

Baptist and Reflector

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News journal of Tennessee Baptist Convention

IRS delays ruling on clergy housing

WASHINGTON (BP)— The Internal Revenue Service has delayed the June 30 effective date of its ruling eliminating the double tax benefit for ministers buying their own houses.

The IRS put off until Jan. 1, 1985, implementation of Revenue Ruling 83-3 which disallows ministers a federal income tax deduction for any portion of mortgage interest or real estate taxes for which they received a tax-exempt housing allowance.

A delay date until 1988 had been urged by Southern Baptist Annuity Board President Darold H. Morgan in a letter to IRS Commissioner Roscoe L. Egger Jr. and by representatives of several religious groups during a recent meeting with Treasury Department officials.

The new effective date applies only to ministers who owned and occupied or had a contract to purchase a house before Jan. 3, 1983, the date IRS announced the revenue ruling. Ministers who purchased or purchase residences after Jan. 3, 1983, will remain subject to the original June 30 effective date.

The 1983 revenue ruling revoked a 1962 ruling which specifically allowed ministers to deduct mortgage interest and property taxes even though they received a tax-exempt housing allowance. IRS said reversal of the 1962 position was part of an effort to apply consistently the tax code's provision disallowing double tax breaks.

Meanwhile, legislation introduced in the House to exempt ministers from the revenue ruling has 75 co-sponsors from both parties, but apparently faces an uphill battle in winning approval from the Ways and Means Committee.

An aide to Rep. Stan Parris, who introduced H.R. 1905, said sponsors are confident of House approval if they can get the bill out of committee.

That may be a tall order, according to a Ways and Means staff person who called the IRS position on the ruling "entirely correct" and suggested "there would be no overwhelming interest on the part of the tax writing committees to take the legislation up."

In addition to the double housing benefit for ministers, the 1983 ruling also eliminated double breaks for veterans and scholarship students. In a letter to House colleagues, Parris warned if IRS "is successful in taking this benefit from clergy, military personnel may find themselves subject to a similar ruling in the near future."

Most military personnel receive a tax-exempt quarters allowance but the IRS ruling did not apply to military housing. However, a memorandum prepared by Treasury Department attorneys before the revenue ruling was issued indicated elimination of the double housing benefit for military personnel had been under consideration.

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Fair's Pavilion rededicated as Linden Activities Center

The Activities Center at Camp Linden was officially dedicated Sunday during special services in the structure which was used as the Baptist Pavilion at the 1982 Knoxville World's Fair.

Approximately 200 people attended the June 5 dedication.

The building was purchased by the Executive Board last November and moved to the encampment where it has been completely renovated for its new usage. At Camp Linden, it will provide indoor recreational facilities, an office, restrooms, and storage area. It also offers a winterized meeting room which can accommodate up to 250 people.

Tom Madden, Tennessee Baptist Convention executive secretary, was the speaker at the dedication service. He noted that the building represents the "cooperative efforts of many parts of Tennessee Baptist life." Much of the work in relocating and renovating the center was done by Baptist laymen who were enlisted by the TBC Brotherhood department.

"I am glad that this building, which performed such a great service at the World's Fair, will continue to serve Ten-

nessee Baptists," Madden said. "This will be a tremendous return in our investment in God's work."

Madden observed that the TBC encampment program is very vital to the work of the state convention.

Also participating in the dedication service were James McDonald, TBC

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SESQUICENTENNIAL COMMITTEE — Fred Rolater (left), chairman of the Sesquicentennial Committee, and Eleanor Yarborough, TBC consultant, discuss plans for the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

TBC's anniversary

June 25 celebration to recall 150 years

The sesquicentennial steering committee is throwing a party and all Tennessee Baptists are invited.

The committee of the Tennessee Baptist Historical Society has planned a one-day celebration of the 150th anniversary of the organization of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

Set for June 25, the celebration will begin with a tour of historic TBC sites. Participants will meet at the TBC building in Brentwood at 9 a.m. for a tour of the site of the original Mill Creek Baptist Church where the convention was organized in 1833 and the former and present sites of convention offices: the Frost Building of the Baptist Sunday School Board; an office building at 149 6th Avenue North, Nashville; the administration building at Belmont College; and

the present building in Brentwood.

Participants on the tour will be able to pay \$3 to ride a tour bus or provide their own transportation for a self-guided tour. Maps will be available and guides will be present at each tour site. Persons intending to ride a tour bus should notify Eleanor Yarborough, history consultant, Tennessee Baptist Convention, P.O. Box 347, Brentwood, TN 37027, so enough buses will be available.

Dinner on the grounds of Judson Baptist Church, Nashville, will begin at 12 noon for those who register in advance with Mrs. Yarborough. The cost of the meal will be \$5. The TNT Novelty Band, a senior adult group from First Baptist Church, Hendersonville, will entertain. Tom Madden, TBC executive secretary, will deliver a word of welcome.

Following dinner, at 1:30 p.m., a celebration service will be held in the sanctuary of Judson Baptist Church.

The service will feature a historical drama, "Come to the Birthday Party," written by Mrs. Peggy Bible, a member of First Baptist Church, Morristown. It will be performed by a drama group from the Morristown church.

Ralph Norton, a former TBC executive secretary, will speak on "Our Spiritual Heritage as Tennessee Baptists." W. Fred Kendall, also a former TBC executive secretary, will address the "Beginnings of Tennessee Baptist Work." Carroll Owen, director of the TBC convention ministries division, will discuss the present and future of Tennessee Baptists.

(Continued on page 3)

Mission gifts fall below goal

Mission giving by Tennessee Baptists through the Cooperative Program was 1.9 percent below the convention-adopted goal pace after seven months, according to Tom Madden, executive secretary-treasurer of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

Receipts for the November 1982-May 1983 period were \$9,613,459.30, while the seven-month's goal would be \$9.8-million.

However, Madden observed that Cooperative Program receipts for the past seven months were 9 percent higher than the \$8,822,250.66 given during the same seven months of the previous convention year.

May mission gifts through the Cooperative Program totaled \$1,071,990.57. This amount is 2.1 percent higher than Cooperative Program gifts for May 1982, but 23.4 percent below the one-month goal for the current convention year.

Messengers to the 1982 state convention set the basic Cooperative Program goal at \$16.8-million for the November 1982-October 1983 convention year.

Court rules against Bob Jones University

By Stan Haste

WASHINGTON (BP)— Religious schools which discriminate on the basis of race in admissions policies are not entitled to federal tax exemption, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled May 24.

In deciding its most celebrated case of the current term, the high court held, 8-1, that Bob Jones University, of Greenville, S.C., and Goldsboro (N.C.) Christian Schools have neither legal nor Constitutional grounds on which to enjoy tax-exempt status, nor are they entitled to receive tax-deductible contributions, the court ruled.

The court's unexpectedly strong decision ended an extended legal battle between the two schools and the Internal Revenue Service, which in 1976 revoked Bob Jones University's tax exemption and has denied the privilege outright to Goldsboro Christian Schools since 1969.

Chief Justice Warren E. Burger, writing for the majority, rejected the schools' key claim that the IRS actions violated their right to free exercise of religion, a guarantee protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution. According to both schools, the policies of

discriminating racially in admissions were based on sincerely-held religious beliefs against mixing of races.

But Burger, quoting from a decision he wrote last term, held "not all burdens on religion are unconstitutional... The state may justify a limitation on religious liberty by showing it is essential to accomplish an overriding governmental interest." He added: "The governmental interest at stake here is compelling... the government has a fundamental, overriding interest in eradicating racial discrimination in education... That governmental interest substantially outweighs whatever burden denial of tax benefits places on petitioners' exercise of their religious beliefs."

Besides the claim IRS violated their freedom of religion, Bob Jones and Goldsboro also argued the tax collecting agency overstepped its legal authority in that Congress had never written specific language into the Internal Revenue Code to deny tax exemption to religious schools that discriminate on the basis of sincerely-held beliefs.

That view, too, was rejected. Burger, after an extensive review of the tax laws, said his examination revealed "un-

mistakable evidence" that "entitlement to tax exemption depends on meeting certain common law standards of charity — namely, that an institution seeking tax-exempt status must serve a public purpose and not be contrary to established public policy."

On that basis, Burger continued, IRS acted within the bounds of the law when in 1970 it issued a revenue ruling declaring it would no longer grant tax exemption to schools practicing racial discrimination in admissions policies.

While acknowledging the serious nature of determining that schools such as Bob Jones and Goldsboro are not entitled to tax exemption and to receive tax deductible contributions, the chief justice said: "... a declaration that a given institution is not 'charitable' should be made only where there can be no doubt that the activity involved is contrary to fundamental public policy. But there can no longer be any doubt that racial discrimination in education violates deeply and widely accepted views of elementary justice."

Justice Lewis F. Powell Jr., who agreed with the chief justice's reasoning in holding that the governmental interest

outweighed the schools' claimed freedom of religion rights, nevertheless questioned whether IRS possessed the necessary statutory authority "to decide which public policies are sufficiently 'fundamental' to require denial of tax exemptions." He added: "Its business is to administer laws designed to produce revenue for the government, not promote 'public policy.'"

Powell also issued a challenge to Congress to move quickly "in articulating and codifying its desired policy as to tax exemptions for discriminatory organizations." Such revisions of existing tax laws are needed, he said, because "many questions remain," including whether organizations violating other accepted "public policies" are likewise to be denied tax exemption.

The court's lone dissenter, William H. Rehnquist, wrote that although he agreed with the majority that Congress has the authority to deny tax exemptions to religious schools that discriminate, "I am convinced that Congress simply has failed to take this action." He added: "Whatever the reasons for the failure, this Court should not legislate for Congress."

News analysis

Bob Jones ruling yields 'agonized ambivalence'

By Stan Haste

WASHINGTON (BP)— The Supreme Court's decision upholding the denial of tax exemption to religious schools which discriminate on the basis of race is neither the awful calamity some in the religious community say it is, nor is it the absolute victory for righteousness others claim it to be.

It has, in fact, left many religious leaders with a sense of what James M. Dunn of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs describes as "agonized ambivalence."

What is not in doubt is the decisiveness of the 8-1 ruling supporting the 13-year policy of the Internal Revenue Service to deny tax exemption to all private schools whose admissions policies discriminate against blacks. The high court, led by Chief Justice Warren E. Burger, was apparently determined to issue a forceful ruling leaving no doubt that such discrimination will not be rewarded with tax exemption. Throughout the history of the Supreme Court, such momentous rulings have been written by chief justices, and Burger, despite critics' views that he has not exercised such decisive leadership often enough, was clearly in charge this time.

Insofar as it makes plain racial discrimination will no longer be tolerated, not just in public educational institutions, but in private and religious schools which enjoy the benefit of tax exemption, the decision must be applauded.

All nine justices, including the lone dissenter, William H. Rehnquist, agreed Congress may condition the granting of tax exemption upon compliance with "fundamental public policy." As Burger put it in the majority opinion, "not all burdens on religion are unconstitu-

tional... The state may justify a limitation on religious liberty by showing it is essential to accomplish an overriding governmental interest." That one statement knocked the props from under the arguments of religious leaders that not even Congress, much less the IRS, has the authority under the Constitution to deny tax exemption when the beneficiary claims sincerely held religious views, however repugnant they may be.

Interestingly, not many of those religious leaders have quarreled publicly with the court's clear language that the First Amendment does not give absolute freedom for such views.

What many of them have criticized is the court's view that IRS may deny tax exemption to religious institutions with views contrary to established public policy, even if Congress has not given the tax collecting agency specific authority to do so. They agree with Rehnquist's position that Congress had not so authorized IRS with respect to the policies of schools such as Bob Jones University and Goldsboro Christian Schools.

On this significant point, the church leaders deserve to be heard. They are understandably worried about the decision's long-range effect, in part because they know the sorry history of IRS abuse. They remember, for example, the twin legal proceedings of the late 1960s when a blatantly-politicized IRS took both the National Council of Churches and Billy James Hargis to court seeking to strip those polar opposites of their respective tax exemptions for the same reason: both were criticizing Richard Nixon's Vietnam policy.

Now, in light of the Bob Jones result, legal experts representing religious groups ranging from the National Council to the evangelical Christian Legal Society are saying the justices went too far in giving IRS such broad statutory authority.

Does the ruling mean, they ask, that IRS at some future date may strip tax exemption from a church that opposes prevailing public policy on nuclear arms

or refugee resettlement? Does it mean that opposing the prevailing view that a woman is entitled to seek an abortion endangers the tax exemptions of churches whose own theology denounces that view and whose members seek to have it overturned?

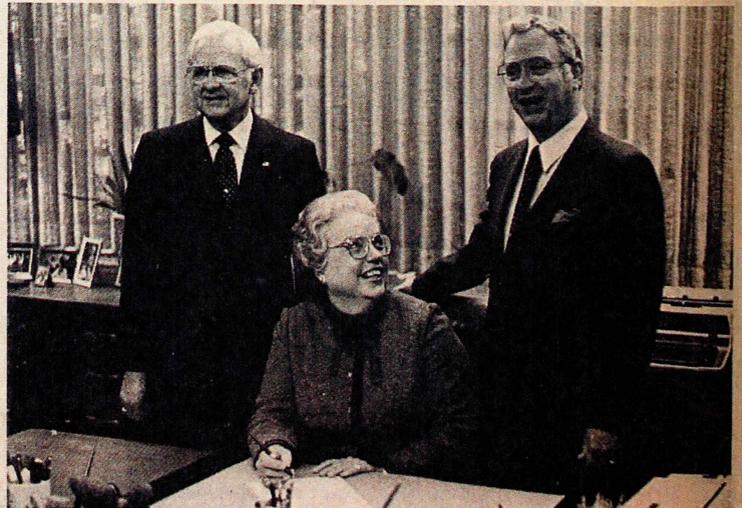
Although he has been accused by some commentators with fence straddling on this key issue in the Bob Jones ruling, Justice Lewis F. Powell Jr., considered by most lawyers to have the finest legal mind on the court, put his finger on the best solution to the dilemma. His concurring opinion, agreeing with the outcome, nevertheless suggests the burden of limiting IRS authority rests upon Congress.

He is right. For although members of both parties on both sides of Capitol Hill breathed a collective sigh of relief when the decision was announced, they should

now be reminded an unfettered IRS is like the proverbial bull in a china closet. It is clearly the lawmakers' obligation to make unmistakably clear that the high court's ruling in Bob Jones is limited to the fundamental public policy of eliminating race discrimination.

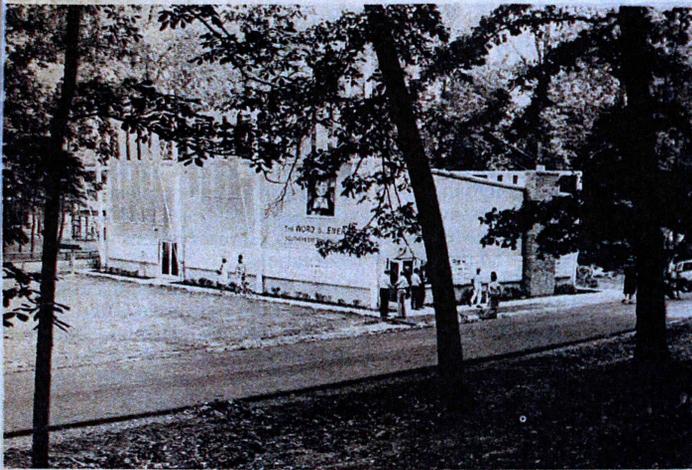
If Congress fails to act, the Supreme Court will in all likelihood be faced again with resolving disputes between religious groups whose views on public policies run afoul of those declared to be of fundamental importance to the nation by IRS bureaucrats.

Congress can head off this grim prospect by rising above its normal inertia and passing legislation reining in IRS. By doing what it ought to do, Congress can dissolve the "agonized ambivalence" hanging over the nation's churches and their leaders in the post-Bob Jones era.



UNITY IN BOLD MISSIONS — Carolyn Weatherford, president of Woman's Missionary Union, signs an agreement to coordinate Bold Mission Thrust efforts among three SBC agencies. Others who signed are James Smith (left), president of the Brotherhood Commission, and William Tanner, president of the Home Mission Board.

BAPTIST AND REFLECTOR
brings you news first



NEW SETTING — One year ago this building was surrounded by millions of World's Fair attendees in Knoxville. Now, surrounded by trees, the former Baptist Pavilion serves as the Activities Center in the Buffalo River valley at Camp Linden.

New Site of Baptist Pavilion . . .

(Continued from page 1)

business manager; Charles Livengood, director of missions for Alpha Baptist Association; Carroll Owen, TBC convention ministries director; and Julian Suggs, director of the TBC church music department.

On the outside of the Activities Center near the main entrance, there is a bronze plaque which notes that this building was used as the Baptist Pavilion at the 1982 World's Fair.

Mike Adams, TBC properties-maintenance manager, supervised the relocation and renovation of the building.

McDonald said that the Activities Center completes an 11-year project by the convention to renovate and expand the facilities at the two TBC encampments, Camp Linden and Camp Carson. The cost of the renovations and additions was said to be \$1.5-million, which was provided by the Cooperative Program and the Golden State Missions Offering.



REMINDER — A bronze plaque near the door of the Camp Linden Activities Center notes the building's former use.

IRS rejects BJCPA request on public disclosure rule

WASHINGTON (BP) — The Internal Revenue Service has denied a Baptist agency's request to hold public hearings before issuing a new regulation requiring public disclosure of gifts and contributions to all non-profit organizations except churches and those church-related organizations considered by IRS to be vital to the religious mission of a church.

IRS ruling . . .

(Continued from page 1)

A spokesman for IRS said application of such a revenue ruling for military personnel is "not currently under consideration."

Elimination of the double benefit for clergy while preserving it for military personnel has drawn criticism from some quarters. "How can they pick out one group and not direct it at everybody?" asked Bill Aud, a congressional liaison for the Veterans Administration and a Baptist layman from Alexandria, Va.

Aud charged IRS can take on pastors because they are not powerful enough to fight it but predicted IRS would have a much tougher time if it sought to apply the same ruling to military personnel.

An IRS spokesman said the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs made the only request for hearings on the proposed regulation and that the new rule would take effect later this year without hearings.

Baptist Joint Committee General Counsel John W. Baker said his agency sought to oppose the new regulation because concerns the IRS definition of which church-affiliated organizations qualify as "integrated auxiliaries" of a church might exclude agencies and institutions considered by Baptists and other denominations as vital to their religious mission.

"Regulations already in force," Baker said, "take away from churches the power of determining which of their agencies and affiliated organizations are integral to their religious mission and vest that determination in the IRS. This is an assumption of a religious role by the secular state — a role forbidden by the Constitution."

Under present regulations, church-affiliated organizations failing to meet the IRS integrated auxiliary test are required to file financial disclosure forms with the nation's tax collecting agency. The new regulation would make such statements public.

Dissidents attack, burn relief truck in Africa

SESSAMI, Zimbabwe (BP) — Anti-government dissidents in Zimbabwe burned a 10-ton Southern Baptist relief truck May 28, threatened to kill its African driver, and robbed him of nearly \$1,400.

Despite the incident, missionaries in Zimbabwe voted four days later to continue the massive hunger and relief effort which began in 1982.

Five dissidents, on the run from government troops, attacked Kilian Sibanda at his home in Sessami. He had stopped there briefly en route from transporting corn meal to the starving people in Zimbabwe's drought-stricken Gokwe area. Most of the cash stolen was money people had paid for the meal. Those with money buy their grain at cost and others receive grain free.

The Zimbabwe mission runs two 10-ton trucks twice weekly to the drought area as a first step "band-aid approach" to stave off starvation among the 30,000 Tonga until Southern Baptists' massive "People Who Care" project can develop long-term assistance. The project is a joint effort of Louisiana Baptists, the Foreign Mission Board, and the Zimbabwe mission.

The mission voted June 1 to ask the Foreign Mission Board for another \$455,000 in hunger relief funds to develop the project and up to \$35,000 to replace the burned truck. The board has already appropriated more than \$1-million for relief work in the area.

Missionaries and Sibanda believe the dissidents, who wielded Russian-made AK rifles with fixed bayonets, burned the truck to keep it from being used to report their location. Sibanda believes he convinced them it was not a government vehicle, but one used for hunger relief.

During the attack, one of the young men jumped onto the truck and stuck a bayonet into Sibanda's ear. After robbing him of the cash, including \$100 of his own money, the dissidents forced him to pour diesel fuel over the truck. When he refused to torch it, they did it themselves.

The dissidents roughed up Sibanda and repeatedly threatened his life. At one point, he scuffled with a dissident while pushing a bayonet away from his ribs. The man pushed him down and was poised to kill him. "Leave the old man alone," the other dissidents told him.

They forced Sibanda, his wife, and children to lie on the floor of their home, where they stayed from 5 until 8 p.m., when government troops arrived in search of the fleeing dissidents.

The troops fired a warning shot outside the door. Sibanda, mistakenly fearing dissidents had shot a son who had hidden in the garden, rushed to his aid. The son, fearing they had shot his father, also hurried to check on him.

Investigating soldiers discovered the

dissidents had murdered a soldier on leave in civilian clothing and beaten up some civilians down the road while making their escape.

Reports of kidnapping and violence crop up from time to time as dissidents continue to harass the Marxist-led government. But mission chairman John Faulkner said missionaries personally have experienced no confrontation since Missionary Archie G. Dunaway Jr. was killed by guerrillas during the country's war for independence from white rule in 1978. "They realize, however, they could face an isolated incident like this at any time," he added.

"We will be honest with Louisiana Baptists and tell them an element of danger exists," Faulkner explained. "Such problems may cut back on the number of volunteers who will come. The deciding factor will be whether or not they feel called of God to help us meet this overwhelming problem. This is God's project, and those who come here should do so in answer to His call — and only His call."

The ambitious three- to four-year plan has anticipated use of more than 250 volunteers from Louisiana in the next 18 months. It includes development of medical and community health clinics, grain grinding mills and storage facilities, agricultural development, evangelism and church development, digging bore holes for clean water, dams, road repair, construction of an air strip for clinic personnel, and cooperative stores operated by the Tonga.

From now on, Baptist vehicles will be marked with huge block letters which read "Baptist People Who Care."

Celebration . . .

(Continued from page 1)

Julian Suggs, TBC director of church music, will lead congregational singing of hymns from the era of early TBC history. Angie Lewis, a contemporary Christian musician, will sing. Lynn May, executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Historical Commission, will participate on the program.

TBC retirees will be recognized and two "W. Fred Kendall" awards will be presented to students who wrote winning papers on some aspect of TBC history.

Pastors of each church in the Tennessee Baptist Convention were mailed packets of information on the history of Tennessee Baptists and the June 25 celebration.

"We need to be sold on who we are as Tennessee Baptists," said Mrs. Yarbrough. "If we don't know who we are, we'll find ourselves having to re-invent the wheel."

She said the June 25 celebration is designed to help Tennessee Baptists rediscover their heritage.

Lottie exceeds \$54-million

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Final receipts for the 1982 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions fell nearly \$4-million short of the \$58-million goal. When the books closed May 31 the total was \$54,077,464.

Gifts ran 50 percent ahead of the U.S. inflation rate and exceeded the 1981 total by more than \$3-million, or 6.48 percent. But this is the smallest percentage increase since 1974 when giving reflected another U.S. recession period.

Because the total 1982 offering goal was budgeted, the capital request portion of the budget will be cut to meet field operating expenses. Two-thirds of the overseas capital budget provided by Lottie Moon funds, however, will be met.

EDITORIAL**Pittsburgh SBC to face important issues**

From all indications, messengers to next week's Southern Baptist Convention in Pittsburgh may indeed fulfill the convention's theme, "Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace" (Ephesians 4:3). In recent years, such words as "unity" and "peace" have been no more than idle hopes when the messengers gathered.

Leaders of both SBC political parties have indicated that they have no organized challenges to be fought on the convention floor.

The presidential election this year will be rather routine — primarily because of the openness and fairness of the incumbent president, James T. Draper Jr. He deserves to be re-elected to a second one-year term.

This is the first time since the 1978 SBC (when Jimmy Allen was re-elected without opposition) that the presidential election has not been the major item on the SBC agenda.

Based on the lack of pre-convention rhetoric this year, some might conclude that the 1983 convention will turn out to be dull and unimportant. Yet, there are many issues which the messengers must consider.

RECORD COOPERATIVE PROGRAM GOAL. The Executive Committee will recommend a visionary 18 percent increase in the Cooperative Program goal for the October 1983-September 1984 convention year. The recommended total will be \$125-million, compared to the present \$106-million. The recommendation would allocate \$114.5-million for the basic operating budget (up 18 percent from the current \$96,635,000); \$3,340,385 for capital needs (established by previous conventions); and \$7,159,615 for a challenge section.

1984-1988 CAPITAL NEEDS BUDGET. The current capital needs budget allocations end with the 1983-84 convention year. The Executive Committee will recommend a \$31,740,000 capital needs budget for the following five-year period.

Included in this amount will be \$8-million for a proposed new Southern Baptist Convention Building in Nashville, to replace the inadequate facilities which are now being used. The building will house the offices of the Executive Committee, Southern Baptist Foundation, Christian Life Commission, Education Commission, Historical Commission, Stewardship Commission, and Seminary External Education Division.

COOPERATIVE PROGRAM STUDY COMMITTEE. This special committee's recommendation will authorize the creation of a 15-member task force to coordinate stewardship education and emphases during the next 15 years to increase the total income of Southern Baptist churches to \$20-billion a year and Cooperative Program giving to \$2.5-billion by A.D. 2000, and by that year, or sooner, that the allocation for home and foreign missions reach 75 percent of the Cooperative Program goal.

AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS. The Executive Committee will recommend amendments to four bylaws.

Bylaw 8, Enrollment of Messengers. A change here would permit messengers to register by having (1) a completed and signed registration card, (2) a letter from the messenger's church, signed by the clerk or moderator, or (3) a telegram from the messenger's church noting his/her election. The present bylaw allows ONLY the registration card.

Another proposed change would require the registration secretary to convene the Credentials Committee and set up registration tables at least one day prior to the convention's opening.

Bylaw 16, Election of Board Members, Trustees, Commissioners, or Members of Standing Committees. A proposed addition to this bylaw would require that persons elected "shall have resided within the state from which they are elected at least one year prior to election."

A second change would require the Committee on Boards release its report to Baptist Press at least 45 days before the convention.

A sentence would be added: "Persons desiring to challenge the report . . . are encouraged to publicize the nature of their challenge sufficiently in advance of the annual meeting of the Convention to allow information concerning the challenge to be made available to Convention messengers."

Bylaw 19, Representation: Baptist World Alliance General Council. The proposed amendment would automatically name the presidents of the Southern Baptist Convention, Home Mission Board, and Sunday School Board to the general council and reduce the number of others to be named from nine to six.

Bylaw 21, Committee on Committees. Proposed amendments here are similar to those proposed to Bylaw 16 — members must have resided in their states for at least one year and the SBC president must announce his appointments to Baptist Press at least 45 days ahead of the convention.

The Executive Committee also considered a referral from the 1982 SBC related to the handling of resolutions, but correctly decided to delay its study until after this year's convention. President Draper has initiated several changes in the resolutions procedure for next week's convention.

HOUSING GUIDELINES. The Executive Committee will recommend several new guidelines for cities wishing to host the SBC. These should pass easily — judging by the housing problems the messengers will face

in Pittsburgh. Under the proposed guidelines the host city must offer 6,500 hotel rooms (3,000 of which must be within two miles of the convention center) and a convention hall which will seat at least 16,000 with 50,000 square feet in an exhibition hall in the same building complex. In addition, except for block reservations by the convention itself and Woman's Missionary Union in their headquarters hotels, all reservations will be by individuals ONLY — no more block reservations!

FUTURE CONVENTION SITES. Based on pre-convention discussion, the most controversial recommendation from the Executive Committee will be that the 1989 SBC be held in Las Vegas, Nev. The recommendation was approved by the committee on a 32 to 20 vote.

Advocates note the reasonable hotel rates, the evangelistic opportunities, and the encouragement to Nevada Southern Baptists.

Opponents cite the geographical distance from many Southern Baptists, the image which Las Vegas has, and the ridicule Southern Baptists will receive from independent fundamentalist groups.

The Executive Committee will also recommend that the 1990 SBC be held in New Orleans, La.

So much for the known business items on the SBC agenda. However, as at any Baptist meeting, motions may be made by any messenger.

This is the first time that the convention has met in Pittsburgh. We did meet once before in that state — 1972 in Philadelphia.

The 1983 SBC will be important to Southern Baptists, partly because of the business items on the agenda — but more specifically if the bitter controversies of recent conventions have subsided and we can truly have a session characterized by the "Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace."

GUEST EDITORIAL**Nominee's non-SBC positions**

By Bob Terry, editor

"The Word and Way," Jefferson City, Mo.

Those who recognize the name of Albert Lee Smith Jr. probably first heard it in 1980 when he was elected to Congress from Alabama's sixth district. That election made national headlines as an example of the power and influence of the Moral Majority which worked diligently to defeat incumbent John Buchanan.

Last year in New Orleans, Smith was nominated for first vice-president of the Southern Baptist Convention. He made the runoff before losing to John Sullivan.

Now Smith is back in the news as a nominee for membership on SBC Public Affairs Committee.

His Congressional background seems ideal for the assignment. What makes the nomination questionable are the positions Smith advocated during his term.

On June 17, 1981, Smith introduced legislation "to strengthen the American family and promote the virtues of family life through education, tax assistance and related measures." The idea sounds worthy, but the specific proposals in HR 3955 fly in the face of what Southern Baptists have historically advocated.

Smith's bill proposed parochial aid for private (including religious) elementary and secondary schools, colleges, and universities. Smith's proposal would have made possible tax deductions for the cost of tuition, fees, books, supplies, equipment required for courses of instruction, as well as "a reasonable allowance for meals and lodging" for those sending children to private and parochial schools.

It would return sectarian teaching of religion to public schools, declaring, "Notwithstanding any other provision of law, it shall be unlawful for any federal, state, or local educational agency or institution receiving any federal funds prohibit parents or representatives of the community from participating in decisions relating to the establishment, or continuation of courses relating to the study of religion."

Here the language is technical. The courts have ruled that academic study about religion is legitimate and legal. What has been prohibited is the indoctrination or sectarian approach of teaching religion. Studying about religion is legal in any school system in the land. The study of religion is prohibited. Smith's proposal would have returned the public classroom to the days when representatives of the most prevalent religious body in an area went into the public schools to indoctrinate the children in the beliefs of that particular religion.

Smith has clearly placed himself in opposition to consistent positions taken by Southern Baptists and fought for through the Public Affairs Committee and the Baptist Joint Committee.

Baptists have led the fight against parochial aid. Smith supports it.

Baptists have fought for religious freedom. Smith would return us to the days when children were forced by law to study the doctrines of a particular church.

In previous years, Southern Baptists have said they do not want individuals sitting in decision making positions as members of the Sunday School Board who do not use SBC literature in their churches. The messengers have demonstrated that they do not want individuals who are hostile to Southern Baptist seminaries as members of seminary boards and trustees. The same principle appears equally valid for the Public Affairs Committee.

If Smith is not in sympathy with the Southern Baptist position opposing parochial aid and if his views are contrary to the historic position of Southern Baptists concerning religious freedom, then perhaps Smith should remove himself from consideration as a nominee to the Public Affairs Committee and the Baptist Joint Committee.

Cicero's comment



By the editor

Cicero was at the local pharmacy picking up a few things for the Pittsburgh trip, when coming down the aisle with a heavy-laden shopping cart was B. "Red" Dee.

As we chatted, Red mentioned that he also was getting ready for the trip to the Southern Baptist Convention and was stocking up on needs.

"You are taking ALL of that?" asked Cicero.

"Right," acknowledged Dee. "These items will be helpful — and even necessary — in view of what is expected when the messengers gather in the Civic Arena. In fact, I wish every messenger would have these things with him."

With heightened curiosity I asked, "What are you taking with you?"

B. "Red" Dee began to show me his purchases.

"Here are several kinds of vitamins. I figure I will need them to keep up my energy level for those long reports, sermons, and business sessions."

He added that he was taking three boxes of Band-Aids to treat cutting remarks. "However, I don't think these will be adequate for treating those deep wounds that will doubtlessly occur — not to mention back stabbing."

Dee showed me several kinds of tranquilizers which would be helpful in case the business sessions get emotionally fraught. "I would wish that tranquilizers would be standard equipment given to the messengers at registration — at least one for each IBM ballot!"

"I also can get a bottle of calamine lotion to treat the 'rash' of anticipated motions and resolutions," Dee said. "It might also help for those things I expect to get 'under my skin.'"

A related item is some analgesic balm, for soothing bruised egos. He showed me two other items which he wished every messenger would have — mouthwash to sweeten up breath and words, and air deodorant to lift the heavy atmosphere that could permeate the Civic Arena.

"I plan to take along an extra pair of glasses to read all those resolutions that will be presented," Red continued. "And perhaps it would be good to have some sunglasses or safety goggles when reading those 'inflammatory' statements."

Other items in Red's basket were:

—Corn pads for when your "toes get stepped on."

—No-Doz tablets to stay awake and alert during long sessions.

—Ice bag to help keep a cool head.

—Ear plugs for protection if messengers shout at the president for recognition.

Cicero observed that B. "Red" Dee had every possible thing that a well-equipped messenger would need.

"Not quite," Dee interrupted. "I am looking for the Dramamine. It is supposed to be good for 'motion sickness,' and I expect a lot of motions next week that will make me sick!"

Braidfoot urges study of gambling, crime

NASHVILLE (BP) — A Southern Baptist ethicist has urged President Ronald Reagan to carry through with his announced plan to name a commission on organized crime and has suggested the link between gambling and organized crime be among the top priorities for the commission.

Larry D. Braidfoot, general counsel and director of research for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, told the president in a letter "such a commission would be helpful in focusing the concerns of criminal justice more specifically on the activities of organized crime rather than upon those who do not represent an ongoing threat to society and are good candidates for alternative sentencing.

"The commission could investigate thoroughly the link between legal and illegal gambling. Illegal gambling represents one of the major sources of income of organized crime," he wrote.

Braidfoot told the president that in 1980 the estimated gross income of organized crime was \$150-billion, an amount surpassed only by the income of the oil industry.

"Organized crime pays no taxes, skims profits from their businesses, and channels this money into legitimate businesses. In this manner, organized crime strangles the competitive environment in which legitimate businesses

seek to provide jobs and earn justified returns," he wrote.

Braidfoot said organized crime represents one of the greatest threats to the long-range economic stability of our nation.

He also told the president organized crime has a negative impact on a wide range of special moral concerns such as citizenship, family life, race relations, and alcohol and drug abuse. "Drugs, gambling, and prostitution are but three avenues by which family life and moral decency are eroded by organized crime," he wrote.

Braidfoot also pointed out to Reagan that many contend the link of organized crime to gambling can be broken by legalizing gambling. "Instead, gambling seems to flourish in an environment in which gambling is legal," he stressed. "The true relationship between legal and illegal gambling needs to be more clearly understood because of the massive campaign being waged to legalize gambling, ostensibly to help provide additional sources of revenue for both states and the nation.

"Unwise public policy should not be established which will whet appetites for

gambling and create customers for organized crime from among the citizens who should be protected from organized crime."

Braidfoot also called on the president to oppose H.R. 85, a bill now pending which would establish a national lottery.

"Gambling is bad for morality, for politics, and for economics," he wrote.

Citizen's Corner

By Jerry Self
Public Affairs and
Christian Life
Consultant



Prayer and Bible reading in school continues to be a greatly misunderstood issue.

A year ago the Tennessee General Assembly passed a law requiring one minute of prayer and meditation to begin the school day. That law was struck down in a judicial decision. This year the General Assembly passed the same law but removed prayer from the law.

These actions have gotten considerable attention in the media. What has not been discussed is the fact that current Tennessee laws lists as a duty of teachers the reading of the Bible at the opening of each school day (TCA 49-1307). Current Tennessee law also allows voluntary prayer by pupils without any prescribed form or content to those prayers (TCA 49-1023).

Apparently these two laws have been ignored both by those who would choose to make use of them or those who would oppose them.

On the national scene, the president again appears to be pushing a proposed constitutional amendment to allow prayer in schools. In clarification of the amendment, the president has stated that some governmental institution representative would have to write or approve whatever prayers are used in the public schools.

Our heritage of spontaneous prayer, free of any ritual structure is healthy. Either in terms of liturgy or liberty it is hard to see how Baptists can favor government control of prayers.

FMB starts work in 100th country

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — The reassignment of Jonathan and La Homa Singleton from one Windward Island to another — St. Lucia — places Southern Baptist missionaries in 100 overseas countries.

The Singletons moved south just a little more than 100 miles from the island of Dominica in order to begin the new work. They had been stationed in Dominica since missionary appointment in 1979.

The Caribbean nation of St. Lucia is a former British colony which has enjoyed full independence since 1979. Baptist work has been limited primarily to the capital, Castries, and surrounding area. The predominant religion of the island's 140,000 people is Roman Catholic.

The beginning of work on St. Lucia coincides with the transfer June 1 of missionaries to Angola, Swaziland, and Netherlands Antilles.

Personal Perspective

By Tom Madden
TBC Executive
Secretary-Treasurer



Recently I received a new book written by John Sisemore entitled, *Church Growth Through the Sunday School*.

The author reminds us that the church was born in an atmosphere of growth. It was commissioned to grow. It was promised that it would grow. In the early days of the New Testament church, it almost exploded with growth.

I have long been convinced that God wants His church to grow.

I believe He wants the church to grow numerically. The book of Acts recorded the early numerical growth of the church as they won people to Jesus.

Each member of the church is to grow in stature. Some of the areas we are to grow include knowledge, fellowship, doctrine, and prayer.

The church may grow in influence. This is often a byproduct of quantity and quality growth. A church grows in all areas of stewardship, including giving to missions through the Cooperative Program.

Still another way a church can grow is by beginning new churches and mission points. This may mean crossing barriers and geographical lines. The church expands in ever widening circles. It not only extends geographically, but multiplies internationally.

A church must grow — that is its nature. A church must grow — that is its mission. A church must grow — that is its motivation.

A church CAN grow — in any place, in any environment, in any culture, and in any civilization.

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Alvin C. Shackelford, Editor

Charlie Warren
Associate Editor

Baptist and Reflector

Steve Higdon
Assistant Editor

Betty Walker, Production Assistant

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Man with a burden builds a new

When William T. Vernon, a black Southern Baptist pastor, moved back home to his native Nashville, he could hardly believe there was not a single black Southern Baptist church in the entire metropolitan area.

He was so shocked, he set out to do something about it. In 1981, he helped establish Nashville's Twelve Robes Baptist Church.

For more than a decade, Vernon had served as pastor of two black Southern Baptist churches in Michigan. Yet, back home where Southern Baptists are strong, there was not even one. (Nashville now has a church which is dually-aligned with the National Baptist Convention and the SBC, and three black mission congregations.)

"That was astonishing to me after having served in a pioneer state where there were many black Southern Baptist churches," Vernon admitted.

Vernon's background

The son of a National Baptist preacher, Vernon originally left his native Tennessee to attend Wilberforce (Ohio) University, a Methodist college. After graduation, he went on to earn a degree from Payne Theological Seminary in Wilberforce.

Vernon returned to Tennessee in 1955 and became a Methodist pastor, serving churches in middle Tennessee until 1963. He moved to Michigan and organized a church finance business, helping struggling black churches of several denominations establish church bond programs. Through this, he began to "rub shoulders" with Baptists.

In 1966, he was called as the bivocational pastor of the 17-member Antioch Baptist Church, Pontiac, Mich. He led the church to affiliate with the Southern Baptist Convention in 1969. Within five years, six other black Baptist churches in the area had joined Southern Baptists in the Oakland County Baptist Association.

Growing churches

Vernon, equal employment opportunities coordinator for General Motors from 1971 to 1976, served as moderator of the association from 1972 to 1974 and saw the Antioch Baptist Church grow to 1,150 members by the time he resigned in 1976.

In 1978, he established the Clear Creek Baptist Church in Detroit, a Southern Baptist church affiliated with the Greater Detroit Baptist Association. When he resigned the pastorate in 1981, the church had grown to 370 members.

Now committed to remain a Southern Baptist, Vernon said he was attracted by Southern Baptists' Sunday School concepts and materials and the denomination's "friendly outreach" and general concepts of church growth.

A community in need

Soon after moving home to Nashville, Vernon became aware of a densely-populated, predominately-black area of east Nashville, between Dickerson Pike and Ellington Parkway.

A high-crime area known for drugs and prostitution, it leads Nashville in juvenile crime, drug arrests, and break-ins. Unemployment is astronomical. Vernon estimates 90 percent of the people are unchurched, although most have attended churches sometime in their past.

"The Lord laid a burden on my heart," Vernon said. "Somebody had to go in there and say, 'God loves you and God

doesn't write us off because we've made mistakes.'"

Starting a church

He began to spend time in the community, just talking with people. He met Charles Kimbrough, now assistant pastor of the church, who shared his concern for the community and his desire for an evangelical church.

Kimbrough arranged a meeting between Vernon and Paul Durham, pastor of Radnor Baptist Church, Nashville.

Durham listened to his story and remembered participating in a revival at Grace Baptist Church's old location in that neighborhood years earlier. Grace has since relocated.

"I recalled that hundreds of people attended the services but they were not community people," Durham said. "I knew there were thousands of people there without a Southern Baptist witness."

Association helps

Durham set up a meeting between Vernon and Carl Duck, executive director of the Nashville Baptist Association. Duck encouraged Vernon to contact Fred Johnson, pastor of Grace Baptist Church, to seek sponsorship for a Baptist witness in that area.

Duck also referred the matter to the association's missions committee to determine ways the association could help Vernon start a Baptist church in the area.

From the beginning, Vernon realized a

black Southern Baptist church in Nashville, where Southern Baptist work is strong, had to start with a "success" image.

Finding a building

In searching for a place to begin meeting that would project such an image, Vernon discovered a church building that had been vacated when two Church of Christ congregations merged.

Within several weeks, Vernon met with the missions committee of the Nashville association, Fred Johnson at Grace Baptist Church, the elders of what is now Northside Church of Christ, and officers at Citizens Bank of Nashville.

The association offered \$2,000 and arranged an additional \$5,000 from the Tennessee Baptist Convention's fund for new mission work. Grace Baptist Church offered \$2,000 a year to assist the new church. The Church of Christ elders and Citizens Bank began to work out a plan for the purchase of the church building. In the meantime, they agreed to let the Baptists meet in the building rent free if they would pay the utilities.

Services begin

The first service of the Twelve Robes Baptist Church was held Aug. 2, 1981.

"It was not until Jan. 8, 1982, that we got court approval to purchase the building," Vernon explained. "We paid only utilities during that period. That gave us an opportunity to grow and begin to develop."

A sign was erected outside the build-

ing, "Twelve Robes Baptist Church, affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention."

"We wanted no false notions," Vernon said. "We wanted people to know up front that we are Southern Baptists and proud of it."

Financing the building

The building was offered at a total cost of \$135,000. Vernon placed his own home as collateral for the first \$30,000 for the first 12 months. Citizens Bank arranged a plan where the church would pay only interest for the first three years at a reduced interest rate.

The association's missions committee offered a gift from proceeds of the sale of the Brookside Baptist Church building. Surprisingly, Vernon turned it down.

"It was a generous offer but it would have been detrimental to our congregation," Vernon explained. "I've seen what a welfare mentality can do to my people."

Instead, Vernon arranged a \$200,000 bond issue which would allow the church to renovate and pay off the mortgage while "supporting ourselves rather than taking a handout."

The bonds are offered for sale to in-



A HELPING HAND — Betty Coleman (right), director of the day-care program at Twelve Robes Baptist Church, assists Asantewa Hollie as she takes a few shaky steps while learning to walk.



Name 'Twelve'

Twelve Robes Baptist Church is as unusual as its name. But the name gives a clue about how the Nashville church functions.

The "Twelve Robes" reflects the 12 tribes of Israel and the 12 disciples of Jesus Christ.

When William T. Vernon, now pastor at Twelve Robes, was pastor of Clear Creek Baptist Church, Detroit, Mich., a black Southern Baptist church, the deacons asked him to develop a new concept of church organization that would be Biblically based and would work well in a black community.

"The concept grew out of the question, 'What did God do when He established His nation?'" Vernon explained. "God told Moses to distribute the work load among 12 tribal leaders."

church

Stories and photos by Charlie Warren

dividuals" at six percent interest. "We are asking mission-minded people to invest in us for six percent interest," Vernon stated. He is aware there are many better financial investments available to individuals, but "this is a great investment for Southern Baptists" in terms of spiritual return, he said.

The bond program began in January 1983. The church still has more than \$100,000 in bonds to sell.

For the first several months, Vernon served with no salary. Now, he receives a monthly pastor's supplement from the

Home Mission Board and the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

The membership of the church has grown to more than 100 and a traditional Southern Baptist program is offered — Sunday School, church training, music ministry, mission organizations, Wednesday night activities.

Community ministries

There are also some untraditional programs.

"The church should serve the total man — not just on Sundays," Vernon

said. "We believe the church should operate seven days a week."

Day care is offered to working mothers in the community five days a week from 6 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. The children receive breakfast, a hot lunch, and a program of activities for \$25 per week.

Sewing classes and ceramic classes are offered once a week. Music lessons (voice, piano, and organ) are offered by arrangement. A women's support group meets weekly as a social outlet and to discuss mutual problems.

In the summer, a youth recreational

program and Vacation Bible School are offered.

A satellite medical clinic, part of the family medicine program at Meharry Medical College, operates year-round from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m. weekdays and 9 a.m. to 12 noon on Saturdays.

Outreach, evangelism

All of these programs are viewed by the church as outreach. Volunteer workers are trained in evangelism through an Evangelism Explosion program of the church. The various programs, besides providing a ministry, serve to bring people to the facilities and offer the church an opportunity to touch lives.

"When I drive through this community, I see tremendous waste of human energy," Vernon commented. "I see people standing idle — black and white."

He said he sees people who are on drugs, who have sold themselves as prostitutes, and who have met with hard economic times. "They're reaching out for help and there's been nobody here to help them," he said. "We're here to try to help a lot of people make it through."

Help wanted

He is grateful for help he has received from many Southern Baptist churches in the area. Churches have given materials, equipment, pianos, literature, song books, and physical labor. But Vernon knows he needs even more help.

"We have to tear down some traditions and do some non-traditional things to meet the needs of these people," he said. "We've got to do something radically different and we can't do it alone. It's too much for one man and a group of impoverished people."

He also wants to build a bridge between the black and white communities. "We need to remove the myths," he said. "We don't know anything about each other. If we are going to tell the world that Jesus is for all men, black and white, we've got to build bridges as Southern Baptists. If we love Jesus Christ, we've got to learn to love one another."

He said that money is not the only answer. He wants some longtime Southern Baptists to offer themselves to help, especially with leadership training.

Go where the people are

Vernon is quick to point out one area in which he feels Southern Baptists too often have failed.

"We've put money into outlying areas where there is an anticipated population while people in densely-populated areas are going to hell and we don't really care," he charged. "Now that bothers me."

"We need to look at the large population areas where we don't have churches. In these areas, we can get more for our money."

"When we turn our backs on areas like this, it says something about the church not functioning as it is supposed to function," he concluded.

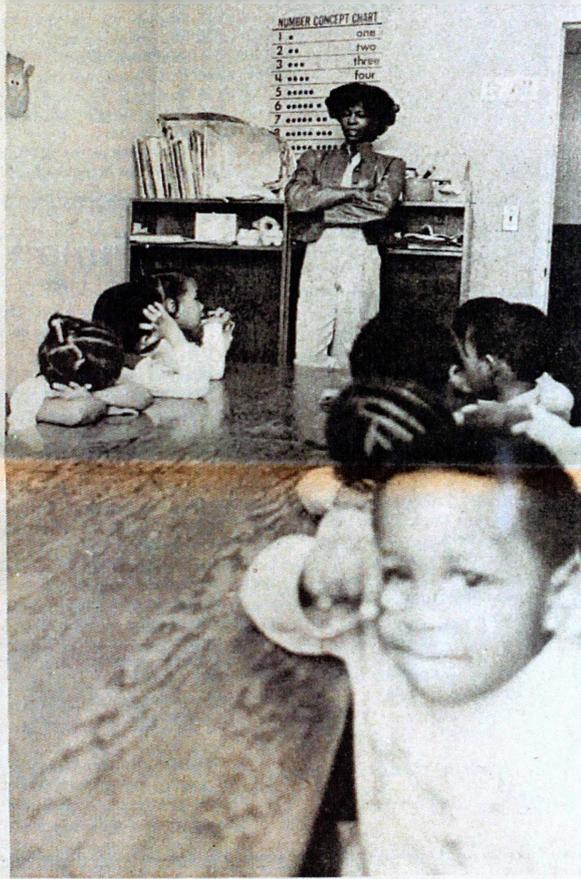
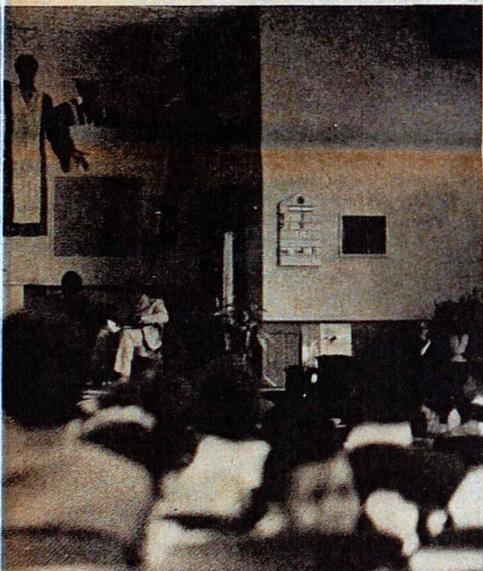
Big dreams

Vernon is dreaming big dreams for Twelve Robes — dreams he intends to translate into realities. The biggest is his goal for 30,000 members.

"We serve a God that makes things happen and we're going to make things happen," he said. "I don't want to stop when I reach 200 people. I want to grow until we're reaching 10,000 and then I won't be satisfied," he said.

Of the 30,000-member goal, he added, "We've asked God for it. We've claimed it. We've got the faith to do it."

WORSHIP AND OUTREACH — William Vernon (photo below), pastor of Twelve Robes Baptist Church, Nashville, preaches to his congregation on a recent Sunday morning. Membership of the young church now exceeds 100, but Vernon has a goal to grow to 30,000 members. The church is reaching out through community ministries such as its day-care program. Operating five days a week, the program is a ministry to working mothers in the community. Volunteer workers, trained in Evangelism Explosion, try to meet the spiritual needs of the parents. Joann Daniels (photo at right) teaches a class of three-year-olds, holding the attention of all but one little lad.



Twelve Robes' reflects concept

He also considered the Biblical fact that Jesus chose 12 disciples.

The Nashville church, therefore, is divided into 12 "tribes," each with an assigned leader. Every member of the church is assigned to whichever tribe reflects his or her talent and interest: Reuben (evangelism), Simeon (youth), Levi (temporal affairs), Naphtali (music, drama, arts), Gad (promotion and programming), Asher (religious development), Issachar (business development), Zebulun (public relations), Joseph (physical maintenance), Benjamin (membership and community welfare), Judah (education), and Dan (political and social action).

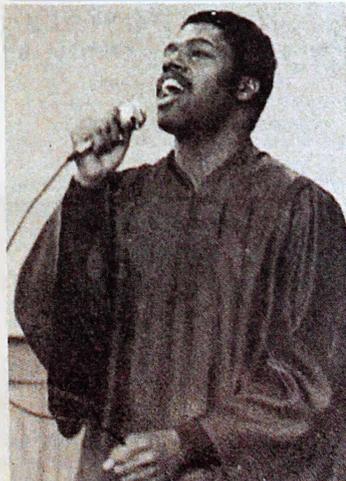
Each tribal leader meets monthly with his tribe to plan and discuss needs of the group and of the church

itself. The leader then communicates these plans and ideas to a monthly tribal council, comprised of Vernon, his associate ministers, and each tribal leader.

"This allows two-way communication," Vernon said. "It also fits into the total ministry of the church by using each person's expertise. The budget is designed to meet the financial needs of each tribe."

Being a member of a tribe creates an attitude of "belonging" among new members, Vernon pointed out. If they feel they "have a family," the attrition rate will decrease.

"The distinction of the robes worn by the tribal leaders signify the discipline of worship and the dedication to humility through the absence of vain pride," Vernon added.



SPECIAL MUSIC — Robert Edwards is one of several soloists in the church.

Southern Baptist Convention

Pittsburgh Civic Arena, June 14-16, 1983

THEME: Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace

Tuesday Morning, June 14

9:00 Music for inspiration
9:30 Call to order; congregational singing; prayer
9:40 Registration and constitution of Convention; Committee on Order of Business
9:50 Welcome by C. Edward Price
9:55 Response by Dan C. Stringer
10:00 Theme interpretation by Joel Gregory
10:15 Announcement of Committee on Committees, Resolutions Committee, and Tellers
10:20 Executive Committee report (Part 1)
11:15 Introduction of business and resolutions

11:25 Congregational singing
11:30 Music
11:35 President's address by James T. Draper Jr.
12:00 Benediction

Tuesday Afternoon, June 14

1:30 Music
2:30 Congregational singing; prayer
2:40 Theme interpretation by Joel Gregory
2:55 Messenger information survey
3:05 Election of officers
3:25 Introduction of business and resolutions
3:35 Congregational singing
3:40 Executive Committee report (Part 2)
4:05 Sunday School Board report
4:35 Business; election of officers; Committee on Committees report; Committee on Boards report; miscellaneous business
5:20 Benediction

Tuesday Evening, June 14

6:50 Music for inspiration
7:15 Congregational singing; prayer
7:30 Foreign Mission Board report
8:30 Business and election of officers
8:40 Congregational singing
8:45 Music
8:50 Bold Mission Thrust report
9:00 Benediction

Wednesday Morning, June 15

9:00 Music for inspiration
9:30 Congregational singing; prayer
9:40 Election of officers; miscellaneous business
9:55 Theme interpretation by Joel Gregory
10:10 Southern Baptist Theological Seminary report
10:20 Annuity Board report
10:40 Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary report
10:50 Brotherhood Commission report
11:00 New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary report
11:10 Education Commission report
11:20 American Bible Society report
11:25 Business; Resolutions Committee (first report)
11:55 Congregational singing
12:00 Music
12:05 Scripture and prayer; Convention sermon by James L. Pleitz
12:30 Benediction

NO WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

Wednesday Night, June 15

6:30 Music for inspiration
7:00 Congregational singing; prayer
7:10 Presentation of past SBC presidents
7:25 Special recognition of Grady C. Cothen
7:30 Home Mission Board report
8:30 Benediction

Thursday Morning, June 16

9:00 Music for inspiration
9:30 Congregational singing; prayer
9:40 Southern Baptist Foundation report
9:50 Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary report
10:00 Commission on the American Baptist Seminary report
10:05 Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary report
10:15 Theme interpretation by Joel Gregory
10:30 Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary report
10:40 Congregational singing
10:45 Business session; Resolutions Committee (final); miscellaneous business
12:30 Benediction
Thursday Afternoon, June 16
2:00 Music for inspiration

2:30 Congregational singing; prayer
2:40 Introduction of fraternal messengers
2:50 Historical Commission report
3:00 Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs report
3:10 Christian Life Commission report
3:20 Stewardship Commission report
3:30 Baptist World Alliance report
3:40 Congregational singing
3:45 Theme interpretation by Joel Gregory
4:00 Business session
5:00 Benediction

Thursday Night, June 16

6:45 Music for inspiration
7:15 Congregational singing; prayer
7:25 Introduction of local committee
7:30 Radio and Television Commission report
7:45 Woman's Missionary Union report
7:55 Congregational singing
8:00 Special emphasis: "The Laity — Ministers in the World"
8:10 Music
8:15 "Unity of the Spirit — In Ministry" by Charles W. Colson
9:00 Benediction

Tennesseans earn NOBTS degrees

NEW ORLEANS — Eight Tennesseans were among the more than 220 May graduates of New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary.

Claude King of Murfreesboro, Harold Smith of Memphis, and Ed Steelman of Nashville received the master of divinity degree.

Receiving the master of religious education degree were Rex Baker of Humboldt, Douglas Brown of Morristown, Richard Grammer of Chattanooga, and Thomas Stegall of Jackson.

Bill Spencer, minister of music at Germantown Baptist Church, Germantown, received the master of church music degree.

Baptist Polity

AS I SEE IT

James L. Sullivan

A comprehensive, contemporary, and practical volume, **BAPTIST POLITY AS I SEE IT** interprets how Baptists do their work together. Rather than a documentary report, it includes charts, illustrations, understandings, and impressions of how and why the denomination functions, relates Baptists to a particular polity pattern, and shows the unique places of its institutions, boards, state conventions, associations, and local churches. \$8.95

James L. Sullivan has observed and served Baptists for more than fifty years. A former president of The Sunday School Board, he is a widely known speaker and writer. He resides in Nashville, Tennessee.



At your Baptist Book Store

BROADMAN

Woman's Missionary Union

June 12-13, 1983 — Pittsburgh Hilton Hotel and Stanley Theatre

THEME: "Building Bridges"

(Woman's Missionary Union does not provide times for program items)

SUNDAY AFTERNOON, 2:00-4:30 p.m.
Grand Ballroom, Pittsburgh Hilton

"Building Bridges," Peggy Masters
"Bridge Builders of Pittsburgh," Cheryl Steele, Paul Baxter, Hollis Half, James Cravens, Ann Cravens
Special music, congregational music, prayer
"Building the Bridge of New Work," Grady Cox
Special music
"Spanning the Century," Brazilian Baptist Centennial
Congregational hymn
Commissioning service: church planter apprentices, Margarette Stevenson, David Benham, Irvin Dawson, Jack Redford, Betty Gilreath
"Reflections from Lottie Moon," monologue by Sheila Bailey

"Financial pillars in missions," Robert T. Banks Jr., Carl Johnson, James L. Powell Jr.

Special music
"Building on the Foundations of Baptist Cooperation," James H. Currin
Musical drama: world premier of "A Call to My People"

Congregational music, business, election of officers, special music
"Laborers Building Together," Carolyn Weatherford
"Reflections from Lottie Moon" by Sheila Bailey

MONDAY AFTERNOON, 2:00-4:15 p.m.
Grand Ballroom, Pittsburgh Hilton

"Building Bridges," Betty Smith
Prayer
"Bridges to the New Poor," Paul R. Adkins;
"Bridges into Burned-Out Bronx," Samuel Simpson;
"Bridges into Inner-city Philadelphia," Gaynor Yancey
Special music

"The 25th Anniversary of Literacy Missions in the SBC," M. Wendell Belew, Mildred Blankenship, Lillian Isaacs, Bea Cagle
Introducing "The Mission Action Book," Ruth Miller

Special music and congregational music
"Meeting Human Need in the Philippines," Harold Watson
"Reflections from Lottie Moon" by Sheila Bailey

MONDAY NIGHT, 7:30 p.m.

Stanley Theatre (Free tickets distributed by state and national WMU offices.)

"Building Bridges," Christine Gregory
Congregational music, prayer
Introducing "Holding the Ropes," Helen J. Parks

Introductions of foreign missionaries; presenting Acteans
"Why We Want Unity," Dorothy E. Sample
Special music, prayer
"The Faith that Overcomes," Gerhard Class
Special music

"The China Legacy — Bridging Time," Carter Morgan

"China Today — Bridging the Great Wall," Bob and Rosalie Hunt
Introduction of "Journey Home," William R. O'Brien

"Reflections from Lottie Moon" by Sheila Bailey
World premier of "Journey Home," color film on the life of Lottie Moon

SBC Pastors' Conference

June 12-13, 1983 — Pittsburgh Civic Arena, Pittsburgh, Penn.

SUNDAY NIGHT, June 12

6:30 Singing, invocation, congregational hymn, special music
7:00 Message by Arthur Blessitt
7:45 Congregational hymn
7:50 President's remarks by James T. Draper
7:55 Testimony: "Tried By Fire" by Mark Stone
8:20 Congregational hymn, prayer, offering, special music

8:45 Message by Charles F. Stanley

MONDAY MORNING, June 13

8:45 Singing, invocation, congregational hymn, special music
9:05 Message by Fred Lowery
9:30 Congregational hymn, special music
9:40 Message by Ron Long
10:05 Congregational hymn, prayer, offering, special music
10:25 Message by Morris Chapman
10:50 Congregational hymn, special music
11:10 Message by Jim Hyllton
11:35 Benediction

MONDAY AFTERNOON, June 13

1:30 Singing, prayer, congregational hymn, special music
1:50 Message by Charles Campbell
2:15 Congregational hymn, special music
2:25 Message by Ron Herrod
2:50 Congregational hymn, prayer, offering, special music
3:05 Election of officers
3:20 Special music
3:25 Message by Len Turner
3:50 Congregational hymn, special music
4:00 Message by Mike Gilchrist
4:25 Benediction

MONDAY NIGHT, June 13

6:30 Singing, prayer, special music
6:55 Message by Adrian Rogers
7:20 Congregational hymn, special music
7:30 Message by Edward V. Hill
7:55 Congregational hymn, prayer, offering, special music
8:15 Message by Stephen Olford
8:40 Introduction of officers, benediction

'Both sides are wrong,' Sullivan warns Baptists

By Jim Lowry

NASHVILLE (BP)— Southern Baptists, like the mighty Mississippi River and its tributaries, gain strength when they are joined by others who are moving the same direction, according to 1977 SBC President James L. Sullivan.

The secret of the 138-year-old Southern Baptist Convention has been the constant channeling of diverse Baptist opinions toward the common goal of sharing the gospel with the world, said Sullivan.

Sullivan, who served 23 years as president of the Baptist Sunday School Board, contends many of the problems faced by the denomination today are caused by a serious misunderstanding of Baptist polity. He added there is an equally serious lack of self-understanding by the leaders in the current conflict.

"Both sides of the present controversy are wrong," he continued, "because one is operating at one end of the Baptist continuum and the other is operating at the other end. One is wrong in position and the other is wrong in attitude. They are carrying on a war that the people in the center don't understand. The people in the center, who are the majority, are disgusted with both sides.

"The leaders in the conflict do not understand themselves because they think they are at the center of the Southern Baptist religious continuum, when in reality they are not," Sullivan explained. "You cannot administer from a fringe position; it must be in the center of the constantly fluctuating constituency served.

"You destroy the backbone of the

denomination when the group on the left and right sides try to greatly enlarge their followings," he said. "If the middle group divides into sides, it will split the convention."

Sullivan warned theological extremism is dangerous to the convention. He said the denomination's greatest challenges are from groups who try to do things legalistically and literally, because Southern Baptists are not that way.

"The truths of the Bible are literally true, but God used history, revelation, analysis, parables, and every other available teaching tool to communicate truths which are absolutely profound," he said.

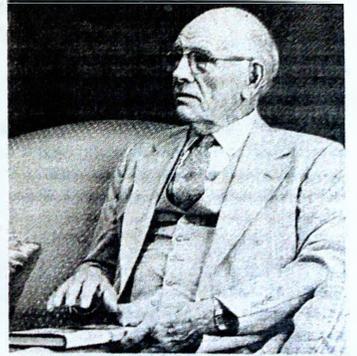
"For a democracy like the Southern Baptist Convention to exist, both sides are necessary," Sullivan said. "We will always have critics, but that is good because we need to hear both viewpoints. It is healthy for both sides to have full freedom of voice."

Sullivan said he believes, based on 57 years of involvement in the denomination, the problems today are not related to doctrine, but to polity. In effect, church members have little or no knowledge of how and why Baptists govern themselves.

"In the Southern Baptist Convention, every individual, church, association, and state convention is autonomous," Sullivan said. "If each member goes his own way without thought for the other, it creates tensions and misunderstandings."

In a new book published by Broadman Press, *Baptist Polity As I See It*, Sullivan writes, "Our polity takes away all threats and appearances of coercion so that each church and person can participate without question marks or reservations."

He further explained problems in theological positioning in the denomination arise when people take themselves too seriously, feelings become intense, humor is considered out of order, and diversity is not allowed.



BOOK ON POLITY — James L. Sullivan, former president of the Sunday School Board, discusses his new book, *Baptist Polity as I See It*.

Sullivan arrived at his present understanding of the denomination through his experience as a local pastor for more than 20 years and his opportunities to serve as a state convention president and on the boards of numerous Baptist colleges, hospitals, and agencies. He explained Baptist polity calls for mutual trust for the system and the people in it.

"Because our denomination is built on trust and voluntary cooperation, it is easy for offhand innuendos to reduce confidence," Sullivan said. "There are justifiable complaints, because there is no perfect denomination, but affirmation and cooperation are important.

"The current denominational conflict is one Baptist group promoting itself against another, rather than a broad base in which diverse groups cooperate side by side for the propagation of the gospel across the world," he explained.

In comparison, he said, "It's like the river trying to reverse itself back to the stream which makes it so powerful. Only with the diversity can we influence the world."

Baptist disaster units aid tornado, flood victims

NASHVILLE (BP)— Weather poured disaster across Mississippi and Texas the last week in May and Baptist disaster relief units played key roles in the aftermath.

Southeast Texas was swept by tornadoes and flooding while the Pearl River basin in Mississippi overflowed in what was almost a rerun of the 1979 Easter flood.

The Baptist General Convention of Texas disaster relief mobile unit, with an

emergency relief task force of volunteers from across the state, set up at Bethel Baptist Church in New Caney (near the center of the worst tornado activity). They worked alongside local Baptists for two days feeding and assisting victims.

In Mississippi the state convention's relief unit served 15,000 hot meals to flood victims and relief workers from the parking lot of Colonial Heights Baptist Church in Jackson — the same location the unit used in 1979. Twenty-one task force members put in 336 man-hours and 135 church volunteers totaled another 540 hours.

An estimated 1,500 homes and businesses were flooded in Mississippi, with the Pearl River reaching 39.6 feet at one gauge. Each day Red Cross volunteers carried meals from the Baptist outdoor kitchen to where they were needed. Hundreds of personal care kits made up by Mississippi Royal Ambassadors and Girls in Action were also given out.

Two other aspects of the disaster ministry were utilized in Jackson — counseling and childcare. Most counselors reported high spirits in the flooded neighborhoods, though Bill Davidson, minister of education at Colonial Heights church, said he could easily tell those who have "close walks with God" from those who do not.

Childcare was also located at Colonial Heights with 16 children attending the first day while their parents began cleanup.

In Texas, officials were amazed at the relatively few deaths and injuries despite the more than one dozen tornadoes that pillaged the Houston-Conroe area. Many could share the sentiments of Jim Palmer, pastor of Bethel Baptist Church in New Caney, who preached the Sunday after the storm: "I don't have water or electricity, and I can't take a shower — but I've got Jesus and that is all I need."

No Baptist churches reported significant damage but Peach Creek Baptist Assembly near New Caney had several buildings damaged and at least 200 large trees blown over.

In the week following the tornadoes, the San Jacinto River and Caney Creek swelled out of their banks. Three area Baptist churches served as shelters and relief centers and volunteers and aid came from numerous other Baptist churches throughout Texas.

Jeanette Hunker dies in Taiwan

TAIPEI, Taiwan (BP)— Southern Baptist Missionary Jeanette Hunker died May 30 in Taiwan after a long battle with cancer. She was 64 years old.

When the veteran missionary became too ill to go to class and teach her seminary students, the students came to her. She taught at home until about six weeks before her death.

Mrs. Hunker, said a colleague, was determined to live to see the class of 1983 graduate at Taiwan Baptist Theological Seminary in Taipei. She died on the evening of graduation day.

Highly respected by missionaries and Chinese Baptists, Mrs. Hunker taught religious education at the seminary for 30 years. Her husband, Missionary W. Carl Hunker, has been seminary president and vice-president and an active professor and pastor.

The Hunkers went to China after World War II and taught at Yates Academy, Soochow. They worked with Chinese in the Philippines after 1949 and transferred to Taiwan in 1952. In addition to teaching, Mrs. Hunker worked with Baptist women throughout Taiwan, training leaders and helping local organizations. She also worked in churches in Taipei.

Born in Texas, Mrs. Hunker was a graduate of Texarkana (Tex.) Junior College; Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge; and the Woman's Missionary Union Training School (now merged with Southern Baptist Theological Seminary), Louisville, Ky.

The Hunkers were appointed in 1946 by the Foreign Mission Board. She is survived by her husband and two children, David Hunker and Joyce Lynn Maslin, both of Kansas City, Mo.

Tanner urges messengers to settle Canadian issue

By Patti Stephenson

ATLANTA (BP)— The future of Southern Baptist work in Canada must be charted by the will of the Southern Baptist Convention body, according to William G. Tanner, president of the SBC's Home Mission Board.

The recurring question of whether to seat messengers from Canadian Southern Baptist churches at the SBC is expected to surface at the upcoming session in Pittsburgh through a motion to amend the SBC's Constitution. The Foreign Mission Board has announced its opposition to the effort.

Tanner, who favors including the Canadian churches, explained the Home Mission Board has not taken a public stand supporting such action because "it's not the position of SBC agencies to instruct the convention, but rather the prerogative of the SBC to instruct its agencies."

Tanner said "the unusual growth of Southern Baptists in Canada has not been through work initiated by the Home Mission Board but rather through the Home Mission Board responding to needs and requests from Canada at the

SBC's bidding."

Since the HMB began responding to Canadian Baptists' call for assistance in the 1950s, "work in Canada has grown in an unprecedented manner," Tanner noted. In the past five years baptisms have risen 43 percent, total membership of Southern Baptists in Canada has increased 37 percent, and total giving to SBC missions by Canadian Southern Baptists is up 178 percent.

The HMB leader observed the Canadian Southern Baptist churches are already part of the Northwest Baptist Convention. "If it's logical for them to affiliate with the Northwest convention and for the SBC to accept their financial support of its missions causes, then it's illogical to deny them full membership in the SBC," he said.

Tanner said he has "no problem with the motion being referred for study if that is the will of the messengers." The Foreign Mission Board has recommended the proposal be referred to the Executive Committee, the Home Mission Board, and the Foreign Mission Board for joint study with a report to be submitted at the SBC's 1984 session.

BIBLE BOOK SERIES

Lesson for June 12

Elijah confronts Baalism

By Jack Parker, pastor
Forest Hill Baptist Church, Parrottsville

Basic Passage: 1 Kings 17:1 to 18:46

Focal Passages: 1 Kings 17:1; 18:21-22, 26-27, 33, 36-39

In 1 Kings 17-19, we read of four dramatic events in the life of the prophet Elijah.

The prediction of the drought and events at Zarephath, where Elijah raised up the widow's son, are recorded in chapter 17.

Chapter 18 describes the contest on Mount Carmel, where God dramatically accepted Elijah's sacrifice and the 450 prophets of Baal failed to obtain response from their false god.

In chapter 19, the prophet flees to Mount Horab to escape the wrath of Queen Jezebel. While there the Lord ministers to his needs.

All this takes place during the rule of Ahab of whom the Bible said, "Ahab . . . did evil in the sight of the Lord more than all who were before him" (1 Kings 16:30).

The prophet (17:1)

Elijah appeared on the scene suddenly and unannounced to tell Ahab of the impending three-and-a-half-year drought. He gave no reason for his condemnation. Probably Ahab already had some awareness of his sin, since sin is not committed through innocence.

We know little of Elijah's background, except that he was from Tishbe in Gilead. His name means "the Lord is my God." His heritage placed his home near the desert. Thus, his people were probably wanderers. Such a culture usually opposed centralized government, and these people opposed efforts to dilute their faith with mixtures of false religions.

After he delivered God's message of judgment, God directed Elijah to brook Cherith where He fed him with meat and bread delivered by ravens.

The challenge (18:21-22)

One writer called this passage "The Lord versus Baal." Elijah's question, "How long halt ye between two opinions?" indicated the people were "on the fence." They had not totally rejected Jehovah, but they sought to combine their worship with Jehovah, Baal, and Asherah.

Since Baal was supposedly the god of heavens, Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal to call upon him to demonstrate

his powers from the heavens.

In advance of the decision as to victory, Elijah admonished, "If the Lord be God, follow Him, but if Baal then follow him."

God's prophet was so confident, he did not hesitate to stand against 450 false prophets.

The impotent power of Baal (18:26-27)

It is interesting that Elijah offered the false prophets first opportunity. If they had succeeded that would have ended the contest.

They prayed to Baal all morning, but there was no answer. Evidently they became so burdened and full of anxiety that they leaped upon the altar in their excitement (18:26).

For six hours, Elijah remained quiet. At noon, he began to mock them (18:27). The next two verses (18:29-30) indicate additional anxiety after Elijah mocked them. Still there was no response from Baal.

Proving God's power (18:33)

This verse ranks with verse 22 in witnessing Elijah's faith. In verse 22 he was willing to stand against 450 false prophets. In this verse, he added additional factors into the situation, knowing in advance that God would answer.

Elijah allowed the sacrifice and the wood to be saturated in water. Verse 35 reported the trenches around the altar were also filled with the overflow. Yet God's spokesman still trusted God to answer by fire.

The power of God (18:36-39)

After Elijah prepared the altar so as to avoid charges of trickery, he calmly prayed. He asked God for a response that would let people know Jehovah was God and Elijah was His servant.

God answered! Fire fell! It consumed the sacrifice, the wood, the stones, the dust, and the water that overflowed into the trench.

Those who witnessed the contest then fell on their faces and acknowledged, "The Lord, He is God."

Conclusion

This lesson proves again the ability of God to bless the servant who is dedicated to Him. God took a servant of whom little was known and turned him into one of the mighty prophets of the Old Testament.

When Elijah prayed for power, he asked for it to be to the glory of God. When he stood for God, he was unafraid. He knew that with God on his side, he possessed the necessary power to win over the forces of false religion.

As Elijah prepared the sacrifice, he was careful to avoid unnecessary charges against himself or against the Lord.

His dedication was in truth. It was for the proper reasons and his practice was in careful manner. There is little doubt why God blessed his ministry.

A man with his dedication, faith, and practice would be a useful servant of the Lord today.



Parker



Garner

UNIFORM LESSON SERIES

Lesson for June 12

Jethro: wise adviser

By Donald W. Garner, assistant professor of religion
Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City

Basic Passages: Exodus 2:15b to 3:1; 4:18; 18:1-27

Focal Passage: Exodus 18:13-24

"Getting counseling" or receiving advice at the hands of a trusted person is still not very popular in some places. Many persons evidently continue to think that only "crazy" people need to receive counsel and advice.

That notion is just not true. This week's lesson shows that even the great leader of Israel needed the counsel of another in order to function at his best. Jethro gave wise counsel; Moses was wise enough to receive it.

The relationship which Moses shared with Jethro can serve as a model for us all.

Jethro was a good counselor to Moses in several ways.

1. A good counselor very often is a trusted friend of the advisee. Though he is not described in great detail in the Scriptures, Jethro obviously was close to Moses.

A kind and courteous man, Jethro insisted that proper appreciation and hospitality be shown to a helpful stranger (2:20). Genuine appreciation for Moses' kind deed on behalf of Jethro's daughters served as the beginning of a deep and lasting friendship. But Jethro's appreciation for kindness received apparently generated in him the capacity to give kindness to others. He kept Moses' family and protected them while Moses was "on assignment" for God in Egypt (18:2-4).

The deep and trusting mutual friendship matured, over the years. We see their friendship in full flower when we read Exodus 18:6-9. These two men took time to "catch up" on the significant events of life since they last had seen one another. They shared news of recent events. They shared in the victories and the power of God in the lives of His people. Jethro shared with Moses as a close and trusted friend.

2. A good counselor possesses and shares the wisdom of human experience. Jethro was older than Moses and possessed the wisdom of years. In the Old Testament wisdom books (Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes), one is wise who has learned from observation and experience how life works best. These books give practical and realistic instruction in view of the various circumstances which might prevail in life. (See Proverbs 10:17, 11:13-14, 12:15, 13:20, 15:22, 19:20, 20:18, and 24:5-6.)

In some ways, Jethro performs the role of "wise man" advising and instructing Moses in a better way to live (and to work). Perhaps Jethro's insight into the situation of Moses was taken directly from his own experience. Or perhaps his especially keen powers of observation allowed Jethro to fashion his wise advice for Moses. But whether by direct personal experience or by vicariously observing others' experiences, the wise counselor brings important insights to his advisee.

3. A good counselor brings to the counseling situation a perspective different from that of the advisee. While he was close to Moses and shared a common core of essential experiences with him, Jethro was different from Moses in many ways. Jethro was from Midian while Moses grew up in Egypt. Their re-

ligious backgrounds may have been different. Jethro was a lifelong shepherd and a priest while Moses grew up in a king's palace. Jethro's family included seven daughters but Moses had two sons. Jethro was older than Moses.

Sometimes we think we cannot give good advice if we are not just like the person for whom we are concerned. But as a matter of fact, God often uses our differences rather than our similarities to provide the cement for deeply significant relationships.

Good advisors are successful often because they do not see things just like their advisees. Jethro, because he was different, brought a whole new perspective to Moses' situation.

4. A good counselor shows sensitivity to the circumstances which exist in the life of the advisee. As was pointed out above, Jethro had grown close to Moses over the years. One gets the clear impression from Scripture that Jethro responded supportively to the various circumstances of Moses' life.

No record exists of the full conversation which transpired in the tent when Moses returned from the burning bush experience. But Jethro's attitude clearly was: "Go! Do what you have to do. I will help you in any way I can" (see 4:18).

Jethro was sensitive enough to see the importance of God's call in the life of Moses. Subsequently, Jethro kept Moses' family as a way of showing his support of the ministry of Moses in Egypt.

Jethro showed his sensitivity to the demands Moses faced. When he saw the workload of Moses, Jethro analyzed the situation quickly. Having known Moses well for some years during more calm days, Jethro was able to give caring advice at an important time.

5. A good counselor accurately assesses and addresses the difficulty faced by the advisee. Jethro went straight to the heart of Moses' dilemma. Incisively, Jethro asked Moses, "What are you doing and why are you doing it?" First, Jethro established the facts of the situation, the details of current practice. Second, he exposed the general rationale or philosophy for such specific practices.

The answers Moses gave are remarkably contemporary. The God-called leader of God's people still can be heard to say today, "I do all of this because the people expect it of me" (18:15). Innocently and somewhat naively, Moses went on to say, "I do it this way because I've always done it this way" (18:16). It apparently did not occur to Moses to make any changes in his approach until Jethro spoke up.

Caring about Moses and bringing the fresh perspective of an uninvolved outsider, Jethro was direct or even blunt. "Well, Moses, it is not a very good system" (18:17).

Jethro spoke the truth in love. He cared enough for Moses to shoot straight with him. Jethro trusted Moses with their friendship to the point that he risked angering the leader by presuming to suggest that Moses change his approach to leadership.

Jethro was right. The system Moses was using was neither fully efficient nor totally effective. Jethro was wise to point out the problems and to call for improvements. Good counselors tend to do that. And Moses was right to "heed" (to hear and to do) the suggestions of his counselor.

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LIFE AND WORK SERIES
Lesson for June 12

A man resisting God

By Fred M. Wood
full-time author, preacher, teacher, Memphis

Basic Passage: Jonah 1-2
Focus Passages: Jonah 1:1-5, 8-10, 14-15

Whatever interpretation we give to the Book of Jonah, we must focus on one indisputable fact. Jonah was a historical person.

He lived during the days of Jereboam II, or perhaps earlier, and prophesied that the king would restore "the coast of Israel from the entering of Hamath unto the sea of the plain" (2 Kings 14:25).

Whether the book which bears his name was written by him, a contemporary, or someone much later in Israel's history is irrelevant to the truth contained in the four chapters. The book tells of the unwilling prophet's encounter with God's grace and also with His stern discipline.

Concerning the literal nature of the story as opposed to the parabolic or allegorical, no problem exists concerning the possibility of a "big fish" large enough to swallow a man. Many have been found of sufficient size to accomplish this feat. Theologian Phillips Brooks said jokingly, "There's no problem at this point. After all, Jonah was only one of the minor prophets."

A great tragedy occurs, however, when we spend all our energies debating the nature of the book and ignore or gloss over the great teaching of God's universal concern for all mankind, no matter who they are or where they are.

Resisting God's call (1:1-3)

When God's Word comes to a person, the complete divine personality speaks with all the power behind it.

Any prophet of God should have known better than to resist a clear command from the Lord, but prejudice is a strong factor in life and, when tied to religion, it assumes almost unbelievable proportions.

Jonah, like all Jews, hated the Assyrians for what they had done and for what they wanted to do if they could ever become strong enough. The bloody history of that empire testified that they cared nothing for human life and sought only to add to their personal possessions by whatever method it took and regardless of whom they hurt. Surely God could not love nor save a people guilty of such greed and cruelty!

The Hebrew text presents a sharp contrast between God's command to "rise and preach" and Jonah's response which was to "rise and flee." The prophet sought to get away from the Lord's presence. Can anyone escape to a place where the Lord is not present?

Jonah fled in the opposite direction from where God ordered him. This usually occurs when we resist God's will. The expression "he paid the fare" was a veiled prophecy of what would happen later. A tremendous price was exacted from him because of his disobedience.

God's action and Jonah's reaction (1:4-5)

Only in God's will do we find peace. Outside of it, life is a wild storm.

Although the text says the Lord sent a great wind that produced the mighty tempest, the deeper truth is that Jonah caused it. Rebellion against that which God has planned for us produces such conflicts that it often seems even the elements are disturbed.

God has created a moral order that is

so interlocked with the forces of nature that one affects the other and makes it impossible for sin and calmness to coexist. Even the heathen mariners knew that something was wrong in the "divine scheme of things" as each called to the deity he held in awe.

Jonah slept through the storm! How indifferent can one be to God's purposes for him! How insensitive we can be when we are out of God's will, but the storms of life crowd in on us and the day of reckoning arrives!

Your sin will find you out! (1:8-10)

The writer leaves some of the action to our imaginations. When they could not cope with the situation by prayer and practical means, the sailors rushed to the only other possible source of trouble which might offer hope of deliverance.

Jonah recited his resume, but he must have told them more than the basics, since they fearfully asked him why he had fled from the presence of his Lord. Were the mariners merely superstitiously ecumenical or had they decided Jonah's God was greater than their own?

Jonah stood exposed before men who were devotees of the gods less than his own. How ashamed he must have been!

Final fruit of sin (1:14-15)

Though they were rough seamen who worshipped lesser gods, the mariners tried to avoid the inevitable. When all attempts to save the ship and cargo failed, they prayed -- calling upon Jonah's God, not their own.

It was not the Lord's ethical character, but rather His power which impressed them originally, but they seemed to have gained some spiritual depth from the experience.

Their petition was logical. Reluctant to throw Jonah overboard, they, nevertheless, felt trapped by the circumstances. They reasoned that perhaps to do so would accomplish the will of the deity who had been spurned by His prophet. When one is in a crisis, it is not too difficult to rationalize!

The "bottom life," however, was that Jonah paid a terrible price, far greater than the cost of the ticket at Joppa. He was hurled to what seemed a watery grave. What a terrible finale for one who refused to share God's love and compassion for all people!



Wood



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Tennesseans earn SBTS degrees

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Thirty students from Tennessee were among the people receiving degrees or diplomas from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary during commencement May 20.

William Northcott of Bradford and Billy J. Harrison of Memphis received the doctor of ministry degree. John Frick of Hendersonville and Anthony Roberts of Sevierville received the doctor of philosophy degree.

Receiving the master of divinity degree were William Ashcraft of Newbern, William Choate of Memphis, James Dixon of Knoxville, Ernie Elder of Memphis, Steven Galyon of Knoxville, Larry King of Clarksville, James Lankford of Decatur, Stephen White of Lebanon, Jimmy Woodard of Knoxville, and Robert Young of Memphis.

Kaspar Hines of Memphis earned the master of divinity/religious education degree.

Receiving the master of religious education degree were Judy Campbell of Knoxville, John Cochran of Jefferson City, Eugene Gladney Jr. of Memphis, William Herrell of Knoxville, and Terry Vandergriff of Maryville.

Jeanette Woodard of Knoxville received the master of religious education/missions degree and Rhonda Smith of Rockwood earned the master of religious education/social work degree.

Receiving the master of church music

degree were Steven Burton of Goodlettsville, Steven Cassada of Etowah, Mary Martin of Sweetwater, Dennis McDuffie of Hendersonville, James Shaw of Memphis, and Ricky Sparks of Maryville.

The Boyce Bible School, a division of the seminary, awarded the diploma in educational ministry to Robert Austin of Gadsden and the diploma in Christian ministry to Delbert Steed of Jackson.

Nashvillian accepts Chester Swor post

NASHVILLE — Scott Werner of Nashville has been named associate to internationally-known author and speaker Chester Swor.

Beginning this fall, Werner will assist Swor with speaking engagements, research, and writing assignments.

Werner is a graduate of Baylor University, Waco, Tex., and Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, Calif.

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BWA youth conference invites choirs to sing

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Youth choirs attending the Tenth Baptist Youth World Conference in Buenos Aires, Argentina, may register to present a brief concert during the July 11-15, 1983 meeting, according to conference music coordinator Leroy Yarbrough.

Yarbrough, music professor at New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary, said choirs who contact him in advance will be scheduled to sing on the conference program or at a satellite location in the city.

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Dr. Jerry Glisson is pastor of Leewood Baptist Church, Memphis, Tennessee, a church known for dynamic growth and an amazing span of social classes and age groups.

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BROADMAN

Harris, Washburn continue serving churches

By Linda Lawson

RALEIGH, N.C. (BP)— Christians retire from their careers, not their responsibilities.

That is how A. V. Washburn and Phil Harris, who retired in 1977 as directors of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's Sunday School and church training departments, respectively, explain their lives which include teaching, leading conferences, and working in their churches.

They remain active in their churches in Nashville. They also keep physically fit by continuing a longtime practice of running two miles a day.

"I have a philosophy that a person, regardless of age, ought to continue to grow in body, mind, and spirit," Harris says.

So at retirement, "I told the Foreign Mission Board I'd give them five years of my life." He and his wife Mariam have worked in Brazil, Argentina, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and West Germany. Between trips he has chaired the evangelism committee at First Baptist Church and the senior adult committee for the local YWCA.

For the next five years, Harris has committed to teach at colleges and seminaries and to return to Brazil to help



UNLIKELY POSE — A. V. Washburn (left) and Phil Harris are more likely to be found running or actively engaged in church work than sitting on a bench. Both retired Sunday School Board leaders have continued to be active in denominational activities.

in the area of church growth.

A. V. and Kate Washburn spent one

year in Scotland working with churches to strengthen their Sunday Schools. When they returned home, Washburn received a challenge from his pastor, David George at Immanuel Baptist Church, "to become Sunday School director and to do some of the things at Immanuel that I'd been telling others to do."

After two years on the job, Washburn, who has been a deacon at the church for 45 years, quips, "It's easier to write a

book than to fill it out." At the same time, the Sunday School at Immanuel has experienced a five percent gain in Sunday School enrollment this year.

Washburn has only positive things to say about 8.5 by '85, the SBC effort to increase the Sunday School enrollment to 8.5-million by 1985. "I'm excited about it and glad to be a part of it," Washburn says.

Turning reflective, he says he believes one problem with the "million more in '54" campaign (an effort to enroll one-million persons in Sunday School in 1954) was that "many persons were enlisted that churches weren't prepared for. We suffered some from overextension. The basic plans of 8.5 by '85 take that problem into consideration."

Washburn is "more convinced than ever, if that is possible," that the Sunday School is the key to church growth. "Personalizing ministry can best be done through the Sunday School," emphasizes Washburn. "The more we get into computers and the loss of individuality is accentuated in society, the greater is the need for the small group in churches."

Harris also praises developments in church training since his retirement.

Among their priorities for the future, Washburn and Harris both list traveling and family time, along with leading conferences and working in their churches.

Harris says he is sustained by a four-step philosophy of life: "Abiding faith in God, fellowship in the gospel with people, an optimistic spirit as demonstrated by a positive attitude, and a sense of humor.

"Don't feel sorry for me," he laughs. "While you're working, I may be in Wiesbaden (West Germany) riding down the Rhine."

Argentina's tottering economy takes its toll in Baptist work

By Erich Bridges

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (BP)— One year after a costly war with England battered Argentina's tottering economy, the average church member wonders if he can feed his family, much less support his church.

"We have any number of children who come without breakfast," says Sarah Wilson, a Southern Baptist missionary who helps run a church community center in Buenos Aires. One teen-age girl has fainted from hunger several times in church. A worker at the community center, adds Wilson, "is asking me to pay her every day because she just can't get through the month. There is no way her salary can make it."

Churches set three- or four-month budgets because the plunging peso makes long-range planning pointless. Formerly strong congregations can no longer support a pastor. The Argentine Baptist Convention struggles to meet payroll for its 50-60 home missionaries.

The churches reflect the nation. After battling the British, Argentina has returned to fighting its old enemy — inflation. The annual inflation rate now orbits near 400 percent, probably the highest in the world. A year ago 10,000 pesos bought a U.S. dollar on the official exchange. Now it buys little more than a dime.

Unemployment climbs and production crawls. The enormous foreign debt — \$40-billion — cannot be repaid. It must be refinanced. If the government defaults on its loans an international banking crisis could result.

Wages can not keep up with inflation. The average worker's real earnings have been slashed in half since 1976 to about \$100 per month. About 90 percent of the work force staged a one day strike

in March to protest government wage controls. Even the prospect of free elections in October, the first in years, is not generating much hope for the future. Soup lines are appearing on the streets of Buenos Aires.

But Baptists are not despairing. Though pesos are worth less, church members are giving more of them so churches can survive. They are also helping each other.

"We've asked people to bring food as often as they can," reports John Divers, Southern Baptist missionary pastor in Buenos Aires. Members at the church he serves operate a food stock and clothes closet and lend money to needy people in and out of the church.

Several churches in Buenos Aires have launched informal "work agencies." Participants keep tabs on job openings and make the jobless members and friends aware of them.

"A lot of help is coming from Southern Baptists," adds Wilson. In 1982 and the first third of 1983, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board sent nearly \$480,000 in hunger and general relief funds.

The money helped missionaries and Argentines finance food and nutrition education for some "villages of misery" (slums) that huddle around Buenos Aires and other cities; food, clothing, medicine, and shelter for victims of chronic flooding in several northern provinces; a milk distribution program run by Argentine home missionaries and vocational training; and the construction of two community centers in Buenos Aires.

Argentine Baptists and 61 Southern Baptist missionaries are also planning a five-year, nationwide evangelism program to confront a disillusioned people with the gospel message.

New Orleans conference probes peacemaking, Religious Right

NEW ORLEANS (BP)— Frank Stagg termed current "right-wing" religious movements in America, "secularism with a Christian veneer" and Glen Stassen called on Christians to take initiative in peacemaking during a conference sponsored by the Christian life committee at St. Charles Avenue Baptist Church in New Orleans, La., May 13-15.

The conference attracted over 100 participants, including New Orleans social workers and religious leaders from various denominations. About 250 persons heard Stassen's Sunday morning sermon.

Stagg, retired professor of New Testament at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., and a member of the New Orleans church, said the conference had the twofold purpose of identifying who Christians are as people of faith and of identifying the agenda for Christian response in a world of hurt.

Speaking on Biblical imperatives for the Christian citizen, Stagg called on Christians to understand there were claims civil order has on them, but that God has the ultimate claim. He charged the American military-religious-political-economic system breeds poverty in the pursuit of wealth and called on Christians to be better stewards within that system. In defense of capitalism and democracy, Stagg said, "Some political systems are better than others, but the human being is capable of expressing its

depravity within any system."

Stassen, professor of Christian ethics at Southern seminary, related the concept of sin as captivity in relation to America's captivity to an escalating arms race. He called on Christians to get involved no matter what position they may take. We need to answer the question, "Are we under the lordship of Jesus Christ or principalities and powers?" Stassen said.

"The prophet in the Old Testament was the voice of the voiceless," said Stagg. "The false prophet was the court chaplain trying to bring the people into submission." Stagg then accused Jerry Falwell of being a court chaplain. "In fact, to me he doesn't represent a Moral Majority but immoral malignancy."

Charging the Bible calls on Christians to pray for their enemies, Stassen said we are never going to make peace if we do not affirm the enemy's valid interest. Stassen recalled the pullout of Soviet troops in Austria at the end of World War II when the United States promised that Austria would remain a neutral state. "It isn't always that simple but we still need to take the active, surprising initiative to make peace," Stassen said.

Arguing the defense department wants to spend \$30-billion over the next five years on the MX missile, Stassen urged the audience to write letters to stop the plan and encourage a bilateral nuclear freeze saying the money could best be spent for human needs.