

Baptist and Reflector

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News journal of Tennessee Baptist Convention

FMB offers assembly to Vietnam refugees

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board has offered the use of its campgrounds in Luzon, Philippines, and \$50,000 in hunger relief money to help in a project to ease the plight of 2,000 Vietnamese refugees aboard the freighter Tung An in Manila Bay.

If the Philippine government approves a proposal to move the refugees off the crowded ship, they would be housed for about a month at the Luzon Baptist Conference Grounds until they could leave to resettle in other countries or be moved to another holding camp.

Some assistance has been given to the refugees by another relief organization which is now seeking permission from the Philippine government for them to be admitted temporarily.

At its March meeting, the Foreign Mission Board approved use of \$50,000 from world hunger funds donated by Southern Baptists to help in feeding the refugees if they are moved to the 15-acre Baptist camp, located near the entrance of Manila Bay within sight of Corregidor.

Funds Reallocated

Although its general relief funds are down to less than \$3,000, the board reallocated another \$50,000 originally set up for earthquake repairs in Romania to meet emergency needs of flood victims in Brazil. Up to this point, permission has not been received from the Romanian government for rebuilding seminary buildings damaged in the 1977 quake. In case the work in Romania becomes possible, efforts could be made to replace the funds.

The plight of 2,000 Vietnamese aboard the Tung An first captured world attention early this year when the ship sailed into Manila Bay in a bid for freedom. Although the Philippines is temporarily housing 2,000 other such refugees, it refused to allow passengers on the Tung An to come ashore. But it spent more than a million pesos (about \$136,000 U.S.) feeding the refugees in the first six weeks after they arrived, Asiaweek Magazine reported.

Warned by Philippine Foreign Minister Carlos Romulo in February that the Tung An might be forced back to sea, the United States agreed to accept 1,200 of the refugees, and five other nations offered to resettle smaller numbers. Philippine authorities expressed fear that the human waste and garbage tossed out of the ship directly into Manila Bay might be a health hazard to cities and villages along the shore.

Missionaries in the Philippines said a former Vietnamese pastor in New Zealand has offered to come at his own expense to minister to the refugees while they are at the camp. A doctor also may be needed.

In other actions, the board heard a report that contributions to the 1978 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions have reached \$26,557,267, more than 66 percent of the \$40 million goal and a \$3.7 million increase over the total at this time last year. Books on the offering remain open until the end of May.

Missionaries' costs increase

The board continued to wrestle with the rising costs of missionary support. It appropriated \$275,000 from current funds to help its 2,900 missionaries meet increases in the self-employment Social Security taxes this year. With the increase, the board will be paying \$465 per missionary, about half the tax amount.

Changes in the federal tax law also made it necessary for the board to appoint a special committee to study what assistance might be given to missionaries.

Until this year, the tax law was allowed an exclusion of up to \$20,000 per year of income earned overseas. The new law removes that exclusion and substitutes for it a number of special deductions, Overseas Division Director J. Winston Crawley explained.

To provide the same level of support for missionaries in 94 countries or territories, the board must provide widely varying amounts. Crawley said all of these factors must be considered by the committee, which met March 14 to begin its study of the complex problem.

The board also voted a 25 percent increase in the dollar allowances for missionaries traveling to and from their fields and for furlough freight expenses, effective Jan. 1, 1980. Crawley said no adjustment in these dollar allowances has been made in several years, and the adjustment is needed to meet rising costs.

A total of \$122,692 was appropriated from world hunger funds for six projects in five countries. In addition to the \$50,000 refugee allocation for the Philippines, the allocations will fund nutritional rehabilitation in India and treatment for extremely malnourished hospital patients in that country; provide food and seeds for planting in Bolivia; finance a farm development project in Togo; and restore funds to work in North Brazil which had been reallocated in February for use in the South Brazil flood crisis.

It approved seven new Mission Service Corps volunteers for service in Venezuela, Zambia and Hong Kong and an equal number of other long-term volunteers for four other countries—Turkey, Dominican Republic, South West Africa and Liberia. The service corps personnel bring to 59 the number approved for overseas service since the first such volunteers went abroad early in 1978.

Tentative approval was given to 22 young people who have volunteered for Mission Service Corps projects related to Brazil evangelistic efforts, pending further screening.

The board also voted \$70,000 for home Bible study projects in five major Korean cities as part of the major city evangelization program in Korea. Florida Baptists, cooperating in the Korean efforts, are providing volunteers and almost an equal amount over a three-year period.

The 15-member search committee seeking a successor to Cauthen is scheduled to present a progress report at the board's meeting, April 9-11, in Kansas City, Mo. Eighteen to twenty missionaries are expected to be appointed April 10 in a service at the municipal auditorium there.



SACRIFICE—In a scene from *Miracles*, to be presented again this year on the campus of Belmont College in Nashville, Abraham offers his son Isaac as a sacrifice to God. The plays will premiere July 2 and run through Aug. 11.

'Miracles' to premiere July 2 on Belmont College campus

Miracles, a Nashville-based production of early English Biblical plays, will premier on the campus of Belmont College on Monday, July 2. The series will run through Saturday, Aug. 11, according to Anderson Clark, producer for the plays and chairman of the department of literature, language, and communication arts at Belmont.

The series of plays, which portrays the

TV workshop to aid concerned viewers

NASHVILLE—A "Help for Television Viewers" regional workshop will be offered April 6 for Tennessee Baptists who are concerned about the issue of television and morality.

Principle speakers for the one-day workshop at Woodmont Baptist Church in Nashville will be Bob Keeshan, television's Captain Kangaroo; and Tipper Gore, wife of U.S. Congressman Albert Gore Jr., of Tennessee.

Keeshan, who created "Captain Kangaroo" in 1955 and has been an innovator in children's programming, will address workshops participants on how to use television responsibly. Mrs. Gore, who is chairperson of the Congressional Wives Taskforce which has sponsored hearings on television and its effects on children, will talk about families and television.

Workshops sessions also will include a panel discussion by executives from the three major Nashville TV stations on ways concerned persons can influence television and a special training session led by Harry N. Hollis Jr., associate executive secretary and director of family and special moral concerns for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

The workshop will begin with registration at 9 a.m. and will conclude at 4 p.m. There is no registration fee, and nursery services will be provided for preschoolers. The event is being sponsored by the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

story of mankind from the creation through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, will be performed in a natural amphitheater between the science and humanities buildings on the campus. Each performance will last two-and-one-half hours.

Over 6,000 persons from several states and countries viewed *Miracles* last summer in its first-year run, Clark stated. The amphitheater will seat 550 persons. Clark said that as many as 18-20,000 may view the plays this summer. He added that the series will be a "professional production."

Newton Neely, drama department, Lambuth College, Jackson, is serving as director for the production. Stage design was done by Paul Chenoweth, Innovative Productions Ltd.; and costumes were designed by Mrs. Irene Corey of Dallas Tex. Richard Shadinger, music department of Belmont, and Henry Fusner, First Presbyterian Church, Nashville, are music consultants for the play.

The script for the production is a collection of 13 manuscripts selected for their dramatic value and organized as a mini-cycle to represent the Judeo-Christian history. In medieval England the series was called *Mystery Plays* and was performed in the streets from the back of a wagon.

Bangladesh head speaks at Christians' meeting

DACCA, Bangladesh—For the first time in Bangladesh's history, the head of state addressed a Christian meeting. The meeting was sponsored by the National Christian Council of Bangladesh whose president is also president of the Bangladesh Baptist Union.

The head of state, President Ziaur Rahman, told the Christians that regardless of religious belief, "we must share the pride of our being responsible citizens of Bangladesh." Baptist leaders in Bangladesh see this as an important dimension to their status in Bangladesh, according to James F. McKinley Jr., Southern Baptist missionary from Kentucky.

Puerto Rico churches plan cooperation in new starts

PONCE, P.R.—Pastors of three Southern Baptist churches here—each from vastly different backgrounds—have led their congregations to join forces in a 10-year project to start one new Sunday School each year.

Accomplishment of the goal would result in a 25 percent increase in the number of churches and missions in Puerto Rico, which now stands at 30.

Two of the pastors, Lee Swett and Jose de Jesus, participated in a recent three-day Sunday School training workshop as part of their preparation to start new work. The workshop was led by the Sunday School Board's Sunday School department.

In the process of setting up their 10-year project, two of the churches, Ponce Baptist and La Luz del Mundo, have decided to merge, a first for English and Spanish-speaking congregations in Puerto Rico. Their pastors, Swett and de Jesus, will become co-pastors.

Swett, de Jesus and Rene Pereira, pastor of Glenview Baptist Church, are finalizing plans to use fellowship Bible classes as their primary method of starting new work. The plan includes strategies to start weeknight groups, some of which will evolve into Sunday Schools and then to mission status.

Ponce Baptist and its mission Valle Verde, La Luz del Mundo and Glenview represent the only Southern Baptist work in a city of 130,000 people. And of the 20 towns in their southern region of the island, only two have Southern Baptist work.

Swett came to Puerto Rico from Kinston, Ala., where he had been pastor of First Baptist Church. When the Ponce church, an English-speaking congregation, began talking with him, Swett said, "I had to get out my map to find out where Puerto Rico was."

In the two years of his pastorate, the church has changed from a membership made up almost exclusively of transient American business and military families to 60 percent Puerto Rican.

Swett is critical of some Americans who come to Puerto Rico on a "temporary" one or two-year assignment to work because they "come on vacation from their churches. I have trouble reconciling this attitude," Swett said.

Weektime Bible study groups have been Swett's main vehicle for reaching people. "Here a Baptist church is strange to the people who are not familiar with our customs. Then through the Bible study group they find out I'm no threat. And some become interested not only in the Bible but in the church I represent," he said.

Swett has been a moving force behind the idea to merge his church with La Luz del Mundo, a move which will change his title from pastor to co-pastor. Separate worship services will continue to be held in Spanish and English but committees and some other activities will be held jointly.

Pereira and de Jesus fit the description of many Baptist leaders in Puerto Rico in being either new Christians or new Baptists. Pereira, former head of the biology department at Catholic University in Ponce, became a Christian three years ago through a Bible study group his wife had begun attending.

Raised in a family "where professional suc-

cess was a main goal," Pereira's father is a successful businessman and his mother is a former member of the Puerto Rican House of Representatives.

Pereira, whose education had included two years of theology, remembers attending the Bible study group initially to try and show up the leader, missionary Donald Moore.

"But the missionary didn't want to argue with me, he just wanted to present Christ," said Pereira. A borderline alcoholic, no immediate life-style change accompanied his decision to become a Christian. That happened a few months later.

While visiting a friend across town from his home, Pereira felt a strong sensation that he should return home where his son had been left alone. Not knowing why, he began the 25-minute drive where, upon arrival, he discovered two men trying to break into his home with his son screaming inside.

From that experience, "I felt the Lord told me that while he gave his son for me, that he did not require me to give mine for him," Pereira said.

And the changes began—an end to his drinking, membership in Glenview Baptist Church and then resignation from his professorship in July 1978 to become fulltime pastor of the church.

Under his leadership, Glenview has outgrown its present quarters, a house with the carport and yard converted into a sanctuary. Negotiations are currently underway for property for a new building.

Jose de Jesus and the members of La Luz del Mundo Baptist Church have officially been Southern Baptists only since November 1978. Before that, they were an independent congregation.

"I was a Southern Baptist before even though I didn't know it," said de Jesus, a Puerto Rican native who has lived in the northeast United States for about 10 years.

Through outreach efforts by members and the use of weeknight Bible study groups, "we've been reaching out to the middle-class people in Ponce," he said.

Senegal sees new work in language missions

BIGNONA, Senegal—Kenneth G. and Margaret Robertson, Southern Baptist missionaries from Arkansas, have opened a new mission station in Bignona, Senegal, about 430 kilometers from the capital city of Dakar.

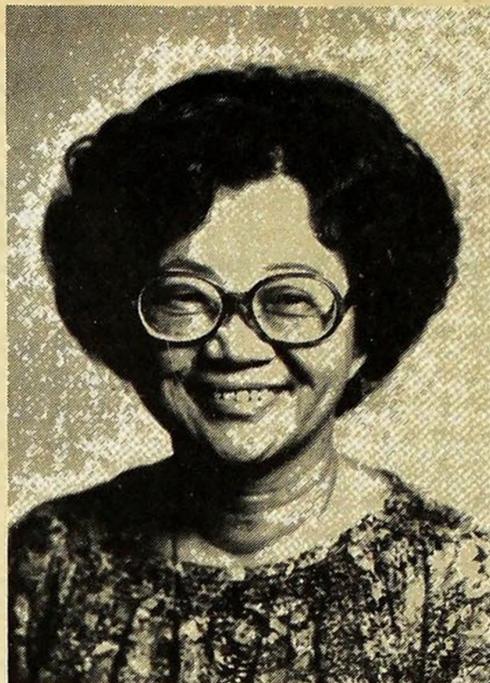
The Robertsons are beginning language study and will begin services as soon as they can communicate in the local dialect, according to Peggy Grossman, Southern Baptist missionary press representative. Southern Baptist missionaries opened work in Senegal in 1969. The Robertsons and 10 other missionaries are assigned to Senegal.

New degree offered at Southern to focus on religious education

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)—The trustee executive committee of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary has approved a three-year program in religious education, leading to a master of divinity in religious education degree.

The new plan combines features of the current master of religious education degree and the master of divinity degree. It requires the same biblical studies core and historical-theological studies core as the present master of divinity program. The major difference occurs in the third core area which will include educational courses currently included in the present master of religious education.

Students in the new program will be under the advisement of the faculty of the School of Religious Education.



NEW EDITOR—Sue Nishikawa, associate editor of the *Hawaii Baptist* for the past 10 years, was elected editor of that publication recently. She is believed to be the first woman elected as permanent editor of a Southern Baptist state paper.

Hawaii elects first woman editor

HONOLULU, Hawaii (BP)—Sue Nishikawa, associate editor of the *Hawaii Baptist* since 1970, was elected editor of the paper at a meeting of the executive board of the Hawaii Baptist Convention, becoming the only woman editor among the 34 editors of Southern Baptist state papers.

Edmond Walker, state executive secretary-treasurer, has been editor of the paper since 1965.

She is believed to be the first woman elected as permanent editor of a state Baptist paper among Southern Baptists, although several women have served as acting or interim editors and several currently serve in associate roles.

Mrs. Nishikawa, a native of Wahiawa, Oahu, Hawaii, will continue working as state Woman's Missionary Union director, a position she has held since 1954. She has also held other positions on the convention staff.

Before becoming state WMU director she was educational director of Olivet Baptist Church, Honolulu. She is a member of the Waikiki Baptist Church and is involved in resort missions through her church.

The new Hawaii editor is a cum laude graduate of Baylor University, Waco, Texas, and has a master of religious education degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Tx.

She is the author of numerous articles and study materials in Southern Baptist periodicals.

Accept Salt II, Valentine urges

MILL VALLEY, Calif. (BP)—The head of the Southern Baptist Convention's national social action agency said he supports a strategic arms limitation agreement with the Soviet Union as an alternative to continuing to "spend ourselves into inflationary ruin and to run toward mass destruction in a nuclear holocaust."

Foy Valentine, executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, said at a lecture-dialogue at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary that he believes SALT II is "an instrument that is morally justifiable."

"I think SALT II is in humanity's best interests, and I am convinced that it is in this nation's best interests," Valentine told students and faculty members, following his address on Southern Baptists and social concern. "We ought not to reject it just because it is also in the best interest of the U.S.S.R."

Valentine's remarks came on the heels of a special briefing at the state department in Washington, D.C. for Americans for SALT, a citizens' coalition which supports a new strategic arms limitation treaty with the Soviets and is pressing for prompt Senate ratification. Valentine said the group met with Paul Warnke, chief negotiator for the U.S. on the SALT II treaty, and other state department officials to discuss ways to support the 75 to 80 percent of Americans who, according to recent Gallup and Harris polls, want a limitation of nuclear arms proliferation.

SALT II, Valentine claimed, will help "preserve the current balance of terrors, which is not ideal and not even healthy, but which is still better than nuclear war."

Former China missionary dies at Va. Baptist Home

CULPEPER, Va.—Olive Riddell, Southern Baptist emeritus missionary to China, died March 7 in Culpeper, Va., where she had been living at the Virginia Baptist Home. She was 90.

Funeral services and interment were held March 9 at Bethlehem Baptist Church, Richmond, Va.

Appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in June 1919, Miss Riddell did evangelistic work with women and girls in China and organized and coordinated Bible classes over a large territory until 1940 when World War II forced her to return to the United States. From 1942 to her retirement in 1953, she was an associational missionary in the Virginia mountains, working under the state Woman's Missionary Union.

Porter Routh feted at Radio-TV awards

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—Porter W. Routh, executive secretary-treasurer of the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee, was honored by the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission during the 10th Annual Abe Lincoln Awards for his support of the commission's ministry.

Routh, who will retire from the Executive Committee July 31, received an Award of Appreciation for his 28 years of "perceptive leadership in the Southern Baptist Convention."

The awards banquet, which annually recognizes broadcasters nationwide for their commitments to excellence in programming, was held in Fort Worth's Tarrant County Convention Center.

Routh, who assumed the Executive Committee post in 1951, was the first layman to hold that position.

Prior to that he was involved in denominational work for more than 15 years, including periods as editor of the *Baptist Messenger* in Oklahoma and secretary of the department of surveys, statistics and information for the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville.

Heart attack takes life of George Willingham

George Willingham, pastor of Rock Springs Baptist Church in Wales, died March 14 following a heart attack. He was a patient at Athens Limestone County Hospital in Athens, Ala.

He had served the Wales church for several years and had also been pastor of Atwood Baptist Church in Atwood. Earlier he had served as a pastor in California under the sponsorship of the Home Mission Board.

Funeral services were held from the Piney Grove Baptist Church in Limestone County, Ala.

Baptist agency joins world hunger group

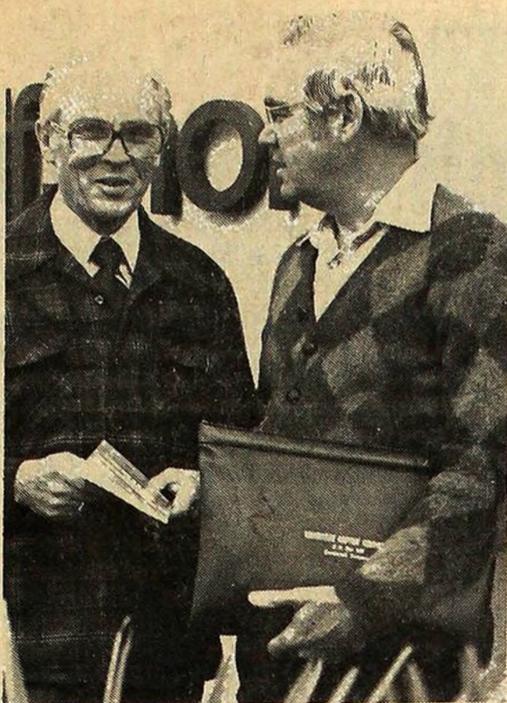
WASHINGTON (BP)—The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs has joined the Washington-based Interreligious Task Force on U.S. Food Policy, according to James E. Wood Jr., executive director of the Baptist agency.

The Baptist Joint Committee became the third Baptist group to join the task force, which lobbies for increased U.S. government allocations to world hunger relief and agricultural development, and works with government for reforms of domestic agricultural policy.

Wood designated Baptist Joint Committee research assistant Rosemary Brevard to represent the agency.

The American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A. has participated on the task force since its founding in 1975, and the Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention joined last fall.

Participants at last November's SBC Convocation on World Hunger, held at the Ridgecrest Conference Center, urged the Baptist Joint Committee and the Christian Life Commission to join the task force as an indication of the denomination's renewed commitment to combat world hunger. Messengers to last year's annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Atlanta had called for the hunger convocation.



STUDENT WORKERS—Glenn Yarbrough (right), director of student work for the Tennessee Baptist Convention, chats with Charles Roselle, director of National Student Ministries for the Sunday School Board, during a recent planning conference at Gulfshore Baptist Assembly in Mississippi.

Home missions reflects good year in all areas

BIRMINGHAM (BP)—Though some Southern Baptist Convention statistics dipped during 1978 according to recent reports, it was a banner year in home missions, M. Wendell Belew, director of the Home Mission Board's division of missions ministries, told SBC leadership in a recent mailout.

Belew pointed out that more than two new church-type missions a day were started in the U.S. during 1978 for a total of 756. These were added to more than 1,800 church-type missions organized the previous year. "When these organize into churches we will have fantastic numbers," he said.

Additionally, he said, Southern Baptists have averaged baptizing 1,000 people a day for approximately 25 years. They have averaged establishing one new church a day since organizing as a convention in 1845.

More than 500 predominantly black churches have affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention and more are affiliating at a rapid rate, he said.

The Home Mission Board department of special mission ministries assisted 21,671 lay persons in doing volunteer short term missions.

Student summer missionaries numbered 1,446—the largest group ever. In church extension, 140 seminary students in summer intern programs established 40 new missions.

A Southern Baptist ministry of some form was begun in nearly 100 counties that have no Southern Baptist church.

In other developments, 516 mission pastors and their churches yielded 9,480 professions of faith, 198 new churches were constituted by mission pastors, and 897 new Bible fellowships were established by mission pastors.

Language missionaries began work with five additional ethnic groups—Pakistani, Persian, Afghanistani, French-Canadian, and Dutch—bringing the total number of Southern Baptist ethnic groups to more than 35.

More Baptist Vietnamese congregations now exist in the U.S. than there were in Viet-

nam before missionaries were forced to withdraw. It is estimated that there are more Spanish speaking Baptist congregations in the U.S. than in all the rest of the world.

Chris Elkins, a Home Mission Board staffer who was formerly associated with the Unification Church, informed 53,440 persons about the "Moonies" through 237 conferences.

Christian social ministries missionaries conducted 37 Vacation Bible Schools in the Watts area of Los Angeles, resulting in 750 professions of faith.

The Immigration and Naturalization Service of the U.S. Department of State has asked the Home Mission Board for help in ministering to illegal aliens.

The Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions in 1978 grew 14.5 percent over 1977 to a total of \$12,282,228—still short of that \$13 million goal—but an increase over the previous year's 11.3 percent.

During March, the Southern Baptist Convention will attempt to top that record. The Easter offering for home missions goal is \$15 million, which would require more than a 22 percent increase over last year's receipts.

Tennessee missionaries said safe on Grenada

ST. GEORGE'S, Grenada—Two Tennessee missionaries, along with two other couples, have been reported safe in Grenada following a claim of control by rebel leaders there.

Missionaries Carter and Charlotte Davis of Tennessee, Manget and Elaine Herrin of Georgia, Alabama, and Florida; and Kenneth and Sylvia Wellmon of South and North Carolina, were said to be "well and in no danger" according to a telex message from the missionaries.

Other reports indicated that at least two persons had died in fighting during the coup on the Caribbean Island.

Baptists, other groups object to lobby disclosure bills

WASHINGTON (BP)—Lobby disclosure legislation came under attack from representatives of religious groups during a hearing of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Administrative Law and Governmental Relations.

James E. Wood Jr., executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, told the subcommittee that the "major concern" of the Baptist Joint Committee about lobby disclosure bills is that "they fail to exclude bona fide religious organizations from coverage."

Wood pointed out that "involvement of the church in public affairs is an inescapable responsibility of the church" for many religious organizations.

He also noted that the proposed legislation would "unconstitutionally mandate excessive entanglement of government with religion." The requirements to register and report to the government would be unconstitutional regardless of the extent of

reporting required, Wood said.

Also objecting to the inclusion of churches in such legislation were the United Methodist Division of Human Relations, the Lutheran Council Office for Governmental Affairs in the U.S.A., and the United Church of Christ Office for Church in Society.

Six measures on lobby disclosure have been introduced in the House of Representatives. None has been introduced in the Senate.

HR 81, introduced in the House by U.S. Reps. Peter W. Rodino Jr., (N.J.), and George Danielson, (Cal.), is identical to the one that passed the Judiciary Committee last year. It would cover any organization that spends at least \$2,500 a quarter on lobbying or employs at least one individual who lobbies for a specified number of days in each three-month period.

HR 1979, introduced by U.S. Rep. Tom Railsback, (Ill.), contains a provision for the disclosure of names of major contributors. That provision, which passed the House last year, met with strong opposition from many sources.

Annuity Board launches campaign to strengthen protection program

DALLAS (BP)—An endowment thrust to raise \$25 million by 1988 to further protection of Southern Baptist annuitants, has been launched by the Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Darold H. Morgan, board president, said

the campaign represents a new way for the board to acquire funds to undergird its protection programs.

B.J. Chenault, a senior vice president directing the newly created endowment department, will head the campaign, using "Project: Partnership" as the theme.

During the next decade, the new department hopes to accomplish three major objectives, Morgan said: 1. stabilize protection plan reserves during volatile investment times; 2. assure an annual "14th Check" for extra benefits for board annuitants where annuities are very small; 3. help smaller churches in pioneer areas enroll their ministers in board programs.

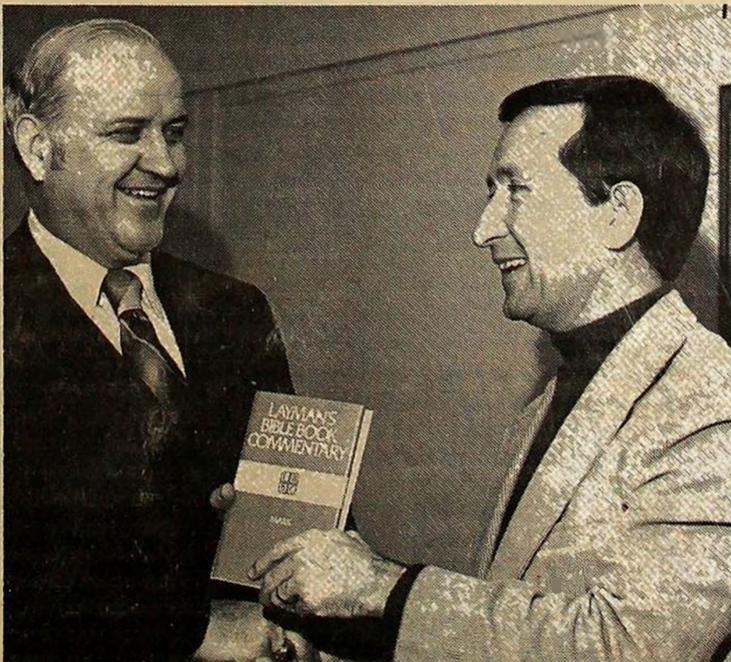
"Our main concern in this endowment emphasis is to have enough earnings to be able to share equitably a supplemental income with our annuitants," explains Morgan. "We will call it a '14th Check.' It can help as we face the continual problems of inflation and the reduction of fixed incomes."

The board, during times of good investment experience, has issued a "13th Check" above the regular monthly checks to annuitants.

Morgan said investment earnings at the Annuity Board can never be used to accomplish these type goals. This is why the endowment department was begun.

Under Chenault, the endowment department will pursue gift annuities, trusts, estates, wills, and other endowment sources.

The department will seek help through Annuity Board trustees, the agency's 17 field representatives, annuitants, ministers, laymen, agencies, state conventions, state foundations, and other key SBC personnel.



SECOND VOLUME—The Broadman's Layman's Bible Book Commentary on the Gospel of Mark, written by Johnnie Godwin (right), has been released as the second of the 24-volume set. Dessel Aderholt, director of Broadman division for the Sunday School Board, presents the first copy to Godwin. The commentary series is to be completed by July 1984.

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NEWS INTERPRETATION—Part 3

Belmont Plaza: possibilities and problems

By Al Shackelford

A special Tennessee Baptist Convention—the first in 104 years—has been called by the TBC Executive Board to consider the financial crisis of Belmont Plaza, a 123-unit high-rise apartment for senior adults in Nashville.

The issue to be faced by messengers to that significant session will be how to solve the financial plight of the project, which was completed on Feb. 1, 1979. The facility is ready for occupancy; a few prospective residents have paid a reservation fee; the Tennessee Baptist Service Corporation is eager to operate its first TBSC-owned facility—but the absence of operating funds has caused the eight-story, beautiful brick structure to sit idle.

Wade Darby, TBSC executive director, has asked that the Service Corporation be given a \$1.5-million letter of credit from the state convention and the assurance that Belmont Plaza will be provided a minimum of \$100,000 per year from the TBC Cooperative Program budget, beginning in November 1979. He says that these amounts are necessary to make Belmont Plaza functional.

The calling of a special state convention is necessary because messengers to the 1974 TBC established a \$5-million debt ceiling on the Tennessee Baptist Service Corporation. Bonds for that amount were issued in March 1977. Only the state convention in session has the power to extend that debt ceiling above the limit it has set.

According to the motion passed by the Executive Board in a called meeting Feb. 22, 1979, the April 5 called state convention is "for the express purpose of dealing with the present problems of Belmont Plaza." The board has also voted to recommend to the called convention that the TBSC debt ceiling be raised an additional \$1.5-million.

The announcement of the special convention has drawn wide discussion across the state about Belmont Plaza specifically and the Service Corporation in general.

In order to provide a background for the convention session, the Baptist and Reflector is presenting a series of News Interpretation articles. The first one dealt with the study and discussion which led to the formation of the Tennessee Baptist Service Corporation in 1974. The second article focused on various TBSC projects.

This week, a look at Belmont Plaza.

Apparently the first official mention of a retirement facility adjacent to Belmont College in Nashville came at a Feb. 2, 1973, meeting of the Ministry to the Aging Study Subcommittee. That group was named from the program committee of the TBC Executive Board, to which the 1972 TBC had referred a motion concerning starting a ministry to senior citizens.

P.O. Davidson, pastor of Frayser Baptist Church in Memphis, was chairman of the subcommittee. Davidson reported to the subcommittee's first meeting on Feb. 13, 1973, that he had had a conversation with Herbert Gabhart, president of Belmont College, during which Gabhart envisioned the possibility of some businessmen purchasing land between the college and Belmont Heights Baptist Church on which to build condominium-type apartments for the elderly. Davidson reported that Gabhart had stated that this venture would not involve the Tennessee Baptist Convention financially. No action was taken by the subcommittee.

The subcommittee held an open meeting on all aspects of ministry to the aging on June 25-26, 1973, with about 30 interested individuals attending. Out of that meeting, a special nine-member Ministries to the Aging Committee was named to formulate recommendations to the program committee.

This committee met July 23, 1973, and, among other actions, approved a motion by Harold Gregory, then director of missions for Nashville Baptist Association, that the "Tennessee Baptist Convention authorize the building of a facility for the aged based upon a feasibility study which will indicate the resources available, and that meanwhile our Baptist people be encouraged to make contributions for the erection of such a facility using the Tennessee Baptist Foundation as the repository of their gifts." There is no mention in the minutes of that meeting where this facility might be located.

This feasibility study was approved by the program committee for recommendation to the Executive Board; approved by the board for recommendation to the 1973 state convention; and approved by messengers to that convention.

Meanwhile, the Executive Board had established its own Committee on Aging, composed of nine members (six from the Ministries to the Aging Committee who were on the Executive Board and three other board members).

This committee on Aging at its Nov. 27, 1973 meeting voted to request \$15,000 from the 1972-73 Cooperative Program overage to finance the feasibility study. The request was granted by the Executive Board at its December 1973 meeting.

During 1974, the Committee on Aging met several times, discussing a number of possible sites on which to develop facilities. However, no location in the Belmont College area was among these.

The Tennessee Baptist Service Corporation was officially organized at the 1974 Tennessee Baptist Convention when the messengers approved the charter and program statement and elected a 15-member Board of Directors for the corporation.

When the TBSC directors held their first meeting on Dec. 2, 1974, Gabhart met with the group and discussed the possibility of locating a retirement facility on property which might be secured at 18th and Acklen streets on the east side of the campus. According to the minutes of that meeting, there was some discussion of the proposal, but no action was taken.

Belmont offers property

The directors met again on Feb. 2, 1975, and heard a proposal from two architects, Bill Gregg and Earl Swensson, for a 60-70 unit high-rise facility on the property. On March 4, 1975, the trustees of Belmont College agreed to deed the property to the Service Corpora-

tion for construction of the senior adult facility, if the facility would also provide space for the college's administrative offices in the structure.

On April 3, 1975, the TBSC directors reviewed various projects under consideration—including Belmont Plaza. The directors were told that the founders' fees were to be \$10,000 to \$15,000 and the monthly maintenance fees \$185 to \$260, depending on the size of the apartments.

The discussion continued at the June 17, 1975, meeting of the TBSC directors. The proposal now was for a 15-story building (with one floor exclusively for Belmont College offices) with 140 units and office space for the Service Corporation. However, when the TBSC executive committee met the following week, they were told that including the Belmont College offices in the facility could cause a difficulty in securing zoning.

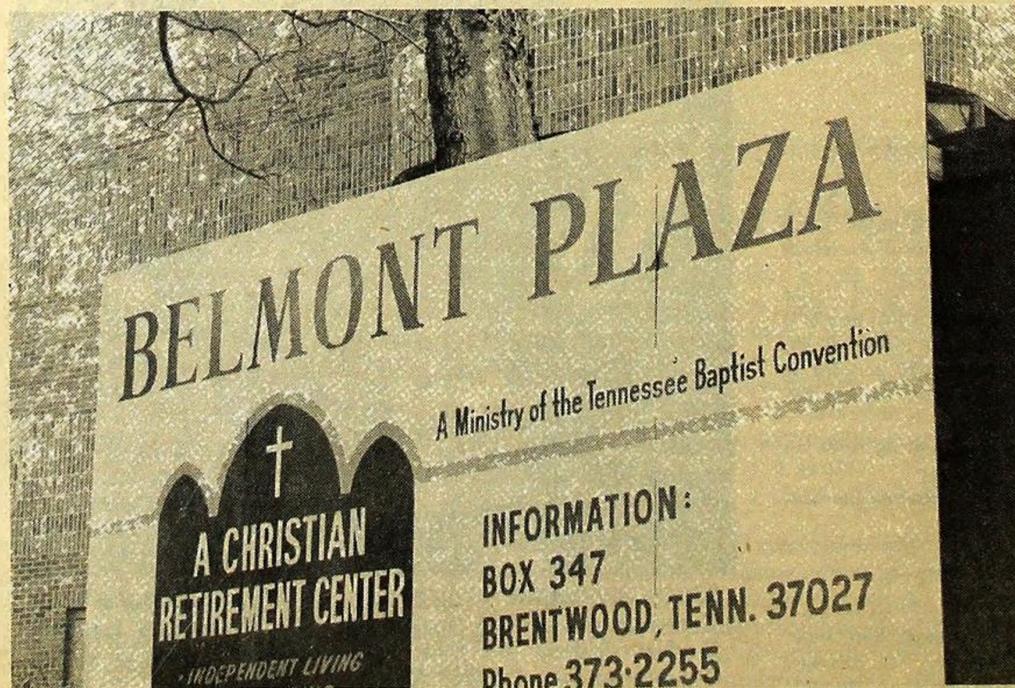
The TBSC directors next met Aug. 7-8, 1975. At this session, they voted to make an offer to Belmont College to purchase the property it owned on Magnolia, under the condition that proper zoning, financing, and the pre-sale of 40 units could be accomplished. Belmont College would purchase an additional lot from a private owner to include in the package.

On Oct. 21, 1975, the TBSC directors learned that Belmont College had made an offer to the individual for the lot. They also voted to employ Earl Swensson Architects as architect for the project. This was confirmed at a March 4, 1976, meeting when the TBSC directors authorized \$18,000 for Swensson to proceed with preliminary plans. Two weeks later (March 18, 1976) the directors approved preliminary designs and layout from Swensson, and also authorized TBSC to file for zoning of the property as a senior adult facility.

Two authorizations approved

The Board of Directors met again on May 27, 1976, and passed two important motions concerning the Belmont Plaza project. (1) They authorized J.C. Bradford and Company to market \$5-million in bonds to finance construction of the facility at a 5.5 percent fee. (2) They authorized the architect to proceed with plans, upon completion of the feasibility study.

One feasibility study was authorized by the TBSC directors on July 6, 1976. The study was to be performed by Dave Clark at a cost not to exceed \$4,000. At the same meeting, the directors authorized core drillings and that Swensson be given an additional advance of up to \$15,000 to continue drawing the plans.



RELATIONSHIP—The sign in front of Belmont Plaza states it is "A Ministry of the Tennessee Baptist Convention."

In its report to the 1976 Tennessee Baptist Convention, the Service Corporation stated, "Belmont Plaza will be adjacent to Belmont College and will consist of 123 units, 6 infirmary beds, and space adequate for crafts, recreation, food service, and religious activities. Residents will pay a founders fee at entrance and a monthly maintenance fee. These amounts, which will be no more than is necessary to maintain, manage, and pay for the facility, are in study at the present" (1976 Annual, page 191).

The big step in the development of Belmont Plaza came at the TBSC Board of Directors' meeting on Dec. 2, 1976, when the construction contract was awarded to Joe M. Rodgers and Associates. Their bid was \$2,775,000. With a 10 percent contingency fund added, the total building cost was estimated at \$3,052,500.

Other costs counted

In addition, there would be an estimated \$180,000 in other costs for such items as storm drainage, carpeting, testing, landscaping, and code requirements. Other costs related to the construction were estimated at \$164,700 for architectural fees and \$145,000 for the property.

Other anticipated expenses which would be charged against the \$5-million bond issue would be consultant fees, feasibility studies, drapes, furnishings, kitchen equipment, construction loan fee, broker fees, bond fees, legal expenses, interest paid on bonds between the time of sale and the time of closing, sales expense, and on-site owner's representative.

The total project budget was estimated at \$5.3-million.

Construction time was estimated at 14 months.

The directors voted to accept Rodgers' bid, subject to the sale of the bonds.

When the TBSC directors met on Feb. 4, 1977, the Belmont Plaza project was near finalization. Gene Kerr, TBSC executive director, reported that the purchase of the property had been completed. Another feasibility study, this one by Goodman and Company of Norfolk, Va., had been completed. Murray Hatcher of J.C. Bradford and Company reported that the "time is right" to market the bonds.

Several actions were taken by the directors at this meeting concerning the project. They asked Rodgers to extend his bid for 30 days until financial conditions could be worked out. They named Third National Bank of Nashville to provide the construction loan, with long-term financing through bonds to be issued by Bradford. They authorized the signing of the architect's contract with Swensson and Associates.

Expenses, fees questioned

Hamilton Traylor, a director from Maryville, raised a question concerning expected operating expense, to which Darby replied that a thorough study was being made concerning food services, utilities, contingencies, etc.

Traylor also questioned the proposed founders fees and maintenance fees, and asked, "Can we get these fees?" Darby responded that the marketing studies say "yes." Gaye McGlothen, a director from Nashville, noted that the units "were harder to sell than we first thought" but added that these fees are comparable to other such facilities in the area.

Darby also reported that a residents' agreement was being prepared, and would be submitted for approval to the full Board of Directors.

The bonds were issued March 1, 1977, by J.C. Bradford and Company through the

(Continued on page 5)

Belmont Plaza

(Continued from page 4)

Health and Educational Facilities Board of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County. This board would officially own the facility until it is paid off in A.D. 2004, at which time it would be sold for \$1 to the TBSC. During these 28 years, the TBSC would operate and manage the facility under a lease.

Kerr told the board's executive committee on April 1, 1977, that 95 percent of the bonds had already been sold.

Groundbreaking ceremonies were held on the site April 17, 1977.

Fees, cost announced

As construction began, so did the effort to sell the units. Promotional materials were printed, announcing the founders fees and monthly fees. These ranged from a one-room studio unit with a founders fee of \$20,000 for one person (\$21,500 for two persons) and a monthly fee of \$565 for one person (\$715 for two persons) to three-room apartment with a founders fee of \$34,500 for one person (\$37,500 for two persons) and a monthly fee of \$700 for one person (\$850 for two persons).

Fees were set at these amounts in order to pay off the bonds and provide services for residents.

Over 100 of the units in Belmont Plaza would be of the studio type.

If withdrawal, death, or dismissal should occur within the first 90 days, the founders fee would be returned, except for \$500. No refund would be made if death occurs after the first 90 days. If withdrawal or dismissal occurs within the first 24 months of residency, an amount equal to 2 percent of the founders fee for each month under 24 months would be refunded. After 24 months of residency, no refund of any amount would be made.

Completion date was expected by Oct. 1, 1978.

In the summer of 1978, model units were open for public inspection, and an advertising campaign was launched through Nashville-area media. Darby later reported that nearly 400 people toured the facility.

Construction delays during 1978 moved completion of construction to Jan. 1, 1979, and the facility was officially completed on Feb. 1, 1979.

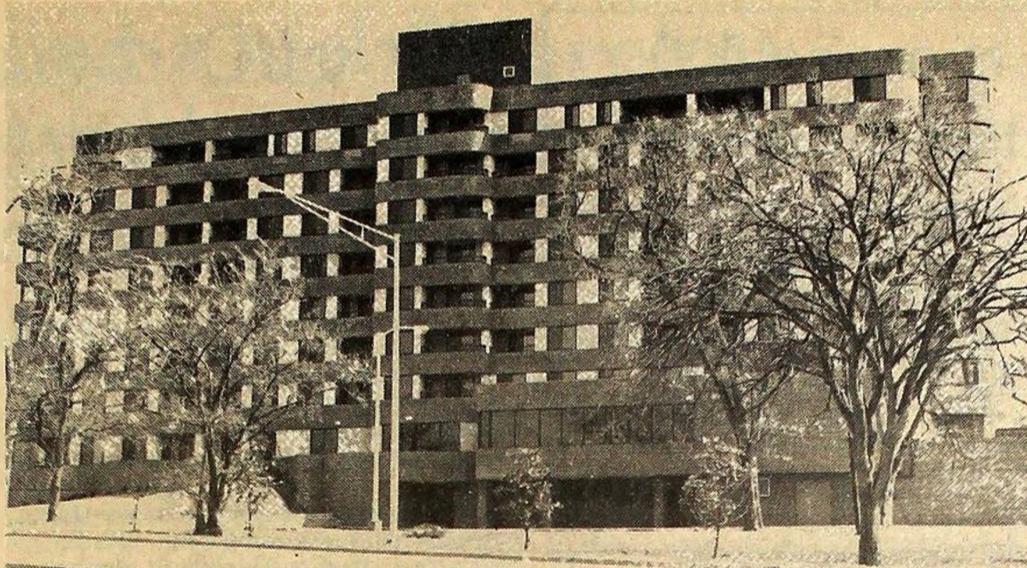
Problems discovered

The first indication of the seriousness of Belmont Plaza's financial plight seems to have come during the second week in November 1978—less than seven weeks prior to the then expected completion—when Darby reported that he examined the various documents related to the project and discovered that there was no provision for operating funds.

No mention of this problem was made during the Service Corporation's report to the 1978 Tennessee Baptist Convention which met the following week.

The TBSC written report (which was printed in the Book of Reports and will be printed in the 1978 Annual) stated: "One project, Belmont Plaza, is a 123-unit high-rise for those 62 years old and above. It is located at 1710 Magnolia Blvd. in Nashville and joins the Belmont College property. Belmont Plaza is not an apartment house nor a nursing home. It is a congregate care facility and is designed for people who no longer want or need to live alone, yet they do not need hospital or nursing home care. At Belmont Plaza the resident has an individual apartment and continues an independent lifestyle, but is surrounded by services which are designed to keep one out of a nursing home as long as possible. A maid will clean each apartment weekly, a nurse will be on call, an attendant will be on duty at a central desk at all times, the two big meals per day will be served in a beautiful and spacious dining room, and many activities featuring fellowship and recreation will be available. Billy Puryear, the administrator, is living in the facility now and demonstration units can be seen at the site."

The first public announcement of the financial plight of Belmont Plaza came when



DECISION—Messengers to the special called session of the Tennessee Baptist Convention will consider the future use of Belmont Plaza, which was intended to provide housing for senior adults.

Darby spoke to the Dec. 12, 1978, meeting of the TBC Executive Board.

Darby told the board that he and the TBSC Board of Directors had understood that income from the bond sale would provide operating capital for up to 18 months. He noted that because of the way the feasibility study and bond indenture were written, "we were in serious financial condition from the first and didn't know it." (See Baptist and Reflector, Dec. 21, 1978).

Alternatives offered

The TBSC executive director told the Executive Board that the project's financial plans could be written so that a part of the founders fee and maintenance fee might be used for operating expense. If this were agreeable to two-thirds of the bond holders, the facility could open as planned.

Darby met with the Executive Board's Christian service committee on Feb. 2, 1979, and explained that in order for Belmont Plaza to become a reality and fulfill its intended purpose, the Service Corporation needed a \$1.5-million letter of credit from the state convention and the assurance of a minimum of \$100,000 per year from the TBC's Cooperative Program budget. He also explained that the units were difficult to market because the facility contained no nursing home facilities.

Operating capital

A search of the minutes of the Tennessee Baptist Service Corporation and the TBC Executive Board produces very few references to operating capital for Belmont Plaza—or any other proposed TBSC project, for that matter. There were no indications of what funds would be needed for operation and management, and no mention of how these funds would be secured—apart from an occasional reference that the facility would be self-supporting.

Certainly, there was no mention in the bond sale prospectus that proceeds from the sale would be used for operating capital for up to 18 months.

Totals of operating expenses and income for that purpose is contained in the "financial statement" (feasibility study) which was prepared by Goodman and Company and distributed with the bond sale prospectus.

The financial statement, which was prepared Nov. 22, 1976, assumed that the project would be in operation by Oct. 1, 1978. It assumed that 36 of the 123 units would be occupied during this period, resulting in approximately \$68,000 in maintenance fees during the three months. It also anticipated \$17,000 in "earned foundation fees," which would supposedly come from the non-refundable portion of previously paid founders fees when the resident died or left the facility. There was also a projected income of \$9,000 from interest to the founders fees placed in the debt service reserve fund. The total anticipated income for the three months would be \$94,000.

Operating expenses for the three-month

period of 1978 were projected at \$92,000.

However, the bond sale prospectus requires that ALL Belmont Plaza receipts from EVERY source were to go into a reserve account at the trustee bank. No money could be taken out of that account, except to pay off bonds and interest, until the reserve account reached \$1,250,000.

Therefore, no operating capital whatsoever would be available from fees until about 50 percent of the founders fees had been collected. This was a tremendous protection for the bond holder, but it provided no capital for operation until the program was well established.

The proposal that the bond indenture and financial statement be rewritten to permit the use of a portion of the income from founders fees and maintenance fees for operating expense has been delayed by J.C. Bradford and Company, until the action of the special state convention on April 5.

Nursing home facilities

The announcement that the units of Belmont Plaza are not marketable without nursing home facilities also provides an interesting study of the history of Belmont Plaza.

The TBSC directors are now proposing that one wing of the facility be converted into a nursing home for residents of Belmont Plaza—and according to a recent statement, for the residents of Deer Lake Retirement Village.

Shortly after the Tennessee Baptist Service Corporation was organized in 1974, the directors retained the services of John Vanderbeck and Richard Hanson of National Housing Services, Valley Forge, Pa. (formerly American Baptist Service Corporation) as consultants.

The proposal for Belmont Plaza was shared with Vanderbeck as preliminary plans were being drawn. He suggested that a 10-12 bed nursing home facility be included in the building, or that arrangements be made for Belmont Plaza to use a nearby nursing home. Both of these suggestions were discussed, and investigation was made into using the nursing home facilities of nearby Trevecca Towers, but the TBSC minutes do not indicate that any formal action was ever taken.

Discussion recorded in the minutes would seem to indicate that the directors, during the planning stages, felt that the operation of the nursing home would be too costly.

The present proposal to convert one wing of Belmont Plaza into a nursing home facility for residents would involve some construction expense, but Darby is not sure at this point what this would cost. Because of state requirements, the hall would have to be widened from its present 6 feet to 8 feet, and wider doors on these rooms would have to be installed.

Darby has indicated that the minimum of \$100,000 per year he has requested would be used to provide for nursing home costs for Belmont Plaza residents.

Conclusion

The building for Belmont Plaza has been completed. It is a beautiful, functional structure, well-designed to accomplish the purpose for which it was intended.

Belmont Plaza is the first facility for senior adults which has been built and is owned by the Tennessee Baptist Convention. As you noted from last week's News Interpretation, this facility was to be one of several envisioned by the Tennessee Baptist Service Corporation to provide a wide variety of housing ministries for retirees. The other projects have encountered various difficulties, so the attention of Tennessee Baptists has become focused on Belmont Plaza.

When Tennessee Baptists began to consider their involvement in a ministry for senior citizens, several statements were made that no Cooperative Program funds would be used for such facilities. This was understood (or misunderstood) to mean that the TBSC would not receive Cooperative Program funds.

In its first annual report to the state convention (1975 Annual, page 167), the Service Corporation stated: "It is the aim of the institution to establish facilities on a self-supporting basis. The needs are too great to expect the Cooperative Program to provide funds for construction of facilities, and additional fund raising campaigns in the churches would not be desirable. However, until such time as projects are established and in operation, it will be necessary for the Cooperative Program to provide operating funds for a state office and administrative staff."

In fact, in December 1974 the TBC Executive Board voted to transfer \$46,699 in the 1974-75 state convention budget from the office of assistant to the executive secretary (Gene Kerr) to the Tennessee Baptist Service Corporation (1975 Annual, page 108).

The TBSC has been included in the state convention budget since that time: \$67,188 in the 1975-76 budget (1975 Annual, page 117); \$72,563 in the 1976-77 budget (1976 Annual, page 99); \$89,696 in the 1977-78 budget (1977 Annual, page 119); and \$98,015 in the 1978-79 budget (Baptist and Reflector, Oct. 12, 1978, page 13).

In addition, the TBC Executive Board allocated \$25,000 to the TBSC from the overage to the 1976-77 budget (Baptist and Reflector, Dec. 22, 1977, page 1), and \$10,000 to the TBSC from the overage of the 1977-78 budget (Baptist and Reflector, Dec. 21, 1978, page 1).

The TBC Executive Board has authorized \$100,000 in interest-free loans to a ministry to the aging. The first of these \$50,000 loans was granted by the board on May 14, 1974 (before the Service Corporation was organized) as "seed money" to begin development of Holly Oaks Retirement Village near Dandridge, (1974 Annual, page 103). The second \$50,000 loan to the TBSC was approved by the Executive Board on Dec. 13, 1974 (1975 Annual, page 108).

But that's history.

From the perspective of hindsight based on the past five years, it would appear that Tennessee Baptists asked their leaders to accomplish the impossible—to establish housing facilities for senior adults without any assets, any collateral, and the credit and name of the state convention to guarantee loans for construction.

On April 5 at the special called session of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, the messengers must decide whether or not the state convention is ready and willing to put their mission gifts through the Cooperative Program to provide housing facilities for senior adults. If this is true, the state convention has an outstanding structure at Belmont Plaza to begin that ministry.

However, if the messengers decide that such a facility and the ministry it could provide is too costly, other arrangements will have to be made to sell or to transfer the facility.

That is the decision which must be faced April 5.

Brazil flood toll reaches 500, funds, construction needed

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—What may be the worst flood in Brazilian history has now claimed 500 lives—four of them Baptists—and devastated at least six Brazilian states. Southern Baptists continue to respond, but more help will be needed, the Foreign Mission Board reports.

"The situation is not as bleak as I had feared, but it's worse than I had hoped," said Fred L. Hawkins Jr., Southern Baptist missionary in Brazil and coordinator of Baptist relief efforts there. Hawkins toured part of

the area stricken by 47 days of persistent rain that left 300,000 homeless and damaged 100 Baptist churches. No details were given on the four Baptists reported dead.

"Government and religious agencies have responded well with food, medicine, and used clothing, but nobody has much hope for funds to help the families resettle," said Hawkins. After an appeal through the Texas Baptist newspaper, the Baptist Standard, two teams of Texas Baptist men are being mobilized to help in reconstruction.

One team of up to six volunteers will repair a church and pastor's home in Governador Valadares. Another six-man team will completely rebuild a church in Aimores, both in the hardest hit state of Minas Gerais.

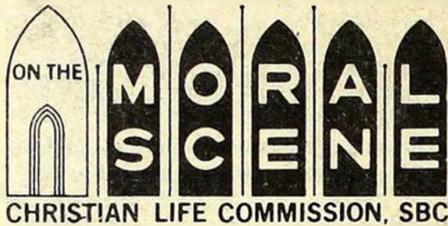
The Foreign Mission Board gave \$95,000 in hunger funds to meet emergency needs. Missionaries requested \$285,000 for disaster relief in south Brazil, but the board could only grant \$120,836 in general relief. The board also granted a separate allocation of \$20,000 for flood relief in north Brazil. The requests virtually depleted the general relief account.

"While funds were depleted, we were able to meet the bulk of the demand for the crisis of hunger and disaster relief," said Cheyne. "This situation emphasizes the critical need for general relief funds."

Rivers rose as much as 30 inches in a few hours and left water marks six feet above street level. While many were able to evacuate, thousands were trapped in homes or businesses. Communications, highways, utilities and railroads were washed out. In one normally dry region, adobe houses were no more than piles of sludge.

In northern Goias, the area most recently hit, a Baptist orphanage collapsed after its 65 children were evacuated. Supplies were lost. For several days the children were without food, and were forced to kill and eat a milk cow. As waters receded, 30 of the children contracted fevers and other ailments.

In Cristalia, 44 church families were left homeless, cut off from outside help. Prices for existing food skyrocketed.



CHEAPER SOLAR ENERGY PROMISED

—"If a Michigan scientist-inventor is right—and the scientific community thinks he is—relatively inexpensive solar energy could be available in many American houses within five years. Stanford R. Ovshinsky, president of Energy Conversion Devices, Inc., announced in a late November press conference that he could produce thin sheets of solar cells capable of converting sunlight into electricity with an efficiency of 10 percent. According to the Department of Energy, 10 percent conversion efficiency is the threshold point at which devices become commercial. Ovshinsky predicted that his solar cell material—an alloy of silicon, flourine, and a little hydrogen—could be installed on house roofs and provide power at an amortized cost of five cents per kilowatt-hour, roughly what consumers currently pay for electricity in the U.S."

(Sojourners, January 1979)

OMENS FOR TOMORROW, THE VANISHING ELECTORATE—"Voter turnout in 1978 was the lowest ever in proportion to those eligible to vote. The level of voter participation in the U.S. is lower than in any democracy in the world save Botswana, a newly independent desert country in Africa. The downward drift is shown in the past five Presidential elections: in 1960, 60.9% of eligibles went to the polls; 1964, 61.9%; 1968, 60.9%; 1972, 55.5%; and 1976, 54.4%. Midterm elections have a lower rate: 1966, 45.4%; 1970, 43.5%; 1974, 36.1%; and 1978, 34%. By comparison, 74% voted in the latest Canadian elections, 82% in France and 91% in West Germany. Other figures assembled by the Committee for the Study of the American Electorate are: During the past 10 years, fully 15-million Americans who once voted dropped out of the political process. Nearly 70-million eligibles failed to vote for president in 1970, and more than 100-million in the 1974 Congressional races. President Carter was elected by fewer than 28% of Americans eligible to vote. (The Washington Spectator, Feb. 15, 1979)

AS AMERICAN AS JESSE JAMES—"Criminal violence, Charles Silberman tells us in his important new book, Criminal Violence, Criminal Justice (Random House, \$15), is 'as American as Jesse James.' Silberman wants to change the way Americans think about crime, criminals, and criminal justice, and he just may do that. He certainly makes one think. For instance, he asserts—and documents his case—that: Almost everyone who persists in crime for any length of time is caught and goes to prison. A larger proportion of felons is now incarcerated than in the 1920s. The guilty rarely escape punishment in criminal court. Plea bargaining has been dominant means of settling criminal cases for the last century, and it works. Putting more police on the streets will not reduce crime."

(National Labor Service, February, 1979)

Work in small Kansas town changes heart of seminarian

CHANUTE, Kans. (BP)—R. Dale Webb went to the southeastern Kansas community of Chanute to earn two hours of seminary credit in exchange for a week of meetings and guided tours. It was as simple as that.

But halfway through the "Town and Country Exposure Program" for seminary students in the Kansas City area, Webb said the annual course helped make him "real again."

"Too many times in seminary you're taken out of the real world," said Webb, a student at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. "Seminary people sometimes become like laboratory animals. This is like making you real again."

During the January program, 16 students from four Kansas City area seminaries visited Chanute businesses and met with community leaders.

The program began three years ago "to see what a town is made up of, to see how those persons related to the life of the church," according to Fred E. Young, dean at Central Seminary of the American Baptist Convention.

The fact that nearly half of the churches in the Baptist conventions are small, with 300 or fewer members, prompted creation of the program. "We've got to provide leadership in those kinds of settings," Young said. "We've got to have the cooperation of the community. We can't go it alone."

Chanute, population 10,000, supports the program. Churches from each seminary's denomination have provided meeting places for seminars and lodging for students. Local businesses have opened their doors for tours. And the media have published and broadcast stories about the program.

As Chanute learned about the seminarians, the seminarians were learning about the people of Chanute.

Following a cement plant tour Webb observed: "There is one guy loading 98-pound bags of cement onto a flatbed truck—eight hours a day. There was another guy out

shoveling gravel with the wind chill at 15 below in the snow. That's a pretty hard way to make a living."

As a direct result of his observations Webb was convinced it is necessary for the pastor to know what his people do and to learn where they hurt. However, Webb noted that motivating the congregation might be difficult because most persons are primarily interested in earning a living.

Webb, himself a smalltown native of Waynesville, N.C., plans to return to his native state and minister in a small town. He noted that he originally came to Chanute for what seemed to be an easy two hours of credit. The experience changed his perspective.

"That (the hours) was the primary reason for me signing up," he said, "but it turned out to be secondary. This is telling me things that I maybe forgot."

Miami student 'roped' into missions effort

MIAMI, Fla. (BP)—Clarence Harris is a candidate for the "Guinness Book of Records." It's something the 21-year-old junior biology major at the University of Miami sort of got roped into. Feb. 24 he ran a 10-mile "rope-athon" to raise \$10,000 in 56 minutes to support students in summer mission projects in five states, England, Korea, and Bangladesh.

So far as he knows, no one ever has attempted to run any long distance while jumping rope.

Georgia Baptist review faculties, postpone executive's retirement

ATLANTA (BP)—Trustee responsibility at Baptist schools, retirement policies and salary packages highlighted the spring meeting at the Georgia Baptist Convention's Executive Committee.

In a series of actions, the committee addressed itself to trustee autonomy and hiring non-Baptists by Baptist schools, extended the retirement date of its executive secretary-treasurer, and raised salary of professional employees by 10 percent of base salary and 2 percent of housing allowance.

The committee also elected Edward R. Davie of Atlanta as the first fulltime black person on its administrative staff in the convention's 157-year history. Davie, named secretary of the program of work with National (Black) Baptists to succeed Earle F. Stirewalt, who retired Feb. 1, has been an associate in the department for 17 years.

Fort named president of student directors

OKLAHOMA CITY, Okla. (BP)—Sam Fort of the Northwest Baptist Convention, Portland, Ore., has been elected president of the State Baptist Student Directors Association.

The organization is made up of state directors of student work in each of the 34 state Baptist conventions and three fellowships which cover Southern Baptist work in all 50 states. Southern Baptists have student work on more than 1,100 campuses across the U.S.

The Georgia committee approved a long statement spelling out the principle of trustee autonomy for Baptist schools and urged the school trustees to "be sensitive to their stewardship to the convention and to Baptist objectives in establishing and supporting colleges."

The statement also acknowledged that trustee and college administrators "will, at times, be unable to employ Baptists with expertise to meet all the objectives of the colleges."

However, the statement asks that when Baptists are not available, Georgia Baptist schools employ "persons of character, ideals, and personal commitment consistent with the purpose of the college and the purpose of Baptists in supporting Christian education institutions."

The statement grew out of controversy at the 1977 and 1978 annual sessions of the Georgia Baptist Convention, revolving around motions that would have required colleges to hire Baptists only and that we have forced colleges to publish religious affiliations of all professors in the state Baptist paper, the Christian Index.

On the retirement question, the executive committee approved a motion allowing Executive Secretary-Treasurer Searcy S. Garrison to continue in office until the end of 1982, when he becomes 70 years old, if he so desires.

Current Georgia Baptist policy forces retirement at 68. Garrison, now 66, has been executive secretary-treasurer since January 1955.

HISTORICALLY FROM THE FILES

50 YEARS AGO

Hollow Rock Baptist Church at Hollow Rock was not defeated by a recent storm which wrecked the building from its foundation. Earlier the church suffered damages from a cyclone. Plans were to erect a modern plant. C.C. Sledd was pastor.

E. Floyd Olive resigned as pastor of Park Avenue Baptist Church, Nashville. He had accepted the position of missionary evangelist under the administrative committee of the Executive Board of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

25 YEARS AGO

Leon Crider resigned as pastor of Greenlaw Baptist Church, Memphis, and accepted Woodland Baptist Church near Jackson.

King Thetford was the new pastor of New Salem Baptist Church, Mason Hall. He served formerly as pastor of Adamsville Baptist Church.

10 YEARS AGO

First Church, Greeneville, called Raymond Langlois as pastor. A native of Nashville, Langlois returned to Tennessee from Columbus, Ohio, where he was state director of Training Union and Baptist Student Union.

David Irby, a member of the staff of Union University, Jackson, since 1964 was named dean of religious affairs by the Board of Trustees. Robert E. Craig was president of Union.

Our People and Our Churches . . .

PEOPLE...

Phillip Little was licensed to the gospel ministry by Fairview Baptist Church in Nashville earlier this month. Marion E. Smith is pastor.

Brainerd Baptist Church in Chattanooga licensed Dalen Jackson to the gospel ministry recently. The son of Mr. and Mrs. Murl Jackson, he is presently working toward his undergraduate degree and plans to enter seminary. Winford L. Hendrix is pastor at Brainerd.

Mr. and Mrs. Romie Tignor, East Park Baptist Church, Memphis, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on March 17. They were honored at a reception in the church's dining room. Wayne Allen is pastor at East Park.

Belle Aire Baptist Church in Murfreesboro ordained Bill Taylor, Duane Free, and Billy Underhill as deacons. Joe Elliott is pastor.

William G. Wilson, minister of youth at Bluegrass Baptist Church in Hendersonville, has been selected to serve as camp pastor for the Centrifuge program at Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center, Ridgecrest, N.C., this summer. The program is a week-long youth camping experience, sponsored by the church recreation department of the Baptist Sunday

Personal perspective

BY TOM MADDEN
TBC executive secretary

A Baptist leader of another generation is reported to have said, "Baptist are many, but not much." I would agree readily that we do not do as much for our Lord as we should, but I recently read some news about our Home Mission effort that was most encouraging. I would like to share some of it with you.

During 1978, 756 church-type missions were organized. These, added to the 1800 established in 1977, means that, on the average, more than three a day have been started for the last two years. Most of these will become fully organized churches in the near future. They will make a considerable impact for Christ's cause.



Madden

Southern Baptists have averaged baptizing 1,000 persons a day for the last 25 years.

During the past year, a Southern Baptist ministry of some kind was begun in nearly 100 counties that previously had no Southern Baptist work.

Here in Tennessee, we have had a church in 94 of the 95 county seat towns. Last month a work was started in the 95th county seat—Lynchburg in Moore County.

Every week Southern Baptists preach and teach the gospel in 38 different languages in the United States.

Student summer missionaries numbered 1,446, and 21,671 lay persons were involved in volunteer short-term mission projects.

During the month of March, our Southern Baptist people are attempting to raise \$15 million through the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering. The goal for Tennessee Baptists is \$900,000.00. I know you will want to have a part in this worthy offering for Home Missions.

School Board. Wilson is the son of Bill Wilson, pastor of Brentwood Baptist Church. The younger Wilson is a student at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, where he is pursuing the master of divinity degree.

LEADERSHIP...

First Baptist Church in Maryville called Bill Blevins as interim pastor this month. Blevins, professor of religion at Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, received his undergraduate degree from that institution. He also earned the master of divinity degree from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville; the doctor of theology from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans, La.; and the doctor of education in counseling psychology from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville.

Louise Dixon resigned as minister of preschool and children at Two Rivers Baptist Church in Nashville to accept the call of Briarlake Baptist Church in Decatur, Ga. where she will serve as minister of children's education. She served as Two Rivers' first full-time minister to preschool and children. The church has been without a pastor since the resignation of Jim Henry in September 1977.

Bellevue Baptist Church, Nashville, called Richard Shadinger as minister of music. Shadinger is professor of church music at Belmont College, Nashville.

Woodbury Road Baptist Church, Murfreesboro, recently called Earl West as minister of music and youth. Jesse Black was also called as his assistant. Lesley McClure is pastor.

Manley Baptists call new pastor

Manley Baptist Church in Morristown extended a call of ministry to Richard H. Emmert, pastor of First Baptist Church in Seymour. Emmert was scheduled to begin his new ministry on Sunday, March 18.

A native of Knoxville, he earned the B.A. degree from Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City. Following his graduation from that institution, he entered Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville where he earned the master of divinity degree in 1973 and doctor of ministry degree in 1976.

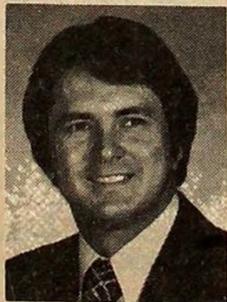
As a student, he was pastor of Richland Baptist Church in Blaine, Tn. and Ryker's Ridge Baptist Church in Madison, Ind.

Brazilian Baptists open mission work in France

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil—Foreign mission strides continue to be made by Brazilian Baptists as they mark the opening of their tenth mission field.

Of 51 Brazilian Baptist missionaries presently serving under the Brazilian Baptist Foreign Mission Board, 25 have been appointed in the last five years—including the latest, Paulo Roberto Soria and family to Paris, France.

The Sorias are the first Brazilian couple to work in a non-Portuguese-speaking country. Although the original request from France was for a couple to work with Portuguese-speaking people, the Sorias have studied one year of French and plan to continue language studies to work also with French-speaking people.



CHURCHES...

Faith Baptist Church, Atoka, completed work on a new educational unit which includes eight classrooms, fellowship hall, and kitchen. Additional work is being done on a pastor's study and library. The work was completed debt free because of financial gifts and time given by the church members. Harry Wilburn is pastor of the church, which is located in Big Hatchie Association.

With a Sunday School attendance of 105 on March 4, the Oral Baptist Church in Lenoir City received over \$9,500 in a special offering to pave the parking lot. Tom Madden, executive secretary-treasurer of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, was the guest speaker. Wade Singletery is pastor.

First Baptist Church of Waynesboro has recently begun another mission—the New Bethel Baptist Mission. Jack Andrews has been called to serve as its first pastor. With the opening of this mission, First church now operates two missions, plus an extension class at a nursing home. According to Norman O. Baker, pastor of the Waynesboro church, the two missions and the extension provide Sunday School for more people outside the church building than the total number attending First Baptist Church.

Retirement ends for Memphis pastor

Retired pastor, W.D. Burke, who has been serving as interim pastor of Cordova Baptist Church, Cordova, for the past several months, has been called as pastor of that church.

Burke retired in March 1978 from the pastorate of Summer Avenue Baptist Church in Memphis, after having served there for over 11 years.

Other churches in Shelby County which have been led by Burke include: Eads, Arlington, Brunswick, and Lucky. He has also served on numerous associational committees and as vice-president of the Baptist Pastors' Conference.

Burke's son, John, is minister of education at Germantown Baptist Church, Germantown. His daughter is Mrs. Jerry Massey, wife of the pastor of Kensington Baptist Church, Memphis.

Tennessee BSU students undertake strenuous spring mission tour

In what Baptist Student Union director Bob Hall calls the largest mid-term mission effort in the history of the University of Tennessee, some 90 students from that institution are spending their spring vacation presenting the gospel through song in seven states.

The three musical groups, Dayspring, the BSU Choir, and the BSU gospel choir, left on March 16 for their individual tours.

Dayspring, a six-member ensemble, is spending the week at Lake Placid, N.Y., the site selected for the 1980 Winter Olympics. In addition to singing before civic organizations and churches in the area, the group will be involved in establishing a Baptist resort ministry for the upcoming olympic year. Home missionary David Book will use the college students in renovating a building which will be used as a missions center during the olympics.

The BSU Choir is singing the gospel this week to midshipmen at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland, and to students at the University of Maryland in College Park. The group is presenting John Fisher's musical, "The New Covenant."

Between performances, the UT students will spend the days working in soup kitchens,

BSU conference set for Mar. 30

Students attending the Tennessee Baptist Student Union Spring Conference in Nashville later this month will be confronted with the problems and issues of world hunger, according to Glenn Yarbrough, director of the convention's student work.

Meeting at the Baptist Sunday School Board's west wing from March 30-April 1, the students will study methods for alleviating the problem of world hunger and will discuss ways they can help.

Glen Stassen, associate professor of Christian ethics, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, will lead the students in this area. Stassen has served as a Baptist pastor in Kentucky and Pennsylvania and has taught religion and philosophy at Duke University in Durham, N.C. and Berea College, Berea, Ky. He was one of the sponsors of the Southern Baptist Conference on Peace, which convened last month in Louisville.

Tennessee students gave \$4,768 toward a program of hunger relief in Bangladesh last year, Yarbrough recalled. The program was sponsored through the National Student Ministries and the Foreign Mission Board.

Leading the students in worship will be Thomas Meigs of Georgetown College (Ky.). Meigs has been college chaplain and assistant professor of religion at the Baptist school in Georgetown since 1975. He holds degrees from Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, and Southern seminary, and has served as a pastor in Kentucky, Florida, and Virginia. Currently, he is a consultant and special worker with NSM in the area of creative worship.

State BSU president Scott Singerman announced that the election of officers would be a major feature of the conference. Nominees for president are Joan Watts of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and Melissa Callison of Vanderbilt University, Nashville.

Sessions will begin on Friday evening at 7:30 and continue through Sunday morning.



Stassen



Meigs

visiting senior adults, remodeling "row" houses, and cleaning neighborhood homes in the inner-city Baltimore area. They will assist Bobby Waddail, BSU director for Metro Baltimore in the work.

Forty-seven members of the BSU's gospel choir are undertaking a 10-day singing tour across Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi. The group will make approximately 25 stops in the 10 days, according to Hall. The theme of their tour is "I Want to See Jesus."

"The theme well describes the energy and excitement of this group's unique brand of gospel music," Hall said. They have been invited to represent the Knoxville BSU at this year's National BSU Retreat in Jackson, Miss., on March 22. They are under the direction of Harold Wheat and Victor Cranford.

Hall told Baptist and Reflector that the BSU puts a strong emphasis on spring missions in order to involve those students who cannot devote an entire summer to various mission projects. "In many ways, spring missions is similar to summer missions," he said. "Students will be changed for life. They will never again be indifferent to the needs of the world."

Devotional

Commitment

By Bill Sorrell

In a society of unspeakable wickedness, God found one man who put his faith and trust in Him. He was Enoch. "Then Enoch walked with God three hundred years after he became the father of Methuselah...and Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him" (Gen. 5:22-24). The fellowship they shared was one of trust and faith. Enoch took a stand; he made a commitment.

We might think of commitment in three areas: to others, to ourselves, and to Christ.

In December of 1976 while serving as a hospital orderly in my hometown, I heard a crash and a scream, another crash and scream. Gunshots were reverberating over the hospital. I quickly got the patient whose vital signs I was checking into the bathroom, closed the door, and went across the hall to put two other men on the floor.

Just as I walked out of the room, I met the gunman face to face and recognized him immediately. He was the son of the man whom I had hidden in the bathroom.

I wondered what he might do to me, but he did not raise his gun. Rather, he entered his father's room, turned, and went outside where he was captured.

In only a few minutes the gunman, who had been refused visiting privileges at 2:00 a.m. the day before, had blown out windows, fired up the ceiling, aimed his gun at a woman in the intensive care unit, and turned a routine day into a near tragedy.

That day we found a new commitment to our patients; their lives and safety had become more important than our own.

We have a commitment to ourselves. Jesus says that we are to love ourselves—not vainly or egotistically but in a way that will honor God. Shakespeare put it this way: "To thine own self be true."

We have a commitment to Christ. If we are to please Him, we must put Him first in all things so that we may say with Paul, "...It is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me..."

Sorrell is a student at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, majoring in religious education. A son of Mr. and Mrs. H.K. Sorrell of Brownsville Baptist Church, Brownsville, Tenn., he served as a summer journalism intern with Baptist and Reflector in 1971.

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Letters to the Editor...

Letters on any religion-related subject are welcomed. Letters of over 300 words will not be used. Other letters may be shortened at the discretion of the editor. No unsigned letters will be printed, but writer's name will be withheld for sufficient reason. Letters must contain complete address.

Correction

Dear editor:

In regards to the statement in paragraph three of "Retirement income" (March 14, letters to the editor) which reads, "It is my opinion that Routh should consider the home given to him, and the mortgage paid off should be sufficient."

I have been informed in a telephone conversation that such was in error and Porter Routh states that he purchased the home. It was not given to him.

He asked me if I would write a letter to the editor and ask that a correction be made, stating that Routh purchased the home.

I remain most appreciative for your services, and I will appreciate the correction.

J.B. Metheny
Route 4
Martin, TN 38237

I apologize for any embarrassment caused by the printing of incorrect information and will gladly print this correction. (editor)

Disagree with article

Dear editor:

I have been a regular reader of your paper for many years. Most of the time I agree with everything I read. But now I will have to disagree with the article on the subject of Belmont Plaza.

The way I interpret it, Belmont Plaza is not for the elderly who have fixed incomes, but more for the "executive types."

It almost makes one feel they will stop tithing. We tithe to help those who are in need, not the rich.

J.C. Manners
209 Cleveland St.
Nashville, TN 37207

The "Baptist and Reflector" is attempting to present a complete, balanced report of Belmont Plaza and its problems, so that the readers can make their own interpretation. (editor)

Save Belmont Plaza

Dear editor:

"You shall give due honor and respect to the elderly, in the fear of God. I am Jehovah." That is pretty strong. But, since God says so, I choose to take it seriously.

What has happened with regard to Belmont Plaza has caused us all to pause and seek God's guidance. I agree, also, with a recent editorial in which the editor was confident that Tennessee Baptists will make the decision the Lord wants us to make. (Are you praying, fellow Tennessee Baptists?)

Truly, I believe that "all things do work together for good to those who love the Lord and are fitting into His plans." Now, we can begin fitting into His plans and make "good" out of this "bad" situation.

So much has been said about our not using mission funds (Cooperative Program). And, yet, throughout this state, there are elderly Baptists who, for many years (all of their lives) have supported mission causes of every kind through Cooperative Program gifts, as well as extra gifts. Now because they are older, "society" has deemed that they live mostly on very, very fixed incomes—and in less than ideal situations, many times. (I don't see very many wealthy elderly!) What would God have us do? Certainly this ministry is MISSIONS and worthy to be included in the Cooperative Program.

Despite the problems, we must keep and support this building for our elderly—the purpose for which it was built. It might cost us something—most worthwhile things do! But

that building is there—waiting to welcome our elderly, so that we might minister to them in the loving way God intended. It will be something we will be proud to say we had a part in through our mission gifts—thus, truly beginning to give "honor and respect to the elderly."

What a wonderful Christian witness!

Mrs. James Nugent
271-B Meadow Lawn
Brentwood, TN 37027

Motion for April 5

Dear editor:

"For the express purpose of dealing with the present problems of Belmont Plaza" at the special session of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, April 5, 1979, I plan to make a motion as follows:

—That the Tennessee Baptist Convention accept and acknowledge obligation for all debts of Belmont Plaza and guarantee full payment of all bonds sold in its behalf.

—That effective April 15, 1979, the services of all employees directly related to Belmont Plaza be terminated, said employees to receive three months' salary and employee benefits in advance; if after July 15, 1979, said employees have not gained employment, for an additional three months they shall be paid 50 percent of their regular salary and benefits.

—That the executive secretary-treasurer of the Tennessee Baptist Convention be charged to sell Belmont Plaza at the earliest practical date, proceeds of the sale to be applied exclusively toward payment of all bonds outstanding on the project. Any difference between proceeds of the sale and balance owed on the bond issue to be paid from Cooperative Program funds and that any profit gained by the sale be placed in the convention's general fund.

—That the executive secretary-treasurer be empowered to appoint or employ an agent or agents to affect the sale of Belmont Plaza.

It is time for Tennessee Baptists to admit we have bought a dead horse, bite the bullet, and get out of this mess.

If the TBC raises the debt ceiling to \$6.5-million, then gives "a minimum of \$100,000 per year from the state's Cooperative Program budget" for Belmont Plaza, very soon the TBC will have spent \$10-million on an apartment house that only 123 rich occupants could afford.

Ralph Duncan
Box 394, Old Hickory Blvd.
Antioch, TN 37013

At physical death

Dear editor:

In the March 7 issue of Baptist and Reflector in the (letters to the editor) section is the letter of F.B. Scates requesting someone to tell him where to find Scriptures on where the spirit and the body of the Christian goes at death.

I am most happy to share the knowledge which my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ has given me on this subject, and it is His will that every Christian should understand it. I am surprised that you do not know it.

I Thessalonians, Chapter 4, verses 14-17
Philippians, Chapter 1, verse 23
Ephesians, Chapter 5, verse 30
Colossians, Chapter 3, verses 1-4

Jesus Christ, our Lord and Our Bridegroom, is not going to let one member of His bride go to hell at her physical death. Jesus said the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

He and each member of his bride are one, and He has the keys of hell and of death (Revelation 1:18). Only those members of the

local visible church who have been created anew in Him, our Lord Jesus Christ, are the real church. They are those who are wearing wedding garments washed in His precious blood.

Gloria C. Smith
Route 2
Indian Mound, TN 37079

Study, pray

Dear editor:

In answer to F.B. Scates' letter of March 7, please see Genesis 2:7 (God formed man of the dust...); Genesis 3:19 (for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return...); Ecclesiastes 12:7 (then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it); and II Corinthians Chap. 5: 6-8... (home in the body, absent from the Lord; absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord).

My friend, if man can't give you a satisfactory answer, please read I John 2:20 then Matthew 18:18-20, find yourself a prayer partner and ask God.

Don't laugh and don't mock if you haven't tried it. My God is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Jas. C. Johnson
704 Morison Avenue
Kingsport, TN 37660

Genesis 3:19

Dear editor:

I would like to try to help F.B. Scates of McKenzie to find his answer to the "Back to Dust" question.

I suppose this statement of the body returning to dust came from Gen. 3:19: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou formed: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

D. Burriss
3465 Van Buren St.
Chattanooga, TN 37415

'Sticking' evangelism

Dear editor:

Recently at a meeting of Middle Tennessee associational evangelism chairmen, one of our denominational leaders reported statistics showing that from 60 to 80 percent of all Baptist baptisms don't "stick." If true, and I'm afraid it is, we are facing a dire crisis.

I share this in light of our yearly parade of churches with the most baptisms. (This is not sour grapes, for our church has been in the top 25 more than once in the last 10 years.) The point I'm getting to is this: we don't need to follow the churches with the most baptisms. We need set before us as an example to follow the churches which have a high percentage rate of "sticking baptisms." I'm serious!

Bill Bennett recently said: "New Testament evangelism is the compassionate sharing of the good news of Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit that lost men may be convicted of their sins, repent, and trust Jesus as Savior and Lord, confess Him publicly before men, obey Him in Baptism, join the fellowship of His church, and in turn become soulwinners themselves. The task of evangelism is not complete until the evangelized becomes an evangelist."

Therefore, I would like to ask our evangelism department to engage in a truly worthwhile project: Give us a report with a list of churches which are engaged in true evangelism, churches whose baptisms "stick" and reproduce other baptisms that "stick." Include information on how these churches are getting the job done. It seems to me that only churches with at least a 75 percent "sticking rate" should be considered.

Prayer: O God deliver us from defective evangelism. May we confess our sinful, slick, but failing methods. May we have "day of Pentecost" evangelism where the converts are not only baptized but continue steadfastly!

James W. Bell, Pastor
Southside Baptist Church
P.O. Box 757
Gallatin, TN 37066

Pulpit To Pew

By Jim N. Griffith

Members of a North Carolina Baptist congregation have complained that skateboards are being used inside the church building on Wednesday evenings.

The complainers are quick to admit that "although some of us need to be speeded up a bit, this is going too fast!"

And certainly this was not exactly what the pastor had in mind when he said: "We've got to get things rolling in our church!"

From almost any standpoint, it can be seen that this situation has the potential of causing more of a furor than "big wheels" in the church.

All this just goes to show you what a strange world we live in. Up to now, it has been the cheapskates—not rollerskates—that have troubled churches.

Still, I do seem to recall a verse from the old spiritual that goes:

"You can't go to heaven on rollerskates—you will roll right past them pearly gates."

Interpretation

Saved by what baptism?

By Herschel H. Hobbs

"The like figure whereunto even baptism doth now also save us" 1 Peter 3:21.

This is a much disputed verse as to its meaning. Does it teach baptismal regeneration or not? It is one of the favorite verses of those who hold to the former view. But is this what Peter says?

He mentions the fact that Noah and his family were saved "by (dia, through) water." This is the "figure" or antitype (antitupon) of "baptism doth now also save us." But this is an illustration of what Peter has just said—that we are saved through Christ's death and resurrection (v. 18). So this colors the meaning of verse 21.

In verse 20 he says that Noah's family was "saved by water." The Greek verb for saved is *diesothesan*, saved through or thoroughly saved. "By water" reads "through (dia) water" in the Greek text. Note *di* in the above Greek verb and *dia*, through. They are the same preposition, only it is spelled *di* in combination with the basic verb.

Thus they were saved through "through water." Water was not the means of salvation except that it bore the ark above it, not in or under it. Noah and his family were not saved by being in the water. They were saved through the flood by being in the ark. And the ark is a type of Christ. Thus we are not saved by being in water but by being in Christ.

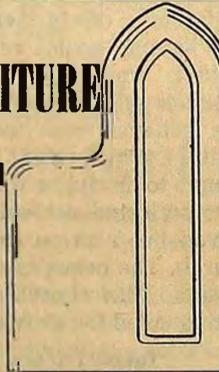
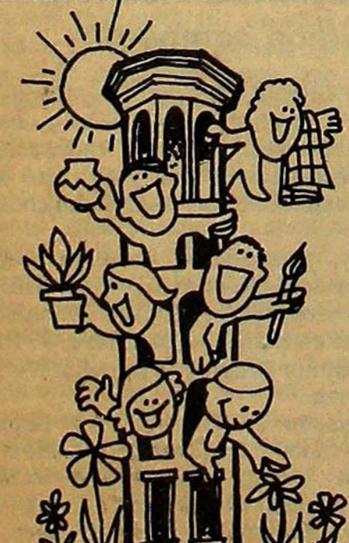
The key to all this is the Greek word rendered "baptism." There are two Greek nouns translated "baptism." *Baptismos* refers to the act of baptism. It is never used in the New Testament for Christian baptism. *Baptisma* connotes the meaning in the act of baptism. It is consistently used for Christian baptism in the New Testament. It is found nowhere else in Greek writings except in the

New Testament and subsequent Christian writings. So it must be a word coined to express the meaning in the act of baptism. Therefore, Peter's words may well read "the meaning expressed in baptism doth also now save us."

Peter has just been talking about our being saved through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. So what is the meaning in baptism? It symbolizes what Christ did for our salvation: his death, burial, and resurrection. It also portrays what happens when we receive Him as Savior: death to the old life, its burial, and resurrection to walk in a new life in Him. We are not saved by being in water. We are saved by being in Christ and all that it involves. This is the meaning in Christian baptism.

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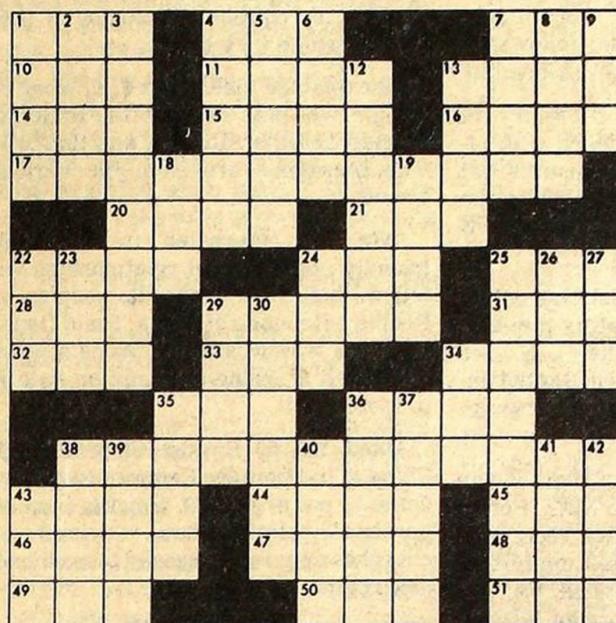
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Bible Puzzle

Answers on page 10



- 47 Woman's name
- 48 Oriental money
- 49 Measures: abbr.
- 50 Man's nickname
- 51 Red or Black

DOWN

- 1 Fallow (Deut. 14:5)
- 2 Monster
- 3 "slothful man — not" (Prov. 12)
- 4 Sierra —
- 5 Died at 34 (Gen. 11:16; poss.)
- 6 Kind of club
- 7 Margarine
- 8 Marshall —
- 9 Dine
- 12 Once more
- 13 Over the camels (1 Chron. 27:30)
- 18 Vase
- 19 Taunt
- 22 Day: abbr.
- 23 Bank term: abbr.
- 24 Electrical term: abbr.
- 25 "charity and —" (1 Tim. 2)
- 26 — carte
- 27 Medical degree: abbr.
- 29 Dash
- 30 Disguised
- 34 — King Cole
- 35 "whether — or woof" (Lev. 13)
- 36 "as a — shall it come" (Luke 21)
- 37 Pagiel's father (Num. 1:13)
- 38 Quarrel
- 39 "with the — horn" (Josh. 6)
- 40 "an — is nothing" (1 Cor. 8)
- 41 Dirk
- 42 Explosive one
- 43 Kind of places (Luke 11:24)

ACROSS

- 1 "borders of — on the west" (Josh. 11)
- 4 "Little Women" character
- 7 Poetic word
- 10 Self
- 11 "he is — to keep" (2 Tim. 1)
- 13 Water pot
- 14 Time period
- 15 Same as din
- 16 "and they — him also" (Luke 20)
- 17 At the last day (John 11:24)
- 20 Three in Madrid
- 21 Little (Deut. 14:16)
- 22 Manner
- 24 Most of arise
- 25 "as Jesus — appointed" (Matt. 26)
- 28 Canadian province: abbr.
- 29 Ant
- 31 "After I am waxed —" (Gen. 18)
- 32 Degree of a sort
- 33 "is cast into the —" (Prov. 16)
- 34 Palm leaves
- 35 Used to be
- 36 Direction in chorus music
- 38 Gift (Matt. 2:11)
- 43 Beloved
- 44 Tower (Gen. 35:21)
- 45 Entomology: abbr.
- 46 "and the whole —" (Lev. 3)

CRYPTOVERSE

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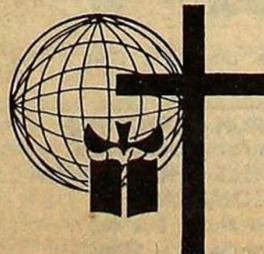
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BWA group intensifies efforts to renew Christian ties in China

WASHINGTON (BP)—The Baptist World Alliance is seeking permission to bring "a small international delegation" of Baptists to the People's Republic of China "for the purpose of expressing international fellowship, peace, and greetings to our fellow believers."

Robert S. Denny, general secretary of BWA, said he is in correspondence with officials of the World Religion Institute at Beijing (Peking), an office established by the Chinese government for the study of religions.

Earlier, three Southern Baptist Convention leaders met with Chai Tse Min, the new Chinese ambassador to the U.S., in Washington to express Southern Baptist interest in re-establishing a Christian witness in China.

The leaders were Jimmy R. Allen of San Antonio, Tex., president of the SBC; Porter W. Routh of Nashville, executive secretary-treasurer of the SBC Executive Committee; and Baker J. Cauthen of Richmond, Va., executive director of the SBC Foreign Mission Board and a former missionary to China.

"The Baptist World Alliance is a voluntary association of 111 national Baptist groups with a total membership of over 30 million,"

Tanzania hospital bombed, robbed

MBEYA, Tanzania (BP)—Armed robbers blew open a safe and stole several thousand shillings from Baptist Hospital, Mbeya, Tanzania.

Explosives used to open the safe did extensive damage to the hospital administrator's office, according to Mrs. Douglas M. Knapp, Southern Baptist missionary press representative for Tanzania.

The missionary doctor living nearest the hospital was awakened by the explosion, said Mrs. Knapp, but the robbers were gone when he arrived.

The robbery should not create a financial crisis for the hospital, said Davis L. Saunders, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's area secretary for Eastern and Southern Africa. Although he had not received word of the exact amount, he said the figure was probably equivalent to several hundred dollars at an exchange rate of approximately seven shillings to the dollar.

Denny wrote. "Our people live in more than 100 nations and enjoy friendship and understanding without regard to race, nationality or political ideologies of the countries in which they live."

He explained that David Y.K. Wong of Hong Kong, "who was born on the mainland," is president of the Alliance, and that BWA's 12 vice presidents are from the various continents.

"We are interested in re-establishing friendly and peaceful relationships with our fellow believers and all peoples of the People's Republic of China," said Denny, who noted he was writing on Wong's behalf. He suggested a spring or summer date for the proposed visit.

About 123,000 Baptist Christians lived in China at the time the Communist government came to power in 1949. Reports indicate that personal religion has survived, though churches apparently ceased to exist under the new regime.

Denny said that BWA efforts to renew relationships with Baptists in China began as early as 1970 when V. Carney Hargroves of Philadelphia was elected president of the Alliance. Hargroves had once taught school in China.

Wong visited China as an individual in October 1975 shortly after his election as BWA president. William R. Tolbert, president of the Republic of Liberia and a former president of BWA (1965-70), was able to meet with a small group of Christians during an official state visit to China in July 1978.

William Jewell president sets June 1980 retirement

LIBERTY, Mo. (BP)—Thomas S. Field, president of William Jewell College, has announced his retirement, effective June 1980 at age 65.

J. Gordon Kingsley, currently dean of the Baptist college, was named president-elect by the school's trustees, Feb. 15. He will continue as dean until the retirement of Field, who has served as president since 1970.

Kingsley has been dean of William Jewell since August 1976, and served as associate dean for three years before that. He has also served as assistant professor of English, professor of English, and director of special programs at the college.

Prior to joining the faculty at William Jewell College, Kingsley taught at colleges in Kentucky, Mississippi, and Louisiana, and served as assistant to the president at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans, La.

UNIFORM SERIES Lesson for Sunday, March 25

Your body: God's gift

By Carolyn D. Blevins
instructor, religion department
Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City

Basic Passages: I Corinthians 5:1-8; 6:9-7:40
Focal Passages: I Corinthians 6:15-20; 7:3-7

Over the past twenty years we have had a recurring debate at our house. It is not one of the world's most profound debates. But it has sparked some fascinating conversations. My husband insists that nothing staggers his imagination more than the limitless universe God created. I don't agree. What could be more unbelievable and fantastic than the human body? It is one of those senseless debates. What each of us is saying is how awed we are by God's creative powers.



Blevins

Of course the entire discussion is a very old one. The Psalmist insisted, "The heavens declare the glory of God" (Psalm 19:1). Paul asked the Corinthians, "Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit?" (I Cor. 6:19).

Your body is an amazing creation. And you take all its functions and potential for granted. I recently sat in a crowd watching people move in and out. I wondered again at the miracles of bodies—moving, talking, behaving in various ways, and performing hundreds of functions of which you are unaware. I wanted to sing with the Psalmist, "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 139:14). The gift of life expressed through bodies is a treasure you frequently forget. And can you believe you actually abuse this unique gift?

A double problem: I Cor. 5:1-8

The misuse of this treasure called a body was of great concern to Paul. He was especially anxious that the Corinthian Christian appreciate the sacredness of the body. Christianity differed significantly from many of Corinth's religions. Most of the religions demanded particular beliefs. Few of them made ethical or moral demands of their adherents.

Christianity was founded on a strict code of both beliefs and behavior. The Corinthian Christians were lax in enforcing that code. Apparently, one of their members was living and having sexual relations with his stepmother. Paul was appalled by both the behavior and the church's indifference to it. The behavior was inconsistent with Christianity. Why wasn't the church shocked enough to discipline their member? Such laxness reflected not only on the member involved but also on the ethics of the entire church. The behavioral problem was serious enough. The church's nonchalant attitude compounded the gravity of the situation.

Inconsistency: I Cor. 6:9-10

Paul simply couldn't understand how a Christian could violate his own body or the body of another. How could the Corinthians expect to be a part of God's kingdom if they refused to live under His rule? How could they arrogantly live as if they were free of God's demands?

Yet, Paul knew the Corinthians were still learning the radical difference between Christian attitudes and the attitudes of the Greek world. Some Greeks believed the body was evil. One way to cope with an evil body was to deny it as much as possible. Rigorous asceticism was the result. Another way to come to terms with an evil body was to just give in to it. Every appetite was satisfied.

In this atmosphere Paul was preaching Christian freedom. Unfortunately, some Corinthians took their new freedom as license to do as they desired. So Paul had to make some clear distinctions between the Greek and Christian concepts of the body.

The Christian concept of the body came from Judaism. The Hebrews understood the body was good. Paul taught that the body was

the temple of God! The Corinthians needed to understand and appreciate the goodness of their bodies. Abuse of the body had no place in Christian living.

Mutual respect: I Cor. 7:1-40

Paul was sure Jesus was returning soon. He couldn't get excited about such things as marriage when the second coming was so imminent. However, Paul realized the value of marriage. One of the values of marriage was to provide proper channels for sexual appetites.

In marriage, too, the body was to be honored. Both husband and wife were to honor and respect their own bodies as well as their partner's. Paul's emphasis was on sensitivity to each other rather than personal gratification. Marriage was a partnership. From time to time within a marriage other needs might take priority over sexual needs. Those decisions needed to be made by mutual agreement and only for a certain time.

Sexual expression was only one of the body's many potentials. Bodies were vehicles for all one was and did. Paul saw many of the Corinthian's problems as related to the proper use of their bodies. When Christians lived like their bodies were temples of God, life was enriched not diminished.

These passages address many contemporary problems. What is Christianity's responsibility in addressing social problems such as child abuse and battered spouses? What impact can Christianity make on current sexual standards? How can the Christian best use his amazing body?

Leaders from Caribbean organize Women's Union

FORTESCUE, Barbados—Baptist women leaders representing 10 Caribbean countries met for two days here and organized the first Caribbean-wide Baptist women's group.

Caribbean Baptist Women's Union, an auxiliary to the Caribbean Baptist Fellowship, became a reality after months of prayer and debate. The group will focus on programs of spiritual growth, leadership training, involvement in community outreach activities and stewardship. During 1979, the International Year of the Child, special emphasis will be placed on child evangelism.

Women from Antigua, Bahamas, Barbados, Bermuda, Guadeloupe, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Puerto Rico and Trinidad attended the meeting at Barbados Baptist College. The Windward Islands Baptist Mission, an affiliate of the Southern Baptist Convention, was host for the meeting.

Southeastern announces \$3.5 million campaign

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)—Albert S. Lineberry Sr. has been named general chairman of a three-year effort by Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary to raise \$3.5 million for capital improvements and endowment.

Lineberry, president of Hanes-Lineberry Funeral Service, Greensboro, N.C., will be joined by Theodore F. Adams of Richmond, Va., general co-chairman; and Mrs. A. Harrison (Christine) Gregory of Danville, Va., as vice chairman.

Adams, pastor emeritus of First Baptist Church, Richmond, is a former president of the Baptist World Alliance and former visiting professor of preaching at Southeastern Seminary. Mrs. Gregory is president of the Woman's Missionary Union of the Southern Baptist Convention.

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LIFE AND WORK SERIES
Lesson for Sunday, March 25

Conformed or transformed

By Bob C. Hardison, pastor
Calvary Baptist Church, Nashville

Basic Passage: Romans 12:1-21
Focal Passages: Romans 12: 1-6a, 10, 13, 15-16, 19-21

Paul was a great thinker, but he was also a pragmatist. In the first eleven chapters of Romans, Paul presents his theological understanding of the Christian faith. Beginning with Chapter 12 he applies his teachings to the daily living of his readers. Those who had experienced God's grace were called to a radically different way of life. In this lesson we will study some distinctive characteristics of Christian living.

Living a new life (Rom. 12:1-2)
In verses 1 and 2 of Chapter 12 Paul draws upon all he had thus far said about "the mercies of God" in Romans 1-11. Emphatically he said, "I beseech you by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice to God." Just as a priest would offer a lamb or goat upon a fiery altar to God, Paul exhorted them to present their bodies a living sacrifice to God. By "bodies" he meant the strength, power, skills, and activity incorporated in their physical bodies.



Hardison

The body must be "holy" to be acceptable unto God. The basic meaning of "holy" is to set something apart for God's service. The Old Testament laws concerning sacrifices specified that the animal must be without blemish. For the body to be an acceptable living sacrifice unto God, it must be clean and pure.

Paul concluded by adding that this was their "reasonable service." If God through His mercy gave His Son's life as a covering for our sin, it is not an unreasonable request to ask Christ's followers to live their lives for God.

In verse 2 Paul warns against drifting into the habits of this world. The word translated "world" is literally "age" connoting a social order which ignores God and His will. This present evil age seems to have a way of imposing a relentless pressure upon Christians to conform to its ways and values. The opposite of being conformed to this age is to "be transformed."

Transformation is accomplished through "the renewing of your mind." This transformation of the mind does not happen when one is converted, but is a goal that the Christian never stops trying to attain. In Philippians 2:5 he admonishes the saints to "let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus." We become like that to which we pay attention. In Proverbs we find "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he" (23:7). What does this say to us about the television viewing? The latest survey by the Christian Life Council of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina tells us in the average U.S. home a television set is on 6 hours and 18 minutes every day. Compare that with the amount of time a Christian thinks about spiritual things. It can be readily seen why people are not being changed into the likeness of Christ!

Serving others (Rom. 12:3-6a, 10, 13, 15-16)
As a natural outcome of presenting one's body to God as a living sacrifice, a Christian is not to "think of himself more highly than he ought to think" (v. 3). He should be humble because he was saved by grace and not by works. Furthermore, Gentile believers were ingrafted into the natural branch (Israel) and should not be filled with pride because they, like Israel, could be broken off.

In verses 4-6 Paul uses the analogy of the human body to explain each individual's gifts in the church. Just as the body is composed of interdependent parts with varying functions, the church is composed of individual members with differing gifts. Each part is essential to the whole. When each member

works together with fellow Christians the body is healthy and efficient. In verses 6b-8 Paul lists some of the gifts and tells how they are used.

One of the marks of a Christian is that he has changed from a self-centered life to caring for others. In verse 10 Paul urges them to love others warmly and tenderly. Instead of self-seeking, a Christian should promote the honor of others. A Christian is to boost others instead of himself. "Distributing to the necessity of saints" (v. 13) relates ministering to the needs of other Christians, particularly those in famine-stricken Judea. Paul himself had been busy in Asia-Minor raising an offering for those in Palestine.

Paul further urged them to be "given in hospitality" (v. 13b). Hospitality renders a word denoting "love for strangers." They were to seek out opportunities for showing love to strangers. In the ancient world strangers were viewed with suspicion and were often mistreated.

In verse 15 Paul asked them to "rejoice with them that do rejoice and weep with them that weep." Christians were to empathize with others in their joys and sorrows. When a joy is shared it becomes greater; when a sorrow is shared it becomes lighter.

Loving enemies (Rom. 12:19-21)

After dealing with the believer's relationship with his fellowman, Paul turns to the matter of the Christian's relation to his enemies. Paul addresses the Romans very tenderly ("Dearly Beloved") and exhorts them to "avenge not yourselves."

While it is the natural human impulse to strike back at evil done to us, we are not to pay back evil with evil. A Christian is to love others in spite of what they might do to him. Paul supported his admonition with an idea from Deuteronomy 32:35: "Vengeance is mine; I will repay saith the Lord." By further quoting Proverbs 25:21-22 in verse 20, he told them to give food and water to quench the hunger and thirst of an enemy. Paul was saying for them not to strike back at their enemies but try to make them a friend. Paul's concluding statement is a good guiding principle for all of us—"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

Internationals plan conference in April

NASHVILLE—Regional Christian International Student Conference will be held this spring in Tennessee and Texas.

Sponsored by National Student Ministries of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, the conferences are designed to encourage, challenge and disciple Christian internationals, said Rollin DeLap, international consultant.

The April 20-22 conference will be held in Pigeon Forge, Tenn., and will include students from the states of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, North and South Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia.

The May 18-20 conference will be held at Lake View Baptist Assembly near Texarkana, Arkansas-Texas and will include students from Arkansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Mississippi, Oklahoma and Texas.

Florida Baptist college gets \$1 million gift

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (BP)—A \$1 million gift has been given by an anonymous donor to Palm Beach Atlantic College, a Baptist liberal arts college.

The gift, to be given over five years, by a Florida Baptist layman, will be used for endowment and for property acquisition.

Dallas membership tops list, Bellevue claims fifth place

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—First Baptist Church, Dallas, still ranks as the largest congregation in the Southern Baptist Convention, according to 1979 rankings of the top 10 SBC churches, but two new churches have joined the top 10, and others have changed position.

The Dallas church, according to statistics through 1978, has 20,045 members, up from the 18,869 recorded when Baptist Press last released top 10 rankings in 1977 (based on 1976 statistics).

But, First Southern Baptist Church, Del City, Okla., which led the Southern Baptist Convention in baptisms in 1978 with 1,012, moved up from fourth to second, rising from 9,935 to 12,217 members in two years.

It replaced Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, Tenn., which recorded 11,407 members previously but dropped to 10,015 members in the latest statistics on the SBC Uniform Church Letter. Although Bellevue has averaged over 1,000 additions each year, it dropped back to fifth place because it cleaned its roll of members which it could no longer locate, a church spokesman said.

All the churches in the top 10 (and three not in that group) exceed 7,000 in membership and 10 others top 6,000, but statistical breakdowns show that most churches in the 13.2-million-member SBC have under 300 in membership.

Statistics compiled from 34,989 churches which reported out of 35,404 in the nation's largest Protestant denomination show that 21,525 churches (61.5 percent) have 299 or less in their membership. Other breakdowns reveal 10,967 churches (31.3 percent) in the 300 to 999 range; 2,314 (6.6 percent) in the 1,000 to 2,999 range; 160 (.47 percent) in the 3,000 to 5,999 range; and 23 (.066 percent) in

the 6,000 and up range.

First Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Fla., with 8,819 members, and North Phoenix (Ariz.) Baptist Church, with 8,099, moved into the top 10 for the first time in 8th and 9th places respectively.

Two former top 10 churches—Travis Avenue Church, Fort Worth, Texas, with 7,441, and First Church, Wichita Falls, Texas, with 7,206—dropped to 11th and 13th respectively, although they both showed net increases. The 12th place church, First Church, Atlanta, Ga., with 7,399 members, is the only other Southern Baptist church exceeding 7,000 members.

The top rankings for 1979 (based on 1978 statistics) are: First, Dallas, Tex., 20,045; First Southern, Del City, Okla., 12,217; First, Houston, Tex., 11,133; First, Lubbock, Tex., 10,595; Bellevue, Memphis, Tenn., 10,015; First, San Antonio, Tex., 9,404; First, Amarillo, Tex., 9,347; First, Jacksonville, Fla., 8,819; North Phoenix (Ariz.), 8,809; and Dauphin Way, Mobile, Ala., 7,572.

SWBTS enrollment gains for 12th straight year

FORT WORTH, TEXAS—The cumulative enrollment for the 1978-79 academic year at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary is 4,154 students, according to L.L. Collins, registrar and director of admissions. Of these, 193 are from Tennessee.

This represents the largest enrollment in the 71-year history of the seminary and the 12th consecutive year the seminary has experienced an enrollment increase.

Preliminary figures indicate 1,061 first-time students.

Support urged on amendments of Retirement Income Security Act

DALLAS (BP)—Now is the time for Baptists to support a 1976 Southern Baptist Convention resolution opposing the federal pension law's rule that would prohibit church agencies from participating in church pension plans, according to Darold H. Morgan, president of the SBC Annuity Board.

Morgan urges Southern Baptists to support congressional legislation to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) of 1974.

The Annuity Board president chairs the Church Alliance for Clarification of ERISA, an organization of members of more than 25 religious denominations supporting the legislation introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives by U.S. Rep. Barber Conable, R.-N.Y.

The House bills are HR 1576, 1577 and 1578. Similar legislation is expected to be introduced in the U.S. Senate by Herman Talmadge, (Ga.), and Lloyd Bentsen, (Tex.).

Gary Nash, Annuity Board general counsel, says the legislation would remedy "several technical defects in ERISA."

"It would amend the law's definition of 'church plan' to recognize traditional church retirement plans which cover church and agency employees," he says. The legislation also would let ERISA recognize unique differences among denominational structures.

Current ERISA regulations penalize church workers and also have deprived some denominational employees of pension benefits, Nash says.

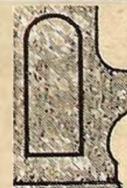
This is contrary to the stated intent of ERISA, he explains. The legislation is designed to correct these inequities.

Nash points out that ERISA threatens to fragment denominational pension plans and, if not amended, undermine how churches have functioned successfully for years.

Enforcement of current ERISA rules also could cause problems as ministers and employees move from one SBC job category to another, he says.

"Letters supporting the Church Alliance legislation should be addressed to senators and representatives," Nash says.

Morgan said more information on ERISA is available from the Annuity Board in Dallas and the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, Washington, D.C.



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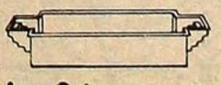
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Puppet ministry boosts Uruguay missions

MONTEVIDEO, Uruguay—In a newly organized Baptist church in Montevideo, Sunday School attendance is boosted by weekly opening assemblies using puppets.

In a rented hall in the commercial section of a high-rise apartment complex housing 10,000 people, puppets are one of the drawing cards for a pioneering Vacation Bible School.

In San Jose, a departmental (state) capital where Baptists have never had work, puppets will play a significant part in starting a Sunday School.

All these uses of puppets and dozens more, in a wide range of Uruguay's evangelical churches, are the result of five months of work here by two Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary students skilled in the use of puppets and in teaching others to make and use them.

Sherril and Sharon Evenson, twin daughters of Southern Baptist missionaries Mr. and Mrs. R. Kenneth Evenson in Uruguay, left behind their studies at

Southwestern in Fort Worth, Texas, one semester to participate in a mission volunteer program sponsored by the Baptist Theological Seminary in Montevideo.

Response expands classes

Under seminary auspices, a night class in the use and making of puppets was offered with the "twin professors." Response from Baptist and other evangelical groups was so great that the one class expanded to four.

"We were overwhelmed by the response. We thought we'd have about 20," said Sherril. Instead, 59 persons finished the four-month course, learning not only to manipulate and make puppets, but also to write scripts and construct a puppet theater and scenery.

Because ready-made puppets are not widely available in Uruguay, each student in the course was required to make at least two puppets. "The creativity shown in making the puppets was fantastic," Sharon said.

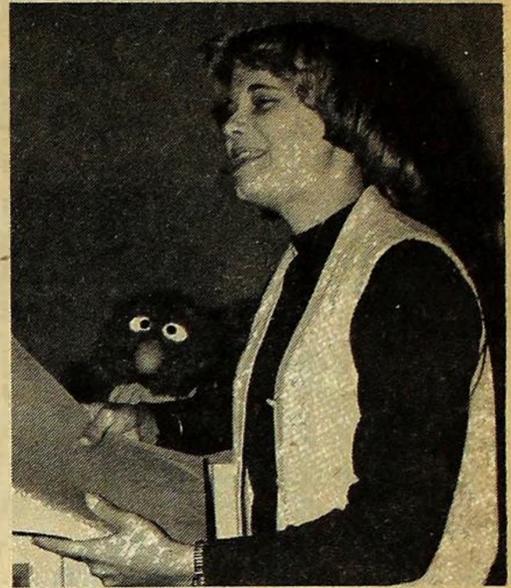
The twins had to write their own manual in Spanish for the course. But having lived in

Uruguay until age 12 (when their parents transferred to the Baptist Spanish Publishing House, El Paso, Texas), the second-year religious education students had a good base in Spanish.

Teams growing

The girls' teaching ministry is now being multiplied by their students. For example, six persons who took the course are now forming four teams of four to six persons each to rotate in presenting puppet shows as part of a Sunday School opening assembly.

Taking a conservative estimate of three "disciples" for each person in the original classes, chances are at least 180 persons are actively involved in puppet ministries around Montevideo alone—showing others that puppets are not just for enjoyment, but also for the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.



PUPPETS PRESENT GOSPEL—Southwestern Theological Seminary student Sharon Evenson demonstrates the use of puppets to present the gospel for Baptists and other evangelicals in Uruguay. Sharon and her twin sister, who accompanied her on the trip, are daughters of Southern Baptist missionaries to Uruguay.

On Matters of

Family Living

By B. David Edens
Director, Marriage and Family Program
Stephens College, Columbia, MO 65201

Class clowns rate high in leadership ability

Class clowns usually "get no respect" from the teachers who must compete with them, but these resident sit-down comics seem to have many of the qualities admired in adults. A pioneering study of the personality traits of class clowns—the kids who never leave 'em laughing, but remain to exasperate educators for the entire term—shows that these youngsters do not fit the stereotype of the attention-starved misfit.

The study, reported in the American Educational Research Journal, reveals class clowns as popular leaders in other kids' eyes as well as their own. They are regarded as active, independent, and creative. Their self-confidence runs high.

Teachers have more reservations, rating the irrepressible entertainers as more unruly, assertive, attention-seeking, and less likely to buckle down and complete academic work than their classmates. However, they also gave the clowns high marks for cheerfulness and acknowledged their leadership potential.

Non-clowns were more meticulous about doing required work, more reluctant to speak up in class, and less pleased with themselves than the junior comedians.

Researchers Sandra B. Damico and William W. Purkey polled 3,500 eighth-graders to identify the 96 class clowns in their study. They then compared classmates' ratings of their funny freres (the majority, 80, were boys), teachers' ratings, and the clowns' self-evaluations with the ratings given 237 randomly selected pupils by peers, teachers, and selves.

Where are the future Radners, Balls, Burnetts, and Dillers?, one wonders. Although 57% of the 3,500 kids in the total sample were girls, only 16 were singled out as clowns.

Koreans accept Christ at industrial school

SEOUL, Korea—More than 500 middle and high school students recently made decisions for Christ at a school for industrial workers near Seoul, Korea.

Many of the more than 2,000 enrolled in the school are beyond high school age but never completed their schooling. Those who attend the school, located in the middle of an industrial complex, also work day or night shifts there.

The school director, who is a Christian, allowed Southern Baptist missionary Robert T. McEachern Jr. to lead a three-day series of day and night meetings during which the decisions were made, according to Paul A. Rhoads, Southern Baptist missionary press representative there.

Johnson named treasurer of Foreign Mission Board

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board has elected Carl W. Johnson as senior assistant treasurer and treasurer-elect of the board.

Johnson, 41, currently serves as vice president of administration, treasurer, and director of Morton G. Thalheimer Inc., a Richmond real estate and brokerage firm.

A native Richmonder, Johnson will assume his duties May 1. He will become treasurer after Everett L. Deane, the board's treasurer since 1950, retired in December 1980.

Foundation

They are our youth!

By Jonas L. Stewart

The youth of Tennessee are most fortunate in having facilities available for obtaining an education in the best colleges and universities in the world. Public schools of higher learning are doing a tremendous job but Belmont, Carson-Newman, and Union are ours. We Baptists should be proud of them. They are the finest among the fine for those who desire an education plus a Christian atmosphere.

Since these are ours they not only deserve, but our ownership demands support from all of us. Pastors, parents, and pupils should place these schools first when giving consideration to their personal allegiance. Our colleges can perform only in proportion to the support they receive from all of us because they are ours.

Public colleges have only to appeal to the legislature to receive hundreds of millions of dollars annually. Our Baptist schools must depend on us because they are ours.

Many people realize that the best and most generous way for them to support these institutions is through their wills. Each school has an estate planning officer who would be glad to discuss what can be done by any interested person. There are no charges for this service because these schools are ours.

Your Tennessee Baptist Foundation is charged with the responsibility of helping to lay a financial foundation under the institutions because they are ours.

For information about how you may help your schools by establishing a trust fund in your will to last until Jesus comes, write or call Tennessee Baptist Foundation, Jonas L. Stewart, executive secretary-treasurer, Box 347, Brentwood, TN. 37027, or talk to your director of missions. He is your friend and a deserving servant of the Lord.

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