughter pretty well, advised against painting over the wallpaper, which meant I had to pull the new wallpaper down and put up a less-offensive wallpaper before Alison returned home. Somewhere in the midst of this, I ripped up the kitchen floor and relaid it as well.

In retrospect, this whole story reminds me of Jesus' words in Luke 14 about counting the cost of discipleship. How easy it is to make a commitment without realizing the cost.

#### SHESAI



Alison Wingfield

The male mind never ceases to amaze me. On a quest to surprise me, Mark once again entered into one of his "simple" projects that turned into a nightmare.

Thank goodness I wasn't here.

Of course, he also is very lucky. He could have had to do it a third time. But I like the wallpaper and vinyl floor patterns he chose.

He put me in a rather precarious position when I came home. Here I was, travel weary from dealing by myself with two kids on a plane, and I am supposed to be effusive in praise of his efforts in the kitchen.

I have to admit my first thought was, "Why didn't he wait and let me help pick out the wallpaper?" After all, the kitchen is one of my main domains. I know he didn't start out to wallpaper, and we had talked about painting, but still...

However, after hearing the saga (in greater length than related above), I had to bite my tongue. He looked so proud and so exhausted.

And I do like it.

The only thing that inadvertently slipped out was that now we need to change the appliances. The colors no longer match. Once you start this home-improvement stuff, you never finish.

Mark may not have counted the cost at the beginning of the fiasco, but believe me, we are paying the price.

Mark Wingfield is editor of the Western Recorder.  
Alison Wingfield is a freelance writer.

## Can any committee be this perfect?

The pastor from Oklahoma makes a good point. Unfortunately, Southern Baptist Convention leaders in a position to address his concern have brushed him off.

The pastor is Paul Brady of Ranch Acres Baptist Church in Tulsa, Okla. His point is that the SBC's new mission statement, approved by messengers to last summer's annual meeting, references the importance of Scripture, Jesus and the Holy Spirit, but omits any reference to God the Father. (See story on page 2.)

Pastor Brady wants to know: Do Southern Baptists believe in the Trinity or not?

Morris Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee, and Mark Brister, chairman of the study committee that drafted the mission statement, have responded that Southern Baptists absolutely believe in the Trinity, but it isn't necessary to spell that out explicitly in the mission statement. Giving reference to Jesus the Son is dependent upon belief in God the Father, they explained.

It is ironic to hear such an argument coming from people who have led the fight to make the SBC a bastion of biblical inerrancy. Had someone like Roy Honeycutt or Cecil Sherman served on a committee that offered such an explanation, they would have been branded liberal heretics and radical feminists.

Within the last year, the SBC Executive Committee declined to act on Brady's request that the mission statement be amended to reference God the Father. And Brister's committee, the Program and Structure Study Committee, has defended its sweeping report as being without error.

#### EDITORIAL

Brister had the audacity to say his committee's work "contains no oversight."

That's an arrogant claim for a committee that proposes reducing the number of SBC agencies from 19 to 12, requiring numerous changes in legal documents and nearly \$500,000 worth of assistance from a management consulting firm. What seven-member committee could possibly have thought of every detail in such a sweeping proposal?

Sadly, Brister's response to the Oklahoma pastor is indicative of the way the restructuring proposal has been steamrolled through its various stages of approval. Last year, members of the Executive Committee had less than 24 hours to read the report before approving it. And Brister's committee insisted that the report be voted up or down as a whole. No amendments were to be considered.

This mishandling of process is unfortunate, because the "Covenant for a New Century" proposal contains many excellent ideas. Those good ideas could be strengthened, however, by allowing the Executive Committee and SBC messengers to be more than rubber stamps.

Brady plans to introduce another motion at next month's annual meeting in New Orleans to amend the mission statement. His proposal is worthy of support.

However, it would be even better if members of the Program and Structure Study Committee would offer the amendment, along with an acknowledgment that while the Bible may be inerrant, committees are not.

—Mark Wingfield



### Paul's words inspired

In the May 7 issue of the Western Recorder, Jon Berger had a stunning rebuttal as to the sinfulness of homosexuality. He simply contrasted Paul with Jesus, saying the words of Jesus were inspired but the words of Paul, being a mere man, could not be inspired.

I wonder how Berger would explain 2 Timothy 3:16: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction in righteousness."

Or 2 Peter 1:20-21: "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

Jack Jones  
Murray

### Thanks for retreat

I want to express a word of praise to God for the insight and leadership on behalf of our state family ministry in the Kentucky Baptist Convention for having the singles retreat at Cave City. This is a much-needed ministry, like single adult Sunday school programs. It addressed some important

adjustments in the lives of many Christians in a very spiritual setting.

I took my wife to see a movie called "Shadowlands" about C.S. Lewis and how his wife died with cancer. I suppose no one really knows how it feels to lose a spouse unless they have been there.

We think things like infertility or divorce happen to other couples but never to us who are in church. I suppose the shock, pain, loneliness and social isolation from such an experience is overwhelming. There needs to be, in the church, an understanding and full acceptance of such persons in their grief and/or new status before the church and community.

If Lewis were a Southern Baptist today in Kentucky, I think you would find him at a Christian single retreat, first as a participant, then later as he had opportunity, as an advocate for such activities. The encouragement ministries of churches and state conventions are good ways for churches to meet the needs of singles from a spiritual standpoint.

David Fletcher  
Mayfield

### Personal testimony

I remember well the first time I was asked to give my personal testimony. It was 1935. I was 21 years old, and a first-year student at the WMU Training School, "House Beautiful," in Louisville.

The trustees of the Training School were meeting. They sat in straight-backed chairs, in rows, in one of the parlors. I walked down the marble stairs, alone, as Miss Littlejohn

announced, "Miss Helen Cannan from Illinois."

This was the group that would vote on whether or not I would be given an invitation to come back for my second year. Much depended upon my "personal testimony."

How would they hear me? My grades were OK. I was questioned on my field work because I was doing double duty. I had been assigned to the Detention Home on Chestnut Street, where I taught a Sunday school class. One of the Training School girls had been assigned to Sunshine Center (now Fellowship Center). Her parents objected to her working with blacks. Miss Littlejohn asked me to take on her assignment.

I don't know whether it was my testimony or my surviving at two field placements that decided them to invite me back.

I have sown, I have watered, and I have left the increase with the Lord. I am now 82.

The Carver School of Social Work has been special to me since 1935. My husband, Allen, was dean of the School of Religious Education when WMU entrusted the school into the care of Southern Seminary, and he had much to do with the coming of Diana Garland as a faculty member.

It's a long way from those days of the WMU Training School to the firing of Diana Garland. The men are now in charge at Carver School.

But the United Way is carrying on its work throughout our community from the building at 334 E. Broadway once known as "House Beautiful."

Helen Cannan Graves  
Louisville

## Court lets stand ruling against city's logo featuring a cross

WASHINGTON (ABP)—Over the objection of its three most conservative members, the U.S. Supreme Court declined May 13 to review a lower-court ruling that a city's use of the Latin cross in its official seal violates the separation of church and state.

Four of the court's nine justices must vote to hear a case before it is accepted for review.

Left standing was a federal appeals-court ruling that "use of an unmistakably religious image" by the city of Edmond, Okla., in one quadrant of its municipal seal violates the First Amendment's ban against governmental endorsement of religion.

Other quadrants of the circular seal depicted a steam engine and oil derrick, a landmark building at the University of Central Oklahoma and a covered wagon with the year "1889."

The appeals court reversed a federal district court's finding that Edmond's use of the religious symbol was permissible because it was intended to be a historical depiction of the city, not an endorsement of a particular religion.

"The cross in isolation could be seen as solely a religious symbol," District Judge David Russell had reasoned. "But because the cross is accompanied by other depictions on the seal, the Court believes a person must reach to believe it is there for the purpose of enhancing or inhibiting religion."

But the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals reversed that ruling, saying the "religious significance and meaning of the Latin or Christian cross are unmistakable."

The appeals court said such religious symbols "transcend mere commemoration, and effectively endorse or promote the Christian faith."

Edmond's seal was challenged by the pastor and other members of Channing Unitarian Church in Edmond and a Jewish resident of the Oklahoma City suburb.

The Supreme Court's refusal to review the case drew an unusual written dissent from Chief Justice William Rehnquist, joined by Justices Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas.

Rehnquist's dissent said the Supreme Court should have accepted the case to resolve a dispute in federal courts about the use of religious symbols in government seals. He also questioned whether the residents had sufficient standing to challenge the seal.

## GOP's abortion plank drawing scrutiny

WASHINGTON (ABP)—A suggestion by the head of the Christian Coalition that the Republican Party soften its anti-abortion stance has sparked a public feud with other prominent evangelicals who demand the GOP not back away from its call for a constitutional amendment protecting the unborn.

Christian Coalition head Ralph Reed suggested that the Republican Party should drop from its platform a statement calling for a human-life amendment to the Constitution in order to focus on more attainable goals.

The May 13 issue of Newsweek carried an excerpt from Reed's new book, "Active Faith." In the chapter, Reed said Christians should not compromise on the right to life, but he noted "as a purely tactical matter" that "amending the Constitution may be the most remote weapon at our disposal at this time."

Reed said he endorses the current plank on abortion—which was part of the party's platform in 1984, 1988 and 1992—but noted the "pro-life community's hopes ... do not hinge on the existing wording of the GOP platform but on the principle behind it."

Rather than insisting on a constitutional ban on abortions, Reed sug-

gested the GOP adopt a platform that seeks "by all legal and constitutional means to protect the right to life." Reed emphasized the suggestion was his own and not the position of the Christian Coalition.

A coalition of 12 anti-abortion leaders responded with a full-page ad in the May 15 Washington Times demanding that the abortion plank in the GOP platform be readopted "without any change or deletion."

"We believe that the goal of constitutional and legal protection for unborn babies is the transcendent moral, social, cultural and political issue of our times," the statement said. It added that an anti-abortion amendment is necessary because a 1992 Supreme Court ruling declared abortion a constitutional right.

A spokeswoman for Focus on the Family told Religion News Service the statement was prompted by Reed's proposal to change the plank and by calls from several Republican governors for the plank to be dropped from the GOP platform.

Signers of the statement included Adrian Rogers, former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, and Richard Land, head of the SBC Christian Life Commission.

The coalition said their statement was non-partisan. "We long and pray for the time when the Democratic Party and any other party is as pro-life as is the current Republican Party platform," the statement said.

Land said the nation needs a constitutional amendment protecting the unborn for the same reason it needed a constitutional amendment to end slavery. "The argument that passage of such an amendment is not now politically possible in no way should negate the fact that must be the ultimate goal," Land added.

Other signers of the statement were Gary Bauer, president of the Family Research Council; Judie Brown, president of the American Life League; James Dobson, founder of Focus on the Family; Richard John Neuhaus, editor-in-chief of "First Things;" D. James Kennedy, president of Coral Ridge Ministries; Beverly LaHaye, chairman of Concerned Women for America; Phyllis Schlafly, chairman of the Republican National Coalition for Life; Charles Colson, chairman of Prison Fellowship Ministries; Paul Weyrich, president of Free Congress Foundation, and J.C. Willke, president of the International Right to Life Foundation.

## Episcopal bishop cleared of heresy charge

WILMINGTON, Del. (RNS)—Saying there is nothing in Episcopal doctrine to bar non-celibate homosexuals from becoming deacons and priests, a church court dismissed heresy charges against a retired bishop May 15 and opened the possibility that gay ordinations will increase dramatically in the 2.5 million-member denomination.

In dropping the charge that Bishop Walter Righter violated his ordination vow in 1990 when he ordained Barry Stopfel, now a priest in the diocese of Newark, the court declared

that "there is no discipline of the church prohibiting the ordination of a non-celibate homosexual."

The court said its ruling was on "the narrow issue" of whether Righter violated church law and was not an endorsement of gay ordination.

"We are not deciding whether life-long committed, same-gender sexual relationships are or are not a wholesome example with respect to ordination vows," the decision stated. "We are not rendering an opinion on whether a bishop and diocese should or should not ordain persons living in

same gender sexual relationships."

Still, the 7-1 ruling makes the Episcopal Church only the second mainline Protestant denomination to allow gay ordination, after the United Church of Christ.

One bishop, Andrew Fairfield of North Dakota, dissented from the majority view, sharply arguing that the Bible forbids all homosexual activity. Two bishops, Roger White of Milwaukee and Donis Patterson, a retired bishop of Dallas, voted with the majority but issued a separate concurring decision.

## NATIONAL NOTES

■ **Moynihan to challenge veto.** In a break with fellow Democrat Bill Clinton, New York Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan said May 15 he'll vote to override a presidential veto of a measure banning late-term abortions. "It is as close to infanticide as anything I have come upon in our judiciary," Moynihan said of the "partial-birth" abortion procedure.

The Senate voted 54-44 last December to outlaw the procedure unless the mother's life was in jeopardy. Nine Democrats joined with 45 Republicans to vote in favor of the ban. Moynihan, who was ill and did not vote, opposes abortion but until now has said a woman has the right to decide.

■ **Clinton opposes gay marriages.** President Clinton opposes same-sex marriages but will "look carefully" at any legislation Congress passes aimed at banning it, White House spokesman Michael McCurry said May 13. "He believes this is a time when we need to do things to strengthen the American family, and that's the reason why he's taken this position," McCurry said.

■ **More women seeking shelter.** The International Union of Gospel Missions has issued a report that shows a marked increase in the numbers of mothers and children who rely on its shelters and other services. A 1995 study released Thursday May 9 found that rescue missions nationwide provided more than 1.28 million nights of lodging to children, an increase of 10 percent over 1994. They provided more than 3,000 children daily with day care, after-school care and tutoring, an increase of slightly more than 50 percent over the previous year.

"These numbers reflect an alarming increase in the number of children whose parents cannot adequately provide for them," said Stephen Burger, executive director of the International Union of Gospel Missions. "And the vast majority of these children are being raised by single mothers."

■ **Graham preaches to 2.5 billion.** A worldwide audience estimated at 2.5 billion people heard Billy Graham preach

April 14 via the evangelist's World Television Series. Graham preached in an hour-long telecast shown during prime time in more than 200 countries. Graham officials estimated that more people heard the gospel April 14 than on any single previous day in history.

■ **Liquor ad ban nixed.** Rhode Island's ban on liquor-price advertising violates the First Amendment's free-speech guarantees, all nine justices of the U.S. Supreme Court said May 13. The ruling reversed a 1994 decision by a federal appeals court that a 1956 law banning alcohol price advertisements, except those inside liquor stores, was proper under the 21st Amendment.

■ **Player refuses Playboy.** Danny Wuerffel, quarterback for the University of Florida, has turned down the "Scholar Athlete Award" for Playboy magazine's 1996 Preseason College All-America Football Team. "It's just not something I want to be associated with, and there's a

whole lot of bad connotations that go along with that magazine," said Wuerffel, who attends First Baptist Church of High Springs, Fla.

■ **Tax breaks and vouchers proposed.** House Republicans have introduced a bill that would provide a series of tax breaks and vouchers for "faith-based" drug rehabilitation programs in low-income communities. The American Community Renewal Act was introduced May 15 and is expected to come to the floor by mid-July. The bill's primary sponsors are Reps. James Talent of Missouri and J.C. Watts of Oklahoma.

The bill would provide tax breaks for investment and for tuition payments at private and parochial schools. It also would provide vouchers to drug rehabilitation programs sponsored by religious organizations. A provision in the bill also would provide funds for drug counseling and rehabilitation programs that have a religious content and character.

# ISSUES

## Dunn: Drive to make India a Hindu nation dangerous

By Ken Walker  
State Correspondent

LOUISVILLE—The drive by a newly-empowered political party to officially declare India a Hindu nation should be of concern to all Americans, James Dunn told a group of Kentuckians May 15.

Dunn, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, said the India struggle parallels an effort by the Roman Catholic Church to turn Poland into a "Catholic" country. He called the trend a dangerous global development.

"Anywhere the coercive power of the state belongs to one group, the state is not free and freedom is in danger," Dunn said in a presentation at Clifton Baptist Church in Louisville.

"Any time there is a state church or a church state, our Baptist work is not complete," he added, quoting a remark by George W. Truett on the steps of the U.S. Capitol in May 1920.

Dunn visited Louisville last week on his way to Lexington to address a meeting of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, held at Central Baptist Church. A Kentucky chapter of Americans United recently has been reorganized.

Dunn emphasized the elections in India, which concluded last week, as an example of the danger of combining church and state.

A report by Daniel White, professor of religious studies at the University of North Carolina, in a recent Baptist Joint Committee newsletter discusses the emergence of that country's Bharatira Janata Party.

White implied that the party's agenda sounds similar to American political rhetoric—restricted borders, government policies reflecting the majority's religious beliefs and traditional values.

The Bharatira Janata Party has formed an alliance with another Hindu nationalist organization and sup-

ports a return to traditional Hindu religious language, symbols and rituals to promote political goals, the professor said.

"We should be alarmed for those in people-serving jobs or commerce issues in India," Dunn commented about these developments. "The BHP has declared it will free the nation of foreign influence and will kick out (remaining missionaries) when they take over."

However, he cautioned that Christians in this country should not feel "smugly superior" to Indians just because they think it is wrong that Hindus are in power.

Christians are not immune to the sins of greed, political maneuvering and wanting to have things their own way, he said.

"If we think that, we're missing the doctrine of sin, that there is none good, no, not one. We should be afraid when any religious group takes power and makes fundamental deci-

sions of conscience."

During his talk in Louisville, Dunn traced the development of Baptists back to Thomas Helwys in the early 1600s. He recalled how Roger Williams was persecuted in Colonial New England for his refusal to adhere to the idea of a state church.

He contrasted this history with the Religious Equality Amendment proposed in Congress by Sen. Henry Hyde, R-Ill, which he said seeks to declare that religion has the same rights as any other group. However, Dunn warned that such proposals lead to entangling state and church.

"Free and faithful Baptists have always stood for separation of church and state as a hedge and a safeguard of liberty," Dunn said.

"Any time the state starts meddling in religion, it uses coercion. But the church depends upon persuasion and the Spirit of God. This is not a 'Christian' nation, but a free nation under God."

**"Anywhere the coercive power of the state belongs to one group, the state is not free and freedom is in danger."**

James Dunn

### CLASSIFIED ADS

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**SEEKING:** Minister of music/outreach for northern Kentucky SBC church. Call (606) 635-2444. Grant's Lick Baptist Church, 175 W. Clay Rd., Alexandria, KY 41001. Dr. Paul E. Broyles, pastor/teacher.

**SEEKING:** DeHaven Memorial Baptist Church accepting resúmes for a full-time minister of administration/education. Address inquiries: Personnel Committee, 307 W. Jefferson St., LaGrange, KY 40031.

**SEEKING:** Front desk attendant—evening and night shifts. Seminary or college student preferred. Allows plenty of time to study. Contact: Ginger Niner at Parr's Rest in Louisville. Phone: (502) 451-5440.

**SEEKING:** Nursing assistant. Flexible shifts. Diploma or GED; certified preferred. Contact: Gayle Mink, nurse manager at Parr's Rest in Louisville. Phone: (502) 451-5440.

**SEEKING:** Children's minister. Newly established part-time position in rapidly growing suburban Louisville church. Individual will be responsible for assisting church program and ministry organizations in comprehensive education program for preschoolers and grades 1-6. Send resumé to: Cedar Creek Baptist Church, 7709 Bardstown Rd., Louisville, KY 40291.

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**FOR RENT:** Sanibel Island, Florida: 2-bedroom, 2-bath condo available for vacation rental. Large pool, tennis courts, bikes, canoe, kayak, screened porch, lovely secluded beach. Weekly rates May through mid-December: \$575. Call Pat Owen, (502) 895-8752 (home) or (502) 897-5079 (office).

**NEEDED:** A well-established and growing church needs a pastor. The church has a large Family Life Center and gymnasium. Please send resumé to: Corydon Missionary Baptist Church, P.O. Box 205, Corydon, KY 42406, or call: (502) 533-6972 evenings.

**CARE:** Helping Hands Companion Home Care provides transportation, companionship and personal care from quality, Christian caregivers. Linda Hyers, (502) 426-9783.

**SEEKING:** Full-time minister of youth and children in a church with tremendous potential. Please send resumé ASAP to: Pastor, P.O. Box 384, Lewisport, KY 42351.

**SEEKING:** Growing church in northern Kentucky with strong youth program desires to hire a full-time youth minister. Please send resumé and references to: Fort Mitchell Baptist Church, 2323 Dixie Hwy., Fort Mitchell, KY 41017. Salary commensurate with experience.

**SEEKING:** Resúmes are being accepted for the position of Director/Teacher for the Shively Baptist Church Kindergarten. Individual should have Kentucky certification in early childhood education. Interested individuals should send resumé to the attention of Pam Orr, pastor's secretary, Shively Baptist Church, 1599 Sadie Lane, Louisville, KY 40216, or call Pam Orr in the church office at (502) 367-9155 for more information. Deadline for accepting resúmes is May 31, 1996.

**SEEKING:** Youth minister. Part-time position in rapidly growing suburban Louisville church. Exciting youth ministry opportunity which already includes a dynamic Wednesday night contemporary youth worship service, with teaching, music videos and worship and praise music. Church activities center and facilities in rapidly growing suburban area present outstanding growth opportunity. Please send resumé to: Cedar Creek Baptist Church, 7709 Bardstown Rd., Louisville, KY 40291.

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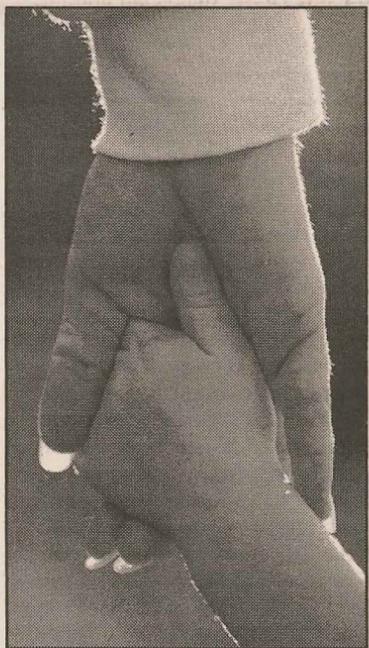


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## Focus and assimilation keys to church growth, Hodge says

*Continued from page 1*

within the first two or three months, "then you're not going to see them long."

"A church is not one big, happy family as we like to say. That is absolutely, scientifically untrue. When our church has a special celebration of some kind, we don't all go in there and hug each other.

"We all go into our little pockets. It's normal. It's more coherent that way. What churches are having to do is realize the 'small group' movement that's been around a long time is now making a new surge across the country."

Although small groups are a re-emerging trend in society, Hodge said they are not new to Southern Baptists.

"Small groups are not an introduction of something new to Southern

Baptists; they are an introduction of something new to the rest of the world. But Southern Baptists have so institutionalized our Sunday school and discipleship program structure that when I mention small groups to the churches I consult with, they say, 'No, we don't have that, but we have Sunday school.'"

Consequently, Hodge said, Southern Baptist churches that have quit growing need to re-educate themselves about the effectiveness of small-group structures, while readjusting their focus.

"We have to teach our people to renew the inclusiveness that makes the small group the great structure that it is," Hodge said. "Focus is what it takes to reach these lost people, and once you reach them, you've got to help them fit in."

### Tips for growing churches

NASHVILLE (BP)—Here are some tips from Ralph Hodge of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board to help churches grow:

- Make change a friend. Develop a "culture of change."
- Deliver what you promise.
- Learn to fail fast.
- Write rules that enable people to do things, not stop people from doing things.
- Learn from everybody and

everything.

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# CHURCHES



## FINANCIAL FORUM

### Materialism losing luster

By Dale Hanson Bourke

For some it comes as an epiphany, a sudden realization that the stuff of life has outpaced the substance.

Others move toward it gradually, growing tired of the "shop 'til you drop" mentality.

Whatever the case, what started as an individual choice has become a national movement. Economists and sociologists agree that a fundamental shift is taking place: Materialism is out. Simplification is in.

"There are two ways to get enough," the writer G.K. Chesterton pointed out early this century. "One is to continue to accumulate more and more. The other is to desire less."

During most of the 1980s and well into the '90s we have made a valiant attempt at the former. Most Americans bought what they wanted, not just what they needed.

And then something changed. It started with individuals who said, "Enough is enough." Some were burned-out achievers who were tired of trying to keep up with the latest fashion trends. Others were people of faith who recognized that materialism was a threat to their souls.

Last summer a poll commissioned by the Merck Family Fund documented that 28 percent of Americans voluntarily had cut back on income to improve their lifestyle during the past five years.

The Trends Research Institute, headquartered in Rhinebeck, N.Y., cited simplicity as one of the top 10 trends of 1996.

In a society where shopping is considered a recreational pastime, desiring less will take some coaching and hand-holding.

Janet Luhrs, editor and publisher of "Simple Living," says in a recent issue, "Once you reduce your desires ... you have time and space for a more peaceful, joyful life."

Peace and joy. Not bad replacements for the possessions spilling out of our closets. And not new concepts, either.

What is considered a current wave to pollsters is as old as the advice of Jesus to the rich young man in the Gospel of Luke: "Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven."

For those of us who have accumulated more earthly treasures than we can enjoy, it is a challenge worth accepting.

Dale Hanson Bourke is publisher of Religion News Service

## Unnoticed decline infecting churches

By Terri Lackey  
SBC Sunday School Board

NASHVILLE (BP)—A pesky illness is pervading Southern Baptist churches, but it's nothing a good dose of innovation can't cure, a church consultant said.

Infecting nearly 70 percent of Southern Baptist congregations, this sneaky ailment is called plateaued or declining growth, and often churches are not aware they've contracted it until atrophy begins to set in, according to Ralph Hodge, a contemporary church specialist for the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

Hodge has become one of the Sunday School Board's physicians for plateaued churches. He said he gets calls daily from church leaders across the country asking him to assess their condition.

"Some say, 'We don't know what to do here. We don't know if we need to do anything. Who could help us?'" Hodge said.

Those who aren't sure they are ailing simply call for a checkup and consultation, he said.

Feeling healthy is the foe of most plateaued churches, Hodge acknowledged. Churches that feel successful or healthy have difficulty acknowl-

edging they need to make changes.

"Unlike other evangelistic denominations, Southern Baptists have continued to expand in numbers and have large successes," he said. "The fear I have is that Peter Drucker's principle for businesses can be applied to us. Success may be our greatest enemy."

"When churches feel successful, the ideas that got them where they are seem to be so right to them that they don't think they need to make any changes."

Hodge said a church recently called him for planning consultation. The pastor had resigned and the church wanted to assess its goals before seeking a new pastor.

"Eventually, after much dialogue with them, they diagnosed their own disease. They said, 'Gee, we're plateaued.' And they said it with a big lump in their throat."

"Churches just plan and program from day to day, and they don't really look back enough to see what they are doing," Hodge said.

He gave the example of a church he visits often, yet always misses the turn into the street on which it is located.

"It's one of the most beautiful and imposing buildings you've ever seen,

but I always take the wrong street because of an ambiguous street sign that has been there for 40 years. Every time I go, I have to stop at a nearby McDonald's and ask directions."

Hodge said that type of behavior—"a mindset that everybody knows where we are"—is indicative of an attitude of infallibility to cultural changes.

"This is a great church that feels good about itself because it has been an effective community-impacting church for two centuries. But in the past two years the community around the church has tripled and the church membership has stayed the same.

"They are still the biggest church in town, and they are gaining some people, but they are primarily swelling."

"Swelling," Hodge explained, "is gaining new members from other churches."

In contrast, true growth is "kingdom growth or reaching lost people that you bring into the kingdom of God," he said.

Hodge said churches not growing have plenty of company. According to 1994 figures culled from the Southern Baptist annual church profile, 69.7 percent are plateaued or declining. (Of those, 49.5 percent are plateaued and 20.2 percent are declining.)

For this study, plateaued churches are defined as congregations with plus or minus 10 percent membership change within a five-year period, and declining churches are congregations with a membership loss greater than 10 percent over a five-year period.

The most common problem Hodge said he sees in churches that have stopped growing is lost focus.

He said one way he can tell if a church's vision is skewed is by looking it up in the yellow pages of the phone book. For example, one church's yellow page announcement gave the century it was founded, just as the sign in front of the church did.

"Essentially that's what they are promoting. On their great big sign out front and right across the top, it tells the year it was founded. And 'Come grow with us' was written way down at the bottom. Who is that talking to?" he asked.

Hodge said churches which find their membership plateauing or declining have great potential "to get back on track" by realigning their focus and realizing the cultural barriers that exist between their church world and the world outside their walls.

"The potential is there to grow a church. Success comes when congregations talk and pray and look at new ways to build their church."

"If they grow or not, that's in God's hands," he said. "But at least they are dialoging and looking at what they need to do to grow."

**Feeling healthy is the foe of most plateaued churches, Ralph Hodge acknowledged. Churches that feel successful or healthy have difficulty acknowledging they need to make changes.**

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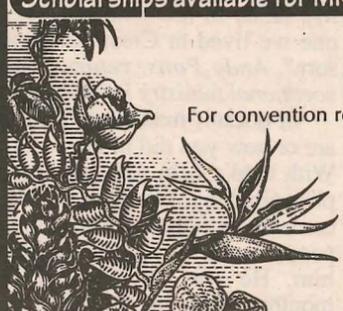
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- Safety for all the Kentucky construction teams going to Russia this year.
- Funds for the meals for the homeless program of Metropolitan Baptist Church in Cambridge, Mass.
- Raja Kandonadee, a church planter in Boston, as he seeks to start an Asian Indian church.
- Jim Meyers, director of missions for Silver Lakes and Whispering Pines Baptist associations in Idaho.
- Earl Jackson, director of missions for Golden Spike and Eastern Idaho Baptist associations in Idaho.

## Mountains to the Mississippi

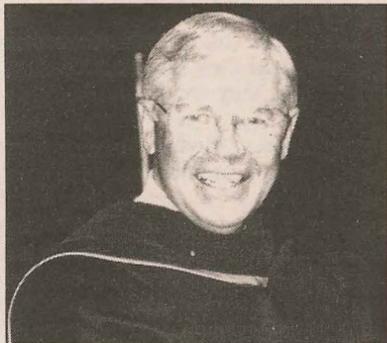
Compiled by Ann Tatum

■ **CENTRAL CITY**—Unity Church called **Danny Epley** as pastor. He was ordained to the gospel ministry at Calvary Church April 28.

■ **DUNMOR**—Dunmor Church called **Scott Hughes** as pastor.

■ **ELIZABETHTOWN**—Severns Valley Church called **John Laida** as interim pulpit minister. He previously was pastor at First Church in Clarksville, Tenn.

■ **FRANKLIN**—Simpson Association elected **Paul Tabor**, retired pastor from Springfield, Tenn., as direc-



**HENRY AT GEORGETOWN** Southern Baptist Convention President Jim Henry delivers the baccalaureate address at Georgetown College May 10. The 1959 alumnus of Georgetown urged graduates to focus on their relationship with God above all else. Educator and poet Nikky Finney delivered the commencement address the next day, urging students to be authentic, "the real McCoy."

tor of missions March 1.

■ **GRAHAM**—Tony Mercer resigned as pastor at Graham Church.

■ **HODGENVILLE**—Middle Creek Church called **Chris Tincher** as minister of youth. He is a student at Campbellville College.

■ **LEXINGTON**—Porter Memorial Church ordained **Daniel Mackey** to the gospel ministry May 19.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Crescent Hill Church has voted to seek alignment with the American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A., while maintaining its alignments with the Southern Baptist Convention and Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. Crescent Hill members are asked to designate where they want the missionary portion of their tithes and offerings to be sent, and the new alignment with American Baptists will provide a third option for giving.

Beechwood Church will host "Salt & Light Ministries," a non-profit mission organization to Ghana, West Africa, in concert May 31 at 7-8:30 p.m. For information, call **Dora Bortey** at (502) 895-1573.

Lyndon Church ordained **Keith McKinley** and **Parush Parushev** to the gospel ministry April 28. McKinley will be ministering in the Louisville area, and Parushev will return to Bulgaria upon graduating from Southern Seminary.

Hurstbourne Church ordained **Bill Thornton** to the gospel ministry



**KENTUCKIANS ON TOUR** Trustees of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board recently took an awareness tour to Alaska, visiting mission sites and hearing from Alaskan leaders and missionaries. Kentucky participants included Mark and Lynn Bond of La Center (far left); Bob and Betty Haile of Hopkinsville (center); and Emma Day of Elizabethtown (far right). Others pictured are Cloyd Sullins, executive director of the Alaska Baptist Convention, Mike Proctor, director of missions for Chugach Baptist Association and Ken Chadwick, state missions director. (HMB photo)

May 19.

Woodland Church's senior adults are sponsoring a "55 Alive Refresher Driving Course" June 12-13 from 12:30-4:30 p.m. Cost is \$8 per person. For information or to register, call **Jerry Powers** at (502) 245-1258 or **Nub Miller** at (502) 239-1007.

■ **MIDDLESBORO**—Lori Kirk resigned as part-time minister to youth at Middlesboro Church, but will continue in this position until a new candidate is elected.

■ **MORGANFIELD**—First Church called **Mark Galloway** as pastor. He previously was pastor at Pigeon Fork Church in Waddy. He will begin his

new ministry June 2.

■ **MORTONS GAP**—Salem Church called **John Ashby**, retired director of missions of Little Bethel Association, as interim pastor. **Harlin Loggins** resigned as pastor of Salem Church to become pastor at Wood Station Church in north Georgia.

## MISSIONARY UPDATE

■ **James and Karen Stanhope**, missionaries to the Dominican Republic, are on the field and receive mail at Lynx Air/Sd Dr., P.O. Box 5600, Fort Lauderdale, Fla. 33340. They are natives of Kentucky.

## 'I was surprised there were no requests for donations'

It is exciting to open the daily mail. We never know what we may find; letters from alumni, parents, donors, friends, pastors and prospective new students.

It is always exciting when I get a letter from a new friend of the Oneida ministry. This person will usually explain why he/she is writing and how he came to know about us. One such letter came in the mail today from Louisville. I will share part of it with you:

"Dear Friends, I was born in Kentucky and have always known a little about Oneida and what it stands for. I do hope and pray that you continue to do the great work that you do there.

"My sister sent me a news sheet and I read every word. And I was surprised that nowhere in the pamphlet was there a request for donations. But you did ask for prayers. And I know God answers prayers.

"Please accept this check and use it where you think it would do the most good."

I am sharing part of this letter with you because it reminds us of the way people see us. We normally do not ask for financial support. It has been a long Oneida tradition to simply share with others the ministry we are trying to provide. We hope they will be impressed with our work and will choose to support us financially or as a volunteer.

If your mail is anything like mine, you are constantly being asked for financial support. There seems to be no end to those who ask for help. No doubt many of them are worthy of your support. Others may not be quite as deserving.

I personally have never felt comfortable asking for financial support. It could become a bad habit. In the past few days I have had requests for

new desks, new books, carpeting or tile for some classroom floors, curtains, computers for the classroom, repairs for staff housing, better lighting for classrooms, a one-ton truck for the farm, playground equipment for the new daycare center as well as furniture for the inside and much more. There could easily be a never-ending list of needs to bring before our friends and supporters.

It is my belief that if we honestly share with our friends what we are doing, and if they can come to our campus and see firsthand what is happening, they will support us. We know there is a limit to the support people can give. Yes, we would love to have more money to meet the many needs of our students, faculty and staff. Our staff work for very modest salaries, and have financial needs as well.

We simply accept the gifts made to Oneida, large and small. Just like you, we look at our resources and our needs. We take the funds you provide and meet our greatest needs. There is no purpose in sending pleas for money with every mailing.

After all, the letters we send and the information we provide should be for the purpose of sharing with our friends what God has done, not want we want done. Part of good stewardship is using our resources to meet the needs of this ministry.

Rather than keep asking for more, I believe it is more important to say "thank you" for what has been given and tell how we have invested the gifts.

Thanks to all our friends for sharing with us and for meeting our needs. Thanks to this new friend who found our ministry worthy of his gift.

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

## THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

## Senior memories

Before commencement, each senior noted influences that brought them to Clear Creek, major accomplishment and fondest memory.

"The hardest time in my life was to wait 10 years for my husband to surrender to God's calling. Attending Clear Creek gave me confidence of who I am in Christ. One snow day when classes were canceled, 49 people showed up at our house to eat and play games. The house was a wreck but I loved it." *Sherry Harper, whose husband, Doyle, is pastor of West Pineville Baptist Church. Sherry works part-time in the business office.*

"It makes me proud to show people the floors in the Academic Building. I spent "time on my knees" laying that tile. The miraculous ways God provided what we needed will encourage us in the future. My father-in-law still tells everyone we lived at Clear Creek Resort." *Andy Potts, returns to bivocational ministry in Alabama.*

"It doesn't matter how old you are or how you did in high school. With God's help you can accomplish anything. When we moved to campus my father was very ill and people were always asking about him. He was in ICU for five months. When he died I received

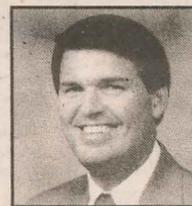
more cards and letters than I had ever seen. There were many other situations when students, faculty and staff never forgot me." *Cynthia Yeoman, from Indiana, teaches Mission Friends and TeamKid at West Pineville. Her husband, Jon, still waits for a ministry assignment.*

"It was very difficult for me to overcome the idea that a human institution could teach the Bible. The growth and development of doctrinal beliefs is my major accomplishment. The relationship my family and I have experienced with our pastor and his family is beyond explaining and will continue the rest of our lives." *Gary Baker, Sunday school director at Hosman Baptist, will continue as Clear Creek's heating-air technician.*

"My fondest memories involve the singles in Kelly Hall. The students there really do become a family. On one occasion when I sought reassurance from God, my burden was their concern. We prayed together and the Lord answered with clarity." *Alan Dodson, pastor, Bethany Baptist, Somerset, and a student at Southern Seminary.*

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

## CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

# MISSIONS

## New video series informs kids on missions

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—Millions of American children today pursue the question popularized by the PBS show "Where in the world is Carmen San Diego?"

The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board would like children to start asking a similar question: "Where in the world is God at work?"

To that end, the FMB next month will introduce a new video titled "Kids On Mission." The eight-minute video, produced by the agency's electronic media department, is geared to grade-school children and can be used by children's groups in local churches.

The new video will be one element in a three-part monthly package, "On Mission With God." This new package will replace "Foreign Missions Update," which the FMB has produced monthly since 1980.

The children's video program is set in a mapmaker's shop. From there, the old-fashioned mapmaker and his computer-savvy assistant take their viewers (thanks to satellite, interactive and multimedia technology and a puppet character named Surfer Bob) all around the world to see the needs of people without Christ and to meet missionaries who want to share God's love with them.

One of the first stops for the show will be the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in New Orleans, where the FMB plans to appoint 54 new missionaries. The new missionaries will talk about God's calling and their response.

"A huge need exists for quality Christian children's programming," said FMB President Jerry Rankin. "This program fills a void by creating

awareness of and enthusiasm for God's Great Commission."

The program is designed to be used as a warm-up to an activity on missions, as a stand-alone program or as an element in a vacation Bible school or similar setting.

"We have an obligation to meet the needs of young people with an inspiring, high-quality production," said Van Payne, executive producer of the project. "This new product is part of the board's desire to be user-friendly."

The new series will be released starting in June 1996. It features Alan Sader of Brunington, Va., as Mr. Christopher and Keia Jones, a high school student from Highland

Springs, Va., as Meg, his assistant, along with a cast of thousands from around the world.

A second element in the new video package is a two-minute segment called "Missions Awareness Series," featuring a quick introduction to what God is doing through Southern Baptists somewhere in the world. The segment is designed for churches to use during their Sunday morning and evening worship services as well as during Wednesday night activities.

The third segment of "On Mission With God," titled "On Mission," includes two features about what God is doing around the world, as well as a short message from FMB President Jerry Rankin.



**MISSIONS VIDEO** In the new missions video "Kids on Mission," Meg (Keia Jones) listens to instructions from the mapmaker, Mr. Christopher (Alan Sader). (BP photo)

## Heroic missionary dies at 90

CULPEPPER, Va. (BP)—Elizabeth Hale, the last Southern Baptist missionary to leave China after World War II, died May 8. She was 90. Hale first set sail for China in 1934.

The depth of her commitment surfaced publicly when, during a World War II prisoner exchange in 1943, the last of 87 Foreign Mission Board missionaries sailed out of Japanese-occupied China. Hale chose to stay.

In a Japanese concentration camp, she lived on near-starvation rations, working in the hospital with mothers and children and counseling fellow prisoners. She was there when the war ended. Against her wishes but under FMB orders, she left China shortly afterward.

She worked in Malaysia from 1952 until she retired in 1971. Through self-support, she built and managed the Bethel Hill Home for elderly Chinese women in Malaysia until 1983. The home is still open.

Hale, a single missionary, was known to colleagues as unassuming, but driven to tell others about Jesus. She developed several thriving churches in China and Malaysia.

Hale's work at the Bethel Hill Home required special permission from the FMB. Using her own resources several years before her retirement, she secured land, built a home, planted fruit trees and started livestock herds for the day she would open Bethel.

After her pastor father baptized her at age 9, "I never wanted to be anything other than a missionary," she wrote. "From then on I loved the Lord Jesus with all my heart. I longed to tell those who didn't know him."

In Malaysia, she developed several churches in North Malaya, where she also started the House of Happiness for Indian and Chinese children. Many children who benefited from that have become pastors, teachers, church leaders and successful business people.

Hale graduated from the University of Richmond in Virginia and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.



## Jacksons credited as dreamers of partnership missions

ABILENE, Texas (BP)—They're well beyond the normal retirement age, but W.H. "Dub" and Doris Jackson continue to focus their energies on sharing Jesus with the world.

Their concept of "partnership missions" has become a key missions thrust for many Southern Baptist congregations, state conventions and the Foreign Mission Board.

"Without a doubt, the victories of the past are a great encouragement for us," Jackson said. "But there is no way we can let those victories cause us to be willing to say to the Lord, 'Thank you for the past, now we will rest.'"

In their early 70s, the Jacksons continue a vigorous schedule, now focusing on Western Europe, recruiting volunteers to share their testimonies and the gospel in churches, homes, hotels, restaurants and everywhere else they go across the region.

Two current Southern Baptist leaders credit the Texas couple with pioneering the widely accepted partnership missions strategy.

"The vision of Dub and Doris Jackson had a lot to do with this concept that is making a major impact on fulfilling the Great Commission and reaching a lost world for Jesus Christ," said Foreign Mission Board President Jerry Rankin.

"It was Dub Jackson who lit the

fire under Texas Baptists to send over 500 pastors and laymen/laywomen to Japan in 1963," said Jimmy Draper, president of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board and a former Texas pastor. "There is no doubt that the concept of partnership missions originated in the heart of Dub Jackson."

The Jacksons, former Southern Baptist missionaries to Japan who continue their work with the FMB through its International Service Corps, currently make their home in Abilene, Texas.

"I started preaching and presenting the idea of American people going over on short two-week programs to help in 1955 while we were living in Abilene and on furlough," Jackson recalled. Because it was a new concept among Southern Baptists, it took nearly eight years for the dream to become reality.

Jackson said he also presented the idea to Japan Baptists and, after four years of study, they adopted it and began another three years of preparation.

Texas Baptists, meanwhile, adopted the campaign and agreed to send 549 team members to Japan, Korea, the Philippines, Taiwan and Hong Kong. Thus the Japan "New Life" effort became "the first real partnership meeting," Jackson said.

The Jacksons eventually left Japan

to set up the World Evangelism Foundation and helped send out more than 8,000 people to 38 foreign countries.

"God led the Jacksons to begin World Evangelism Fellowship to promote and coordinate volunteer partnership projects between Southern Baptist churches and churches overseas," Rankin said. "As this grew, it became the model for the Foreign Mission Board."

State conventions were organized into partnerships with overseas countries, multiplying the enlistment potential and expanding the involvement of pastors and laypeople from America in missions, Rankin said.

Jackson admits his idea hasn't always been received enthusiastically.

"There have always been people with doubts about the value of foreigners going overseas without the language and great knowledge of a country," he said. "That is not a valid concern. From the first partnership in Japan in 1963, and even before that first partnership, in a meeting in Asahigawa, Japan, in 1954, God gave to us the conviction that effective work could and should be done by any and all of us—if we want to be used."

"The basic principal in partnership is that anyone can and should witness anywhere anytime, and that God will honor and bless that witness," Jackson said.

Confirmation of his conviction came early in the Japan campaign.

"I stood in front of the city auditorium handing out invitations to the Japanese passing by," Jackson recalled.

"One young man, a cripple, and under some influence of alcohol, took one of my invitations and, no doubt led by the Holy Spirit that he knew nothing about, went in and sat down at the back. He kept his hat on and lit up a cigarette as he heard his first message.

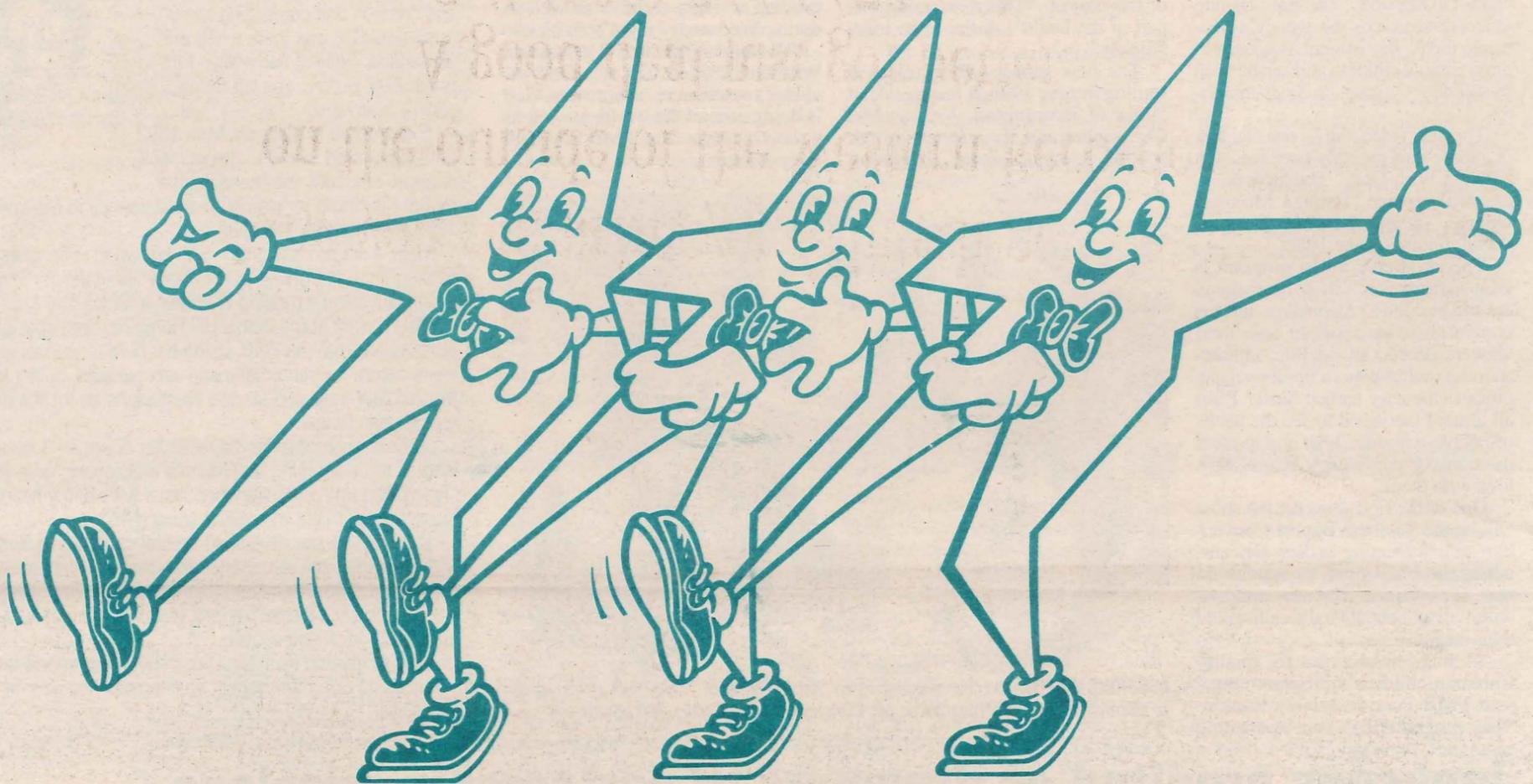
"An invitation was given and he raised his hand saying, 'I am inviting Christ to come into my heart.'"

"If I had been reporting this conversion of this partially drunk cripple who had just heard his first sermon, I think that almost every preacher in my home state of Texas would have expressed some doubts about his decision," Jackson said.

"That would have been understandable. However, I had the joy of baptizing Mr. Saito—and he went on to graduate from our seminary in Fukuoka, Japan, and, for more than 30 years, has served as one of our best-loved pastors in Obihiro, Japan.

"We need all of God's people who are willing to be 'message givers' for our Lord," Jackson stated. "God is ready to use anyone if we will just make ourselves available."

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