

Baptist and Reflector

Vol. 151/No. 48/December 4, 1985

News journal of Tennessee Baptist Convention



VENEZUELAN CHURCH — The Love of God Baptist Church in Maracay, Venezuela, plans to use Lottie Moon funds to move from the location shown above to a location near a major thoroughfare.

Lottie Moon funds provide variety of church property

By Art Toalston

RICHMOND, Va. — Several sturdy poles and a metal roof may not seem like a noble use of Lottie Moon Christmas Offering funds — but in Zambia the materials will become a rural preaching shelter under which lives are changed.

The number of churches in the African country has soared from a dozen in 1979 to about 60. Almost all of the new congregations are meeting under preaching shelters that, sometimes, have been enhanced with walls of brick, mud, sticks, or grass.

If the \$70-million goal for the 1985 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions is reached, \$3,150 will be budgeted for several preaching shelters in Zambia.

These shelters are important to people like George Ng'uni, a young Zambian subsistence farmer. At a preaching point in an unnamed village of 500, he was one of the first to profess faith in Christ. Today George leads Bethsaida Baptist Church, where Sunday morning services under a preaching shelter draw 30 to 60 people.

About \$7-million of this year's Lottie Moon Christmas Offering will be used for constructing or renovating church buildings overseas and for a multitude of other capital needs.

The remaining \$63-million will be used for operating expenses and missionary support, a dimension of Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board finances that increases several times each year as new missionaries are appointed for overseas ministry. The number of foreign missionaries has risen from 2,606 at the beginning of 1975 to about 3,600 today.

This year's \$70-million goal entails an 8.09 percent increase over the almost \$65-million given by Southern Baptists to

the 1984 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. Last year's giving, although \$1.2-million below the \$66-million goal, was \$6,750,000 more than 1983's offering — an increase bettering the rate of inflation by nearly three times.

Among church-related needs, one of the most pressing is for loan funds to erect new church buildings in India, Brazil, Portugal, and several other countries.

In Maracay, Venezuela, for example, Love of God Baptist Church is using a \$20,000 low-interest loan to relocate near a major thoroughfare and build a larger house of worship. It is one of just two Baptist congregations in a city of a half-million people.

The church, organized a year and a half ago, has grown to 60 members and has launched a mission and a preaching

(Continued on page 3)

Fire ravages auditorium of Jefferson City church

A fire destroyed the auditorium of First Baptist Church in Jefferson City early Monday morning. The fire started near the organ around midnight and spread rapidly to the back of the main auditorium.

Located at the southwest corner of the campus of Carson-Newman College, the church is used for chapel and other college-related functions. The women's dormitory located across the street from the church was evacuated for a few hours while local fire departments brought the fire under control.

The fire did not reach the office area of the church, but there was some damage

caused by smoke and water. An addition to the educational building, completed only two and one-half years ago, also was saved from fire damage. The fellowship hall, located beneath the auditorium, was partially destroyed when the steeple fell through the structure.

Damages are estimated at over \$1.5-million by members of the church's building committee.

Richard Smith has been serving as interim pastor of First Baptist Church since September.

The cause of the fire was being investigated at press time on Monday.

TBC disaster teams return

Tennessee Baptists' disaster relief teams and equipment returned home on Wednesday (Nov. 27), after serving more than 10,000 meals to victims of Hurricane Kate on the Florida Gulf Coast.

Archie King, TBC Brotherhood director, reported that the feeding units operated in Battery Park and Marina in Apalachicola, Fla., from Nov. 23 until Nov. 26. Not only did the unit provide meals for those in the Apalachicola Bay area, but meals were taken by boat to residents stranded on St. George Island.

King said that the economically depressed area made the hurricane damage even more tragic. Three years ago, there were 322 families in the area on government food subsidy but in recent months that number has grown to more than 900 families.

The hurricane brought additional grief by damaging the fishing boats and oyster beds upon which many residents of the area depend for their occupation.

"For this reason, many of those 10,000 meals were double portions," King said.

He added that the two November relief trips to Slidell, La., and Apalachicola, Fla., showed that the unit needs to have a

tent in its equipment. "If we had a 25-by-30-foot tent, we could put it up beside the unit and the people would have some place to eat when it is raining," he stated.

The TBC Brotherhood director reported that 27 homes were damaged beyond repair on St. George Island, which was isolated because of severe damage to the causeway which connects the island to Apalachicola.

King said the opportunity to assist people in need was a rewarding experience for the 15 Tennesseans who made the trip to Apalachicola. "It was a good, positive experience," he added, commenting that the Red Cross, the Florida Marine Patrol, and other groups were very helpful, and the citizens of the area were very appreciative.



FOOD BY BOAT — Tennessee meals are "boated" to isolated residents of St. George Island after the destruction of Hurricane Kate. Second from left is Harold Pinkley of Humboldt.

November gifts fall below goal

With the convention books for the month closing on Wednesday, Nov. 27, Cooperative Program mission gifts reached only \$1,278,158.72, according to Tom Madden, executive secretary-treasurer of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

Messengers to the 1985 state convention, meeting in Memphis last month, adopted a \$21-million Cooperative Program basic budget-goal for the November 1985-October 1986 convention year. The monthly goal for the new convention year would be \$1,750,000 (one-twelfth of \$21-million). November's mission gifts through the Cooperative Program were \$471,841.28 or 26.96 percent below the monthly goal.

Last month's gifts were also below the \$1,608,809.92 given to missions through the Cooperative Program during November of 1984.

Madden sees no reason for discouragement, noting that October 1985 was the largest month in mission giving in TBC history. "With five Sundays in December and some November church receipts not arriving by last Wednesday, I expect December to be an outstanding month in Tennessee mission support," he added.

Virginia Baptists authorize committee to study baptism

SALEM, Va. (BP) — Virginia Baptists, during their annual meeting Nov. 12-13, authorized a committee to study a Constitutional provision concerning "believer's baptism by immersion."

George Euting, pastor of New Bridge Baptist Church of Richmond, Va., offered a motion calling for a committee to study and bring to the 1986 annual meeting an interpretation of Article III of the Constitution of the Baptist General Association of Virginia which concerns membership in the BGAV.

The section reads: "The General Association shall be composed of the officers of the General Association and messengers elected by Baptist churches which follow the New Testament teaching of salvation by grace and believer's baptism by immersion..."

Euting told messengers to the annual meeting he is concerned about churches which accept members without immersion and wants "the body to state its policy considering churches that accept members without immersion..."

The study committee will be appointed by Sherrill G. Stevens, who was elected president of the Virginia association during the meeting. Committee size was not specified in the motion.

Messengers also affirmed the Religious Herald, newsjournal of the BGAV, took an offering to help victims of flooding in Virginia, and adopted a budget of \$13,925,000.

On the first day of the convention, messengers adopted a statement expressing "gratitude" to the Religious Herald and its staff "for credibility and forthrightness" in reporting news of importance. On the following day, a resolution critical of the Herald for publishing contro-

versial stories was turned back because of the affirmation.

The resolution critical of the Herald was introduced by Tommy Taylor, pastor of London Bridge Baptist Church of Virginia Beach. Taylor mentioned an article concerning Robison B. James, a professor at the University of Richmond, alleging "militant inerrantists are heretics," and another article concerning the controversy in the denomination.

It asked the BGAV "to go on record imploring the Religious Herald and staff to heed the voice of our Southern Baptist Convention and of the convention elected Peace Committee... and to use more caution, discretion, and restraint."

The resolution, however, was not considered as officials pointed to the previous action, in which they said messengers "overwhelmingly recorded gratitude..." to the Herald.

Messengers also declined to adopt an anti-abortion resolution. The Resolutions Committee told messengers it "felt the BGAV has spoken on that (issue) enough." The recommendation was supported by a ballot vote.

A special offering to provide assistance to flood victims in the Salem-Roanoke area "as well as all people in need of assistance throughout the state" collected \$6,107.50. The area had been hit by heavy flooding prior to the convention.

Under Phase One of the \$13.9-million budget, Virginia Baptists will retain 62 percent for state causes and sent 38 percent to support the worldwide missionary, evangelism, and educational enterprises of the Southern Baptist Convention. The distribution is the same as under the 1985 budget.



FORMER DOMS — Three former directors of missions who attended the annual meeting of Holston Baptist Association Oct. 15-16, (from left to right) Leslie Baumgartner, Paul Hall, and James Harris, were recognized by Talmage Thompson Jr., current DOM.

Holston plans for 200th meeting

About 600 messengers made plans for their 200th annual session next year at Holston Baptist Association's meeting Oct. 15 at Bethel View Baptist Church,

Bristol, and Oct. 16 at First Baptist Church, Greeneville.

Messengers also honored three former directors of missions, a volunteer worker, and five churches for their missions involvement. They also welcomed a new church into the association.

A banquet began the bicentennial celebration which will end with the annual meeting Oct. 24-25, 1986, tentatively planned for Cherokee Baptist Church, Jonesborough, the date and site of the association's organization in 1786. It was noted that the association was one of the first in the state and that it helped many other associations begin.

Alabama rejects drive for colleges

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. (BP) — Alabama Baptists adopted a 1986 Cooperative Program budget goal of \$23,068,700 and elected a Jasper pastor as president during their annual convention.

Southern Baptist Convention causes are projected to receive \$9,801,219, which is 42.48 percent of the budget. In 1985 SBC causes received 40.59 percent.

Lewis Marler, pastor of Mount Philadelphia Baptist Church in Jasper, will be convention president during 1985-86.

The convention defeated a proposed 26-month, \$10-million college endowment campaign which would have been administered by Cargill Associates of Fort Worth, Texas, and funded through the churches. The endowment funds would have been used for scholarships at the convention's three colleges: Sanford University, Birmingham; Mobile College, Mobile; and Judson College, Marion.

Messengers extended a three-year partnership with the Wyoming Southern Baptist Convention for two additional years, and voted to begin a two-year partnership with Alaska Baptists in 1986.

Messengers decided to put on hold, pending a case study, a proposal to sponsor housing for severely handicapped young adults at the Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind in Talladega. The proposal will be resubmitted next year.

The convention restated its longstanding opposition to "any and all forms of gambling" and opposed "the push for a state lottery." Another resolution urged passage of a state measure which "addresses the need for parental notification regarding an abortion on an unwed teenager living at home and receiving more than half of her support from her parents."

A resolution on world peace commended President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev for "their first steps in dialogue" at the Geneva summit.

The convention approved a motion expressing concern about fund-raising efforts in Alabama by Southern Baptist Convention institutions and agencies. The motion was presented by Edgar Arendall, retired former pastor of Dawson Memorial Baptist Church, Birmingham.

The messengers recognized former DOMs Leslie Baumgartner, Paul Hall, and James Harris. They gave the first Outstanding Volunteer Award to Debbie McNeill, who was the first director of the association's hospital ministry. Trinity Baptist Church, Jonesborough, of which John Carpenter is pastor, was voted into the fellowship of the association.

Moderator Paul Broyles, pastor of Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, Limestone, presided. Messengers elected Robert Jones, pastor of First Baptist Church, Bluff City, as moderator; Frank Lethcoe, pastor of Midway Baptist Church, Johnson City, as assistant moderator; and re-elected E. W. Barnes, pastor of Boone Trail Baptist Church, Gray, as treasurer; Tenna Eades, a member of Central Baptist Church, Johnson City, as clerk and assistant treasurer; and Sarah Walters, a member of Grace Baptist Church, Johnson City, as assistant clerk.

Arkansas Baptists' convention notes university's centennial

ARKADELPHIA, Ark. (BP) — A spirit of fellowship and celebration prevailed as Arkansas Baptists helped their oldest institution of higher education celebrate its centennial anniversary Nov. 19-20 during the annual meeting of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

Messengers adopted a record \$12.25-million 1986 budget, including an increase of .75 percent in the amount going to worldwide Southern Baptist concerns through the national Cooperative Program. Arkansas will send 40.66 percent of its receipts on to national causes.

In 1984, the site for the annual meeting had been changed to the campus of Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, which is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year.

Arkansas' partnership linkup with two Baptist conventions in Equatorial Brazil highlighted the annual meeting. Brazilian pastor and evangelist Nilson do Amaral Fanini addressed the closing session of the convention, challenging Arkansas Baptists to "come together" for the sake of bringing the world to Christ.

Messengers elected Lawson Hatfield, pastor of First Baptist Church, Fordyce, president of the state convention. Hatfield was director of the ABSC Sunday school department for 23 years before returning to the pastorate.

Six resolutions were adopted by messengers. Five of them, adopted without debate, urged participation in the 1986

"Good News, America" revivals; encouraged prayer for the Reagan-Gorbachev summit conference and for world leaders "in a search for a solution to the arms race"; resolved prayerful support for the Southern Baptist Convention "Peace Committee"; reaffirmed Baptists' determination to combat gambling, pornography, alcohol, and other drug abuse; and expressed appreciation for convention office and the host campus.

A sixth resolution on abortion drew substantial debate. The language of the resolution toughened opposition to abortion, compared to resolutions of previous years. Decrying the *Roe vs. Wade* Supreme Court decision as the cause of "millions of elective, convenience, casual abortions," the resolution called on Arkansas Baptists to actively support "appropriate and responsible legislation" to decrease the number of abortions in the state and across the nation.

The adopted resolution called upon Baptists to "work toward that which will assure the highest regard for life, born or unborn" and provide alternatives to abortion.

Two amendments were rejected which would have eliminated cases of rape and incest and put messengers on record as supporting efforts to place on the state's 1986 general election ballot a Constitutional amendment dealing with abortion. That proposal would prohibit expenditure of state funds for abortion. Currently, no state funds are so spent.

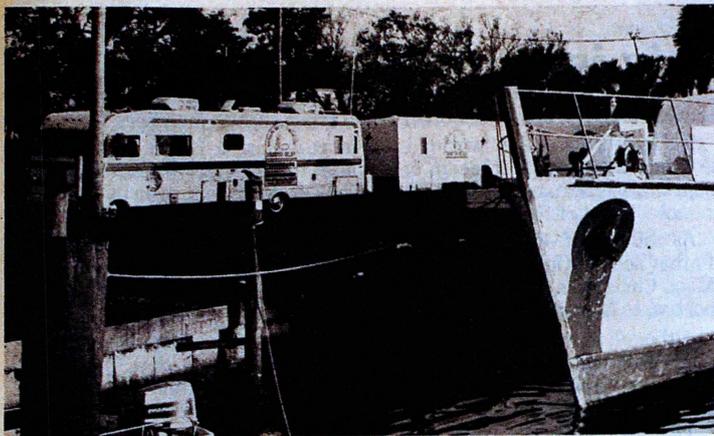
South Carolina holds 'peaceful' meeting

GREENVILLE, S.C. (BP) — In what was hailed by its president as "the most peaceful convention we have ever attended," South Carolina Baptists meeting in annual session Nov. 12-13 adopted a record \$20.1-million budget, elected a Fort Mill pastor president, opposed a state-operated lottery, and promoted its 1986 simultaneous revivals.

George Dye, pastor of First Baptist Church, Fort Mill, was elected president.

Of the 1986 budget, the national unified budget of the Southern Baptist Convention, the Cooperative Program, will receive 37.25 percent, an increase of 0.25 percent. The goal is to reach a 50-50 split by the year 2000.

A resolution asking the South Carolina General Assembly "to defeat again in the 1986 session any effort to establish a lottery in this state" was adopted by the messengers.



READY TO SERVE — The Tennessee Baptist disaster units served meals Nov. 23-26 from this location on the banks of Apalachicola Bay. More than 10,000 meals were served to victims of Hurricane Kate in a three-day period.



MEALTIME — The line forms in front of the Tennessee Baptist disaster relief unit at Apalachicola, Fla., for victims of Hurricane Kate. Heavy rains, high tides, and strong winds left many homeless.

Lottie Moon funds . . .

(Continued from page 1)

point. Key leaders are seven men and women who have completed MasterLife discipleship training. Two new MasterLife classes are being started.

Not only is property expensive, but for Baptists and other lesser-known religious groups in Venezuela, it is nearly impossible to secure bank loans. The Baptist loan fund, says Missionary Richard Beal, "has the possibility, over the years, of being part of the construction of many, many churches." Twenty-two of the Venezuela congregations with loans are current in their payments. Through the Lottie Moon Offering, Southern Baptists will add \$50,000 to available funds here.

Tennessee is entering into a three-year partnership mission with Venezuela Baptists, during which church building construction will be a major aspect.

In Japan, \$18,500 in Lottie Moon gifts will finance the final stages of MasterLife translation into Japanese, as well as subsequent workshops to relay the concept to at least one-half of Japan's 21-plus Baptist churches during 1986.

In Taiwan, \$30,000 will be used to produce an evangelistic film in Taiwanese. Mandarin from mainland China is Taiwan's official language, but about 75 percent of the island's 19-million people speak the native Taiwanese.

Bibles and other Christian literature will be purchased with \$2,400 in Lottie Moon gifts in Equatorial Guinea, an African country that, although poor, has a strong school system. "The people love to read," notes Missionary Peggy Thornton, and a Bible is a way Baptists can share the gospel in the isolated

Marxist country of Albania in Europe, \$26,416 in Lottie Moon Christmas Offering funds will be used for evangelistic radio programs during 1986.

Meanwhile, in war-torn Lebanon, \$55,000 will expand the outreach of Baptist Publications. The Beirut-based ministry produces Christian literature used throughout the Arab world, such as a series of eight books for non-Christian readers.

Lottie Moon gifts totaling \$30,000 will launch an agricultural center in the Islamic region of Lampung, Indonesia. The education-oriented farm will help low-income city dwellers from the heavily populated island of Java who have moved to the island of Samatra to become farmers.

New Duck River honors member, adds church

The New Duck River Baptist Association honored a church member who is helping ministerial students and added a church during the biannual meeting Oct. 21 at El Bethel Baptist Church, Shelbyville, and Oct. 22 at First Baptist Church, Lewisburg.

Bert Williams, a member of First Baptist Church, Shelbyville, established the Michael Williams Ministerial Student Aid Fund in memory of his deceased son. The association voted to dedicate the annual minutes to the father. Singleton Baptist Church, Shelbyville, of which Edwin McPherson is pastor, was voted into fellowship in the association.

Moderator David Philyaw, pastor of Edgemont Baptist Church, Shelbyville, led the meeting.

RTVC reorganizes, promotes Edwards

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — A reorganization plan has been adopted by the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission, under which current Financial Vice-president James Edwards will be promoted to senior vice-president and chief operating officer.

RTVC President Jimmy R. Allen will remain as the chief executive officer under the plan, which was adopted during a two-day retreat at Lake Texoma, Okla., attended by administrators of the agency as well as representatives of the administrative subcommittee of the trustees.

"The reorganization has been in the works for several months," said Fred Roach, of Dallas, a RTVC trustee. "It was brought to a head by our efforts to restructure our finances."

Allen added: "The reorganization now approved by the trustees will complement the process authorized by the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention."

During its September meeting, the SBC Executive Committee approved a recommendation to allow the RTVC to restructure debts incurred in the startup of the American Christian Television System (ACTS) network. Under the plan, the RTVC will be allowed to borrow up to \$10-million with a 10-year payout and conduct a five-year \$10-million fundraising campaign.

The plan included "very stringent" requirements "designed to help them develop a definite plan to retire their indebtedness without having to add additional indebtedness," according to Executive Committee member Harmon Born of Atlanta.

Roach said the restructuring of the organizational structure of the agency grew out of the overall effort to make the fledgling television network viable.

"This organization gets it down to the bare bones," he said. "It doesn't cut into the sinew, but it puts us in a fighting position. We will still have to struggle and work hard to make it work."

In addition to restructuring the top of the organization, the plan eliminates 13 more employees, leaving the commission with a total of 97 employees, including 90 full-time and seven part-time workers. The 97-employee total is down from a peak of 176 in May of 1984, when ACTS was launched. It first was cut to 146 and then to the current figure of 110.

Under the reorganization, Edwards, as chief operating officer, "will have responsibility for the day to day control," Roach said. "The bank made a specific recommendation about the importance of having a day-to-day operations officer on site all of the time. I think it is smart (to appoint a chief operating officer) because Jimmy (Allen) will be away 80 percent of the time raising money. It is hard for him to sign every policy memo and every personnel action."

Roach, however, specified Allen continues "as the chief policy maker; Jim Edwards' job is to see they get done." Under the plan, Edwards will assume some of the responsibilities of Luke Williams, executive vice-president, who has announced his early retirement Sept. 30, 1986.

Williams told Baptist Press his proposed retirement "has been discussed for some time but has just now been announced."

The reorganization plan also creates an executive management group formed of Allen, Edwards, Williams, and two current vice-presidents who will be promoted to senior vice-presidents.

The new senior vice-presidents are William Nichols, who was promoted from director of broadcast services to senior vice-president of affiliate relations, and Robert Taylor, vice-president of programming services, who was named senior vice-president of programming services.

The other vice-presidents will remain in their current roles.

The plan also calls for opening Jan. 1 in Los Angeles a fourth ACTS regional office. Ken Hunsberger of Memphis, who had been working on a contract basis with the ACTS network, will be director of that office. The other regional offices are in Atlanta, Fort Worth, and New York. Dennis Parrish and Bruce Grinstead, two television producers who have been working on a contract basis with the network, also have been added to the permanent staff.

Roach said commission representatives are continuing meetings with a Dallas bank in order to convert a three-year, \$6-million line of credit to a \$10-million, 10-year payout for the loan. "The bank is working with the commission to try to solve" the financial problems, he added.

Roy McClain dies in South Carolina

ORANGEBURG, S.C. (BP) — Roy O. McClain, former pastor of First Baptist Church, Atlanta, died of a heart attack at his farm Nov. 21. He was 69 years old.

McClain, listed by Newsweek in 1955 as "one of the 10 greatest preachers in America," had been pastor of First Baptist Church, Orangeburg, since 1976.

McClain had been in excellent health, according to his wife. He had attended a senior citizens luncheon the day of his death and suffered the fatal heart attack after taking a nap.

Pastor of the Atlanta church for 17 years (1953-1970), McClain took a strong stand in favor of orderly racial integration.

After three blacks attempting to attend worship services in 1963 were led by ushers to an "auxiliary auditorium," the church was picketed by a civil rights group demanding whites and blacks be seated together. Later that year, the church voted by mail ballots "by a decisive margin" to fully integrate.

He was preacher on the radio "Baptist Hour" during the mid-1950s.

Saying he was exhausted and needed rest, McClain resigned the Atlanta pastorate in 1970 and for six years described himself as "a minister at large" without a congregation. He wrote books, filled interim pastorates, and raised Shetland ponies at his farm in Orangeburg. In 1976, McClain returned to the pastorate of the Orangeburg church, where he had been pastor before going to Atlanta.

McClain was a graduate of Furman University, Greenville, S.C., and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. He is survived by his wife, Betty Bryant McClain; three brothers; a sister; three sons; and two grandchildren.

EDITORIAL

Christmas and missions: 'How big is your world?'

Christmas and missions are merged inseparably in the all-time favorite Scripture verse, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16, NASB).

At Jesus' birth, the angel of the Lord proclaimed the "good news of a great joy which shall be for all the people" (Luke 2:10).

Completing His physical ministry on this earth, Jesus gave two commandments: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation" (Mark 16:15) and "You shall be My witnesses . . . even to the remotest part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

As Southern Baptists ponder Christmas and missions, it is time for the annual Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions. The goal for the 1985 offering is \$70-million. This goal would require an 8.09 percent increase above the nearly \$65-million given by Southern Baptists to the 1984 Lottie Moon Offering.

Tennessee WMU has set our state's goal at \$4,250,000.

Many Tennessee churches have set their own goals, challenging their members to respond to the tremendous mission needs of our world.

These goals — as important as they are — have no real meaning apart from the personal goals set by individual Baptists for themselves. Perhaps goals and gifts relate to this question, "How big is your world?"

To some, their "world" is wrapped up only in themselves. In our day of emphasis on selfish ambitions and wants, too many people unfortunately never expand their sphere of interest beyond themselves.

Others consider their "world" to include their families. Their total desire is to care for family needs, which is commendable — but entirely inadequate as a Christian concept of the world.

Another view of the "world" by some would include friends, acquaintances, neighbors, fellow workers, and other church members.

tances, neighbors, fellow workers, and other church members.

God's concept of the "world" is far more inclusive. He did not send His Son into the world to redeem only white, middle-class Americans. The supreme Christmas gift is for all creations in all nations, even those in the remotest part of the earth.

As children of God, it behooves us to view the "world" as our Heavenly Father sees it. Our response to Christian missions — including the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions — will be directly in proportion to how much our concept of the world is like that of God.

Although much of our interest and promotion of this week's foreign mission emphasis is on the offering goal, it is significant that this year's theme is "And I Will Pray." Is prayer for missions and missionaries more important than money for missions and missionaries?

The testimonies of those who serve God under appointment of our Foreign Mission Board would answer that question with a resounding "Yes." These servants, separated from family and a familiar culture, know firsthand how important prayer is for their lives and their ministries.

Prayer is the essence of our response to the significance of Christmas. Prayer is the most frequently requested help asked by our missionaries serving around the world. Prayer is that element which can bind hearts and lives together in common concerns.

In a Christian sense, prayer and financial support are not in conflict or even separated, but rather are two closely entwined aspects of a Christian's response to a lost world.

Jesus expressed it plainly, "For where your treasure is, there will be your heart also" (Matthew 6:21). It logically follows that "where your heart is, there will be your treasure also."

It is impossible for a Christian to pray earnestly for a need, without seeking to help. Likewise, it is impossible for a Christian to give sacrificially, without praying for God's blessing on the gift's recipient.

"How big is your world?"

The way that you answer that question will largely influence your response to the Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions' theme, "And I Will Pray" and your response to the financial goal of the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions.

GUEST EDITORIAL

Pray without ceasing

By Betty Whitson

SBC missionary to South West Africa

The Great Commission calls us to obedience that is demonstrated in giving, going, and praying. This call does not distinguish between those who go and those who stay. All Christians should be involved in fulfilling the Great Commission.

The faithful Christians staying at home do "go" through their gifts. The Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and vital Cooperative Program monies provide essential support. In the same spirit, Christians serving overseas must also give in order that the gospel may be spread in still more lands.

Southern Baptists have developed a beautiful process whereby the gifts of the multitude make it possible for a minority to go and minister.

Missionary homes become hotels for travelers, hospitals for the sick. Our vehicles transport people to religious services, or to find medical help when needed.

Missionaries neither deserve nor desire praise for our actions. You would do the same if you were here. We are an extension of your arm of concern.

While giving and going are important, we must remember that these are never adequate apart from prayer. For this reason, Southern Baptists must take seriously the 1985 Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions theme "And I Will Pray." I would urge Southern Baptists to consider the theme in three ways.

First, there must be continuous prayer. Missionaries appreciate prayer support during the week of prayer, on our birthdays, and on other special designated days. But we face great needs every day.

We need wisdom to understand the language and culture of the people. We need divine guidance in relating to others in a redemptive way. We need courage to tackle difficult issues. We need to know the peace of God when failure comes often and success seldom. Pray without ceasing, Southern Baptists.

Secondly, I would ask that you pray intelligently. World awareness helps as you pray for world needs. Information concerning world needs can be gained from week of prayer materials as well as articles published in mission periodicals and state Baptist papers. Knowledge of worldwide needs can also be increased through correspondence with missionaries on the field. We are happy to hear from those seeking information concerning mission work in our area.

Finally, Southern Baptists, pray for laborers. Pray for more missionaries. In my area of South West Africa (Namibia) alone we need three additional families to help meet the spiritual needs of the people.

Pray also that God will call out workers from among the national Christians. We know that the spiritual needs of the world cannot be met only by importing foreign missionaries. Pray for more national workers who know the language and culture of their people, and who will be willing to labor with missionaries in a united effort of sharing the gospel with all mankind.

And I Will Pray

I Corinthians 14:15b



CIRCULATION THIS ISSUE — 75,429

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Post Office Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37027
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Baptist and Reflector (USPS 041-780) is published weekly except New Year's week by the Executive Board of the Tennessee Baptist Convention at Brentwood, Tennessee 37027. Subscription prices: \$5.55 individual; clubs of ten or more, \$5.25; church budget, 9.0¢ per family per week when sent to 50 percent or more of church homes. Second class postage paid at Brentwood, Tennessee, and at additional mailing office.

Space forbids printing of resolutions and obituaries. Advertising rates on request.

Member of Baptist Press (BP) news service of the Southern Baptist Convention.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Baptist and Reflector, P. O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37027.

News Journal of Tennessee Baptist Convention
Tom Madden, Executive Secretary-Treasurer

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Letters to the Editor

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

Four wonderful days

Dear editor:
What a blessing the recent meeting of the Tennessee Baptist Convention was to me! As a member of First Baptist Church, Memphis, I was asked to help with registration. That position gave me a good observation post, and I would like to share that with your readers.

First, I continue to be amazed with how God can use any one of us. There were messengers and visitors of every description, and yet all had a common purpose.

Second, the sermons and devotionals were inspiring and challenging. I hear good sermons all the time from my pastor, Earl Davis, but I am thankful that a person could go to any Tennessee Baptist church and hear "good preaching."

Third, the music was magnificent. This is such a vital part of worship, and I believe Baptists do it best. The congregational singing was as meaningful as the beautiful anthems and solos.

Fourth, it was a joy to see friends from years past and to make new friends. It was fun seeing pastors and church workers greet each other. We are not somber people, and I am thankful for that. The humor and friendliness are ap-

Nolachucky acts on BSU, crusade

The 158th annual session of the Nolachucky Baptist Association, Oct. 22-23 at the First Baptist churches in Morristown and Whitesburg, voted to construct a Baptist Student Union building; to invite Bailey Smith, past SBC-president and full-time evangelist from Oklahoma, for a crusade; and heard reports of increases in church work.

The first session had 244 messengers from 51 of the 55 churches present.

The messengers voted unanimously to join the Tennessee Baptist Convention in constructing a BSU building at Walters State Community College, Morristown, on land the two bodies have jointly purchased.

The association voted to invite Smith and his team to Morristown for an eight-day crusade Oct. 19-26, 1986.

The associational clerk reported increases in 15 of the 17 church growth indicators listed in the association's digest of church letters. The indicators include items such as baptisms, membership, program enrollments, and giving patterns.

Ricky Dinkins, pastor of Fernwood Baptist Church, Morristown, served as moderator.

New officers elected for the upcoming year were James Williams Jr., pastor of Bethel Baptist Church, Morristown; Joyce Bruce Vile, re-elected for the 11th year as clerk-treasurer; and Alma Greene, re-elected as associate clerk-treasurer. Vile and Greene are both members of Bethel Baptist Church, Morristown, and associational secretaries.

pealing. I did not ever hear a word of criticism or a harsh tone. I appreciate those who were complimentary of our church and its hospitality.

Every good thing that has come to my life has been a direct result of my relationship to Christ and His church. I believe that our convention aids the churches in spreading these blessings. Thank you for a wonderful four days.

Mrs. James F. Fitzpatrick
6806 River Birch Road
Memphis, TN 38119

Only one nominee?

Dear editor:
I commend the Bylaws Workgroup of the Executive Committee for proposing an amendment to Bylaw 16.1 to clarify that there may be "further nominations . . . from the floor" when the Committee on Committees nominates persons to serve on the Committee on Boards. This is consistent with our parliamentary authority, Robert's Rules of Order (Bylaw 11), which requires, as I read it, an opportunity for nominations from the assembly whenever any nominating committee brings its report (1981 ed., pp. 365, 424).

However, another proposal from the workgroup - "No messenger shall be allowed to nominate more than one person for election to the committee on boards" - raises serious questions.

Does this proposal imply that a messenger is entitled to be concerned about only one position on the 52-member Committee on Boards?

Inasmuch as a messenger is entitled to vote for persons to fill all positions on the Committee on Boards, why should Bylaws permit the messenger to nominate someone to fill only one position? On what theory can be the convention justify a bylaw provision which makes the power to nominate more narrow than the power to vote for nominees to all positions?

No other provision of the current Constitution and Bylaws, as I read them, restricts the rights of messengers who constitute the convention (Const. III, Bylaw 8.1). If we adopt this second proposal, what precedential effect will it have in restricting other rights of messengers?

If the purpose of the proposal is to permit nominations on a position-by-position basis only, it is possible to achieve this purpose without limiting messengers' rights. The proposed wording, in my opinion, is infelicitous at best and, when literally interpreted, contains serious implications.

Hugh Wamble
5001 North Oak Street Trafficway
Kansas City, MO 64118

Correction

On page 5 of the Nov. 27 issue of the Baptist and Reflector, Lynn King, pastor of Maplewood Baptist Church, Paris, was incorrectly named as presenting a resolution on the SBC Peace Committee during the Tennessee Baptist Convention in Memphis.

The correct name is Jim King, pastor of Maplewood Baptist Church, Clarksville.

The Baptist and Reflector staff regrets the error.

Moderates win N.C. election

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (BP) - While other state Southern Baptist conventions continued to function with little or none of the political warfare characteristic of the national SBC meetings, the familiar battlelines were clearly drawn in North Carolina.

Prior to the Nov. 11-13 meeting in Charlotte, N.C., two slates of officers were promoted throughout the state - one by "Friends of Missions," an organization which assumes a moderate posture on theology and full support and cooperation with the denomination, and another by the element which has been critical of the denomination, charging a drift toward liberalism.

"Friends of Missions" made a clean sweep of all three major offices.

William Poe, a Charlotte attorney and a member of the SBC Peace Committee, was elected president over Ned Matthews, pastor of Parkwood Baptist Church, Gastonia. Leon Smith, pastor of First Baptist Church, Goldsboro, was elected vice-president over Ken Ridings, pastor of Grassy Branch Baptist Church, Asheville. Betty Gilreath, a layperson from Charlotte and recording secretary for the national Woman's Missionary Union, was elected second vice-president over Sam Currin of Raleigh, U.S. Attorney for Eastern North Carolina and a trustee of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

Messengers also approved a budget of \$26.12-million for 1986, of which 35.45 percent (the same as last year) will go to Southern Baptist worldwide causes; took action on a motion by J. D. Grant, Franklin, instructing the General Board and its Executive Committee to "reconsider" the employment of John Bunn as executive director at Fruitland Baptist Bible Institute; approved the report of the Committee on Committees without debate; and approved Greensboro as the permanent site of the annual meeting.

An attempt to make changes in the state convention's covenant relationship with Wake Forest University produced two conflicting vote results which left the covenant unchanged.

The provisions of the covenant were modified by a simple majority vote to let the university elect one-third of the trustees, rather than the convention electing these trustees upon nomination by the university. Two-thirds of the trustees must be Baptists who are members of North Carolina churches but the other one-third can be non-North Carolinians and non-Baptist but they must be Christians who are members of evangelical churches.

However, changes in the covenant necessitated a minor change in the language of the Constitution - and Constitutional changes require a two-thirds vote for two consecutive years. That ballot vote fell short of the required two-thirds majority by about 3 percent which means the covenant relationship will remain as it has been for the past five years.

Personal Perspective



By Tom Madden
TBC Executive
Secretary-Treasurer

Every once in awhile I hear the comment about someone, "He did what he said he would."

Occasionally I hear, "While he said he would do it, he did not get it done." I began to think about this in the light of God's Word.

I thought of Samson who said he would, but could not. He said he would overcome the Philistines, but when they came upon him and he went out, as in other times, he could not overcome them because God had withdrawn his power. Samson said he would, but he could not.

I also thought of Simon Peter who said to our Lord that if all others forsake Him, he would stand by Him even though it could cost him his life. It was not long after that until Satan's forces converged upon Christ and started putting him through those terrible trials that led to the cross. When Peter was asked if he was a follower of Jesus, he denied it emphatically. Peter said he would, but when the time came, he would not.

Of course, I am reminded of our Lord Who said He would die for us on the cross. While there were many who tried to dissuade Him from this, He steadfastly set His face toward Jerusalem and never hesitated to go all the way to the cross to pour out His life for us. He said He would and He did.

As I think about the statement, "He said he would," I become aware of my own weaknesses and my failure to carry out what I said I would do. I am grateful that God is patient and forgiving toward us.

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Baptists aid victims of Colombia volcano

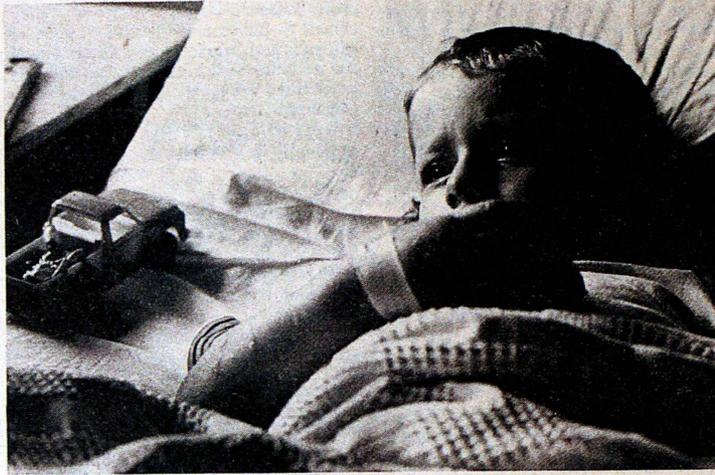
IBAGUE, Colombia (BP) — Edison Ortis, 5 years old, is a new amputee and possibly an orphan. No family members have visited him in the state hospital in Ibague, Colombia. The only toy at his bedside came from a Southern Baptist missionary.

Edisson, who lost his left foot to gangrene, was one of 3,000 to 4,000 hospitalized throughout Colombia following the eruption of volcano Nevado del Ruiz. He is among 50,000 left homeless, people who somehow survived a wall of hot mud and debris, as deep as 60 feet in places, that buried the town of Armero, 22,000 surrounding acres, and 20,000 to 40,000 people.

About 15 Colombian Baptists, Southern Baptist missionaries, and Foreign Mission Board staff members have assisted Colombian Red Cross workers, government officials, and medical personnel in disaster relief.

"The Baptists have done a work that is incomparable," said Ramiro Lozano, a gynecologist who heads the Red Cross chapter in Ibague, about 70 miles south of Armero. Relief headquarters are set up in Ibague.

Helping alleviate acute shortages in medicines and medical supplies is but one of numerous ways missionaries have



ALONE AT AGE 5 — Edison Ortis faces a far more uncertain future than most 5-year-olds. A new amputee from the Nov. 13 volcanic eruption, Edison also may have lost his parents. After infection from mud killed the tissue in Edison's foot, doctors had to amputate it.

used Southern Baptist relief donations to aid Red Cross workers.

"Don't abandon us now — the work has just begun," Lozano said to James Giles, disaster relief coordinator for the Southern Baptist mission in Colombia. Reuniting family members in various hospitals and shelters across Colombia will be a formidable challenge, Lozano said.

"How are these (survivors) ever going to adjust to life after this?" asked Giles' wife, Mary Nell, after several days of visiting victims. "There's no way to even describe it ... horrible, sad, devastating, heartbreaking, shocking."

The Gileses and Ellis Leagans, mission chairman, took a two-burner stove, pots and pans, dishes, and clothing to one apartment where 25 relatives had taken refuge. Included in the group were two women who had lost husbands. One also lost three of her four children; the other, all three of hers.

Missionaries are investigating opening a goodwill center in Ibague to help amputees and others with debilitating injuries and teach new skills to those left jobless. Government officials have not decided what long-term help religious organizations will be asked to provide.

"These people now need somebody to listen to them," added Giles, who spent a half-hour with a Presbyterian pastor from Armero, Rafael Charry, whose wife and two children are presumed dead. Tears dripped to the pastor's cheeks as they closed the visit in prayer. "If God rescued me from this tragedy,

then He must have a purpose for my life," the pastor told Giles. "Everybody ended up without anything, but we have God and we have faith."

"I have had pain with the people," said Adriana Robledo, chief nurse at the emergency room of the Baptist Clinic in Barranquilla, who came to Ibague with missionary physician Robert Edwards. "I have listened to them so they could unload their hurts, tensions, and pains," said Robledo, a member of Barranquilla's Genezaret Baptist Church.

There are "hundreds, if not thousands" of people in grief, many of them farm workers or operators of small home businesses, Mrs. Giles said. Most victims' faces still show an expressionless sort of shock at their sudden, immense losses.

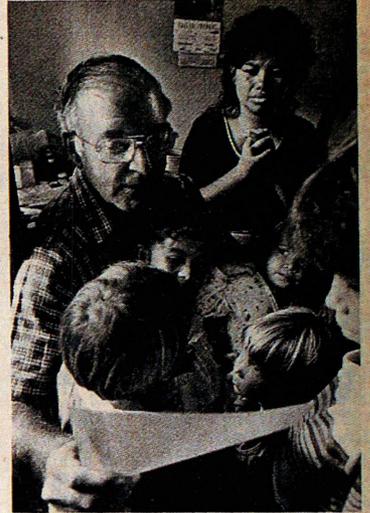
Missionaries have listened to a young father tell of the loss of his 25-day-old son. He believes his wife is alive but does not know where she is. A mother with a fractured pelvis is hospitalized beside her 10-year-old son, whose leg was amputated. She lost her husband and three younger children.

Another woman, just a week away from giving birth, lost her husband and mother. A toddler with "NN" (no name) above his bed and a gash atop his head held out his arms and cried for "Mami" (mommy). He ate only when someone could be found to breast-feed him.

Leagans and his wife, Judy, since 1979 the only Southern Baptist missionaries in Ibague, a city of a half-million people, feel "a personal loss. I sink my roots wherever I am," Leagans said. There's "an intense regional loyalty" in the state of Tolima, where Ibague and Armero are located. Leagans also knew the director of a Presbyterian-related secondary school in Armero, Vicente Rodriguez, who still is missing.

Leagans gave "high, high marks" to Colombians in their response to the crisis. "They haven't sat back and waited for the rest of the world to respond. They've been working tirelessly themselves."

Joining Robledo and Edwards in assisting at the state hospital in Ibague were Guillermo Chaparro, a general practitioner and member of Bogota's Northside Baptist Church, and Don Pearson, an orthopedic surgeon and member of College Park Baptist Church,



ASSESSING NEEDS — In an apartment where 25 relatives have taken refuge after losing their homes and possessions, Missionary James Giles reviews a list of clothing needed for the children.

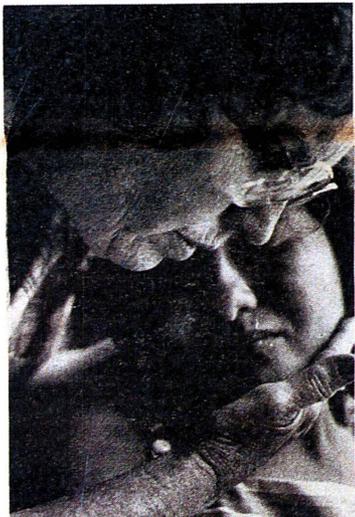
Orlando, Fla. Maria del Carmen de Alvarez, a neighborhood nurse and member of Bogota's Central Baptist Church, worked in various relief locations.

Survivors of the mudslide "look like they've been pulled over broken bricks for a couple miles," Edwards said. In the flowing mud, Charry recounted, "I felt like I was being ground up like a mill grinds wheat."

Both Edwards and Pearson lost count of the operations they performed, each estimating the number at 25 or more. Edwards cleaned wounds of mud and infection, working on one patient, for example, with a bladder full of mud that had been pressed through the man's mouth, nose, and ears. Pearson handled gangrene-caused amputations and cleaned wounds.

Nearly every relief worker has battled weariness. After several days on the scene, Mrs. Giles recounted, "I didn't know if I could go anymore." But the next day, "seeing people who are hurting and in such need, you just forget about yourself and keep going."

—Art Toalston and photographer Joanna Pinneo returned to Richmond Nov. 23 after a trip to Colombia to cover relief efforts.



PRAYING FOR HOPE — Missionary Mary Nell Giles prays with a woman who survived the mudslide that destroyed Armero, Colombia. The woman, only a week from giving birth, lost her husband, mother, and several brothers in the disaster. Her father and 2-year-old son were found safe.

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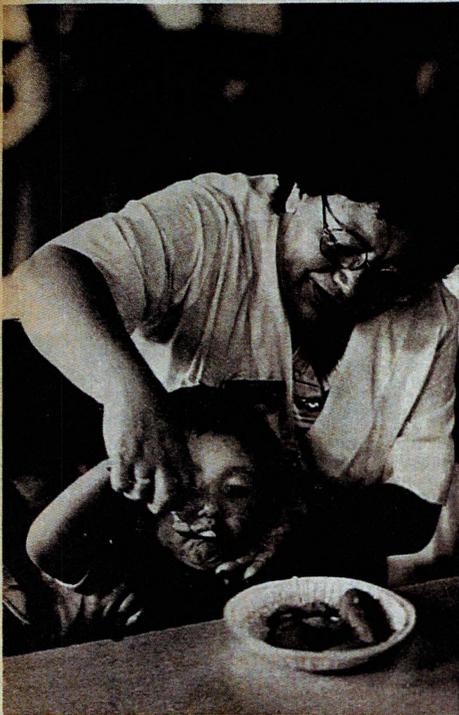
Kansas-Nebraska votes to increase gifts to CP

WICHITA, Kan. (BP) — Messengers to the annual meeting of the Kansas-Nebraska Convention of Southern Baptists adopted an official goal to increase the convention's giving to the national unified budget of the Southern Baptist Convention to 32 percent by 1990.

The Nov. 12-13 meeting in Wichita, Kan., increased the percentage of funds that will be sent on to the national programs during 1986 to 28 percent, a 1 percent increase over 1985.

Messengers elected John Click, pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church in Wichita, as the convention's 23rd president, and adopted a record budget of \$3,023,037. Resolutions dealing with opposition to alcoholic consumption and the taxation of parsonages were adopted.

by Art Toalston
by Joanna Pinneo



HELPING WHEREVER NEEDED — Maria del Carmen de Alvarez, a member of Bogota, Colombia's Central Baptist Church, helps with mealtime at a temporary shelter for victims of the volcano and mudslides. A nurse, Alvarez arranged for a ride to Ibague just to help wherever she could.

Helicopter rescue reveals depth of nurse's concern

IBAGUE, Colombia (BP) — Maria del Carmen de Alvarez stepped past 10 corpses to reach a man covered with dry mud. In agony from numerous infected wounds, he loudly vented his heartache. "My children, my children, where are my children?"

Alvarez, a neighborhood nurse and a member of Bogota's Central Baptist Church, knew the man somehow had survived a full week in the hardened aftermath of the eruption of volcano Nevado del Ruiz. She plus five Colombian soldiers and five rescue workers, laboring under stifling heat, placed the young man aboard a hospital-bound helicopter.

His physical suffering demanded far more medical expertise than Alvarez could provide.

Still, the 47-year-old mother of four sought to minister during the flight. The victim had ceased his yelling and Alvarez, sensing that he could hear, asked tenderly, "Do you know that God loves you? He loves you so much because He has not called you to His presence. He wants to give you another opportunity to trust in Him."

A soldier overheard her words and quipped in sarcasm, "Look who's with us."

To the soldier, Alvarez replied, "It's true about you, too, that God is giving you another chance to hear His message." A second soldier sided with Alvarez, saying, "That's true. God is using us to give life to these people." To Alvarez, he said, "I can tell you're an evangelical."

"Yes, I'm a Christian," Alvarez replied before resuming her witness. "Repent of your sins," she counseled the traumatized man, "and trust in Jesus." He began weeping just as the helicopter approached the hospital landing pad.

Alvarez, one of several Baptists among disaster relief workers in west central Colombia, does not know

whether the man survived. Still, such encounters have assured her "that I can be useful at a moment of such critical need on the part of so many."

She decided on her own to travel to Ibague to help survivors from Armero and the surrounding region buried by a monstrous mudslide after Nevado del Ruiz erupted Nov. 13.

Except for a ride to Ibague with Southern Baptist missionaries Nov. 18 and lodging with new acquaintances here, she said she had not asked anybody for anything.

"I didn't want to sit in front of the television and see the suffering," Alvarez continued. "Rather, I wanted to come and be of service." She also was motivated by thankfulness for the good health of her children and for new skills from a community health course at the Baptist Clinic in Barranquilla.

Disaster relief work "has made me develop more love for people, even though I've always served with love," said the veteran of nearly 30 years in nursing. "Spiritually, I'm very rich; materially, I'm very poor, but I give what I can, which is service to God to help others."

Alvarez reported to a disaster relief center after arriving in Ibague and was told she could sort clothing. Believing she should do more, she boarded a bus to head toward a school that had been turned into a temporary hospital on the outskirts of Ibague.

That morning she treated 30 patients; that afternoon she agreed to look for a hospitalized mother's lost child. The helicopter rescue mission interrupted her unsuccessful search for the child.

Alvarez intends to continue working wherever she is needed in Ibague, simply "waiting for the Lord to indicate how long I should stay."

Northern Plains adopts changes

BILLINGS, Mont. (BP) — The Northern Plains Baptist Convention approved Constitutional changes at its annual meeting in October which added responsibilities to the elected offices of first and second vice-president.

The first vice-president is now a member of the Program Committee and is chairman of the Committee on Committees and the second vice-president is chairman of the Nominating Committee.

Elected to head the three-state (North Dakota, South Dakota, and Montana) convention were: Skip Gordon Dean, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Rapid City, S.D., president; Grady Cockerhan, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church, Great Falls, Mont., first vice-president; and James Eller, pastor of Buelah Baptist Church, Buelah, N.D., second vice-president.

The convention, which attracted 184 voting messengers and visitors, adopted a budget for the coming year of \$1,088,931. Churches affiliated with the convention are expected to contribute \$336,659 of that amount with the majority of the rest of the income coming from the Home Mission Board and the Sunday School Board.

The convention will send 13.5 percent of all undesignated receipts to the worldwide mission and educational programs of the Southern Baptist Convention through the Cooperative Program. That is an increase of 0.5 percent over the current budget.

Northwest convention cuts operating budget

YAKIMA, Wash. (BP) — A cut in the operating budget and a farewell to churches which have been a part of its fellowship for more than 30 years were key items at the 1985 annual meeting of the Northwest Baptist Convention.

During a fairly short business session, the convention adopted a 1986 Cooperative Program budget of \$1,491,564 — three percent below last year's budget. The amount sent on to world mission causes through the Cooperative Program remains the same, 33 percent.

Symbolic goodbyes were exchanged between Canadian representatives to the convention and those on the state side as the Canadian Convention of Southern Baptists look forward to becoming an independent entity next May.

The messengers also approved the designation of its state mission offering monies over the next three years to support the Vision Northwest 2000, a 15-year effort to expand the ministry of Southern Baptists in the Northwest.

Clint Ashley, pastor of the Emmanuel Baptist Church in Pullman, Wash., was re-elected as president of the Northwest convention.

Robert Melton serves in Oak Ridge church

Robert W. (Bobby) Melton has accepted the call from Royce Baptist Church in Oak Ridge to come as pastor.

Melton comes to Oak Ridge from Blaine where he served as pastor of Block Springs Baptist Church for three years. Previously, he held pastorates at First Baptist Church, Sunbright, and Oak Hill Baptist Church, Crossville.

Active in denominational work, he has served in several capacities in Grainger County, Big Emory, and Cumberland Plateau associations.

He is a native of Harriman.

Ingram reveals plans to retire

BETHANY, Okla. (BP) — Joe L. Ingram, executive director-treasurer of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma since 1971, will step aside June 30, 1986, to become full-time president of the Baptist Health Care Corporation.

Gary L. Carver leads Chattanooga Baptists

Gary Linn Carver is serving as pastor of First Baptist Church in Chattanooga. The Gadsden, Ala., native began his new pastorate Oct. 20.

Moving to Chattanooga from Tusculum, Ala., where he served as pastor of the First Baptist Church, previous pastorates also include East Huntsville Baptist Church in Huntsville, Ala.; Parkview Baptist Church, Birmingham, Ala.; Indian-Kentuck Baptist Church, Canaan, Ind.; and First Baptist Church of Claysville, Gunterville, Ala. Carver also served as assistant pastor of Sardis Baptist Church, Sardis City, Ala.

As a graduate of Samford University, Birmingham, Ala., he earned his master's and doctorate degrees from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

Denominational service includes several positions with Colbert-Lauderdale Baptist Association in Alabama. Carver also served on the Alabama Baptist State Executive Board.

Carver's pastorate with the Chattanooga church follows that of Don Harbuck who died in June after a lengthy illness.

In making that announcement at the annual state convention, Ingram emphasized he is not retiring, but rather merely "completing the task" set before him 15 years ago. Ingram, who will be 66 in January, already is president of the Health Care Corporation which operates nine hospitals and four retirement villages but will now devote full time to that job.

In an unusually harmonious meeting, all three men nominated to state office were elected without opposition. Wendell Estep, pastor of Council Road Baptist Church, Bethany, (where the convention was held) was re-elected to a second term as president.

The business sessions were only a few minutes long as messengers approved a budget of \$17.5-million which was virtually the same as 1985. The same 50 percent will be passed on to worldwide Southern Baptist causes through the Cooperative Program.

Resolutions commended the Oklahoma disaster relief team of 24 men who spent two weeks in Mexico following the earthquake, reaffirmed opposition to ordination of women, gambling, beverage alcohol, and expressed disapproval of an Oct. 31 Baptist Messenger story.

The story in the newsjournal of the BGCO was based on an interview on death row with Robbie Johnson, a Baptist who was convicted of robbery and murder during a Dec. 14, 1984, robbery of a Geronimo bank. The resolution put the convention on record encouraging the editor and staff of the publication "to exercise caution and sensitivity to counsel relative to such matters." Those who pushed the resolution felt the Messenger had been insensitive to the victims, three of whom were members of Geronimo First Baptist Church.



Carver

Hawaii Baptists address abortion, homelessness, land use ordinance

PEARL HARBOR, Hawaii (BP) — Hawaii Baptists took positions on a number of volatile issues during their annual meeting — including abortion, the growing problem of homelessness on the islands, and a land use ordinance.

Messengers spoke to the abortion issues on five points as they affirmed the truth of Scripture regarding the sacredness and dignity of human life and God's sovereignty; opposed all abortions except in the case of incest, rape, or to save the life of the mother; opposed the use of federal and/or Hawaii state funds for the

performance of such abortions; commended those of the medical profession who refuse to perform abortions; and affirmed their Christian responsibility to minister appropriately to women considering abortion.

Hawaii Baptists, meeting at First Southern Baptist Church, Pearl Harbor, opposed a proposed land use ordinance which would place "excessive financial and temporal restraints" on the construction and operation of religious institutions. The convention recommended that changes be implemented in order to protect the Constitutional rights of citizens.

Messengers also noted that projects to beautify downtown Honolulu are bringing pressure on low income properties in the areas, leading to costly renovation and resulting higher rents. Tenants of these buildings are being evicted and many forced into the "tragedy of homelessness."

The convention stated it will "encourage and lobby for" low rental properties to be provided for residents with low incomes.

Also HBC affiliated churches were challenged to give financial aid in housing the homeless; to make immediate and on-going decisions to offer temporary emergency housing to those without shelter; and individual Hawaiian Baptists were urged to be in regular prayer for those in power — whether government officials, legislators, or property owners.

Other resolutions opposed state lotteries, pari-mutuel gambling and legalized gambling of any kind, and opposed any sexual orientation legislation which would force the HBC to employ homosexuals.

W. C. Garland, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church, Pearl Harbor, was re-elected president.

Messengers also adopted a budget of \$1,488,519. Of this amount \$793,895 is expected to come from churches affiliated with the HBC. Most of the remainder will come from the Home Mission Board and the Baptist Sunday School Board.

The HBC will send 27.25 percent (an increase of 0.25 percent) of income from local churches to worldwide Southern Baptist Convention programs through the Cooperative Program.

Arizona messengers enjoy quiet meeting

PHOENIX, Ariz. (BP) — The 601 messengers to the annual meeting of the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention never even had the opportunity to use their printed ballots during the quiet two-day meeting at North Phoenix Baptist Church Nov. 12-13.

Most sessions ran ahead of schedule, no negative votes were cast on any business items, and all four officers were elected by acclamation. Si Davis, pastor of East Tucson Baptist Church, Tucson, was elected to a second term as president.

A budget of \$4.8-million was adopted for 1986. The Arizona churches are expected to contribute \$2.35-million of this amount to the Cooperative Program. Of its undesignated receipts, the state convention will send 27.5 percent, an increase of 0.5 percent to the Southern Baptist Convention through the Cooperative Program.

Messengers adopted seven resolutions, all without discussion. Resolutions urged love and reconciliation in the Southern Baptist Convention and supported new work, Planned Growth In Giving and Good News simultaneous revivals set for 1986. Others opposed casino gambling and encouraged churches to work to present alternatives to abortion.

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★ Aug. 2 - Flight to Nome/Kotzebue
★ Aug. 5 - ALASKA BAPTIST CONVENTION FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY

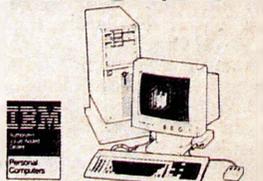
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COMPLETING THE VISION — Carson-Newman College President Cordell Maddox (left) accepts a \$25,000 check from W. P. Tilly Jr., professional personnel manager for Tennessee Eastman Company. The check completes the \$100,000 pledge made by Eastman to Carson-Newman during the Vision '80 campaign.

Maryland-Delaware convention celebrates 150th anniversary

SUITLAND, Md. (BP) — With little controversy, messengers to the annual meeting of the Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware Nov. 11-13 kicked off a yearlong 150th anniversary celebration.

Ralph Ehren, pastor of Colesville Baptist Church, Silver Spring, was elected to

a second one-year term as president.

Highlighting the three-day meeting at First Baptist Church, Suitland, Md., were programs and speeches pointing toward a sesquicentennial celebration next November.

The convention adopted, with mild dissent, a two-year study from its Constitution and Bylaws Revision Committee. The main change states that the president "in consultation with the two vice-presidents will appoint three major committees." Previously this was solely the responsibility of the president. Another change specifies that most convention and executive board committees shall consist of one member from each of the 12 associations.

The Constitution was approved on a vital first-time vote last year but the bylaws portion was turned back to the committee for further study. The affirmative vote this year on both portions gives the convention a new Constitution and bylaws document.

A \$2,357,000 Cooperative Program operating budget (an increase of \$206,000) was approved. Forty percent will be spent for Southern Baptist Convention causes with 60 percent staying in Maryland and Delaware, the same level as 1985.

The convention approved resolutions of gratitude and expressed support for the Southern Baptist Convention Peace Committee; took an offering for relief of flood victims in Maryland and surrounding states following a resolution on the subject; and stressed a need for Baptists to wage peace and to pray and work for peace in areas such as the Middle East, South Africa, Central America, and Afghanistan.

The next annual meeting was set for Oct. 23, 1986, at Union Hill Baptist Church, Athens; Eastanallee Baptist Church, Riceville; and Rockview Baptist Church, Niota.

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Florida convention moves beyond 50-50 Cooperative Program split

MIAMI (BP)— Messengers to the Florida Baptist state convention adopted a record budget, took a strong stand against all abortions, and denied the appointment of a prominent conservative leader to the powerful State Board of Missions.

One year after becoming the first state Baptist convention to divide its income equally between state causes and the national Cooperative Program, the Florida convention again raised its unified giving.

Although the increase is small (from 50 percent to 50.1 percent), it is part of a plan to increase Cooperative Program giving by 0.1 percent each year. "We just could not stop at 50 percent," said Executive Director-Treasurer Dan C. Stringer.

The \$24-million total budget, the largest ever for the state, is an increase of \$2-million over last year.

For the most part, Florida Baptists followed this year's trend of state conventions devoid of the controversies that have rocked recent SBC meetings. Only twice did messengers depart from scheduled or anticipated actions, once to debate abortion and later to remove Jacksonville pastor Jerry Vines as a nominee to the State Board of Missions.

The abortion issue surfaced in the annual report of the State Board, the committee which acts ad interim between meetings of the state convention. In authorizing a program of counseling women with unwanted pregnancies, the State Board had instructed the convention staff to prepare materials which "include the Biblical, ethical, and theological position abortion is morally wrong except for instances of incest, rape, and when the life of the mother is in danger."

While messengers voted to accept the State Board report unchanged, a separate motion called for a more restrictive stand in the counseling materials and declared all abortions are immoral, including those that follow rape, incest, and efforts to save the life of the mother.

Although the motion to instruct the state staff was debated for an hour, it passed by an estimated 2-1 margin. The action carries more weight than traditional resolutions against abortions because it directs the type of counseling that can be offered pregnant women through the convention Christian Social Ministries program and children's homes.

Vines, co-pastor of First Baptist Church of Jacksonville, is a member of the SBC Peace Committee and a leader of conservatives in the denominational

controversy. Although Vines was asked to be on the State Board by the Committee on Nominations, messengers rejected the nomination after another Jacksonville pastor noted Vines' lack of involvement in the local Baptist association. Billy Strickland, pastor of First Baptist Church, Oceanway, was elected without debate in place of Vines.

Florida Baptists elected a pastor, a layman, and a woman to the three convention offices. Max Cadenhead, pastor of First Baptist Church, Naples, and this year's vice-president, was chosen president. James L. Redman, a lawyer from Plant City, was elected vice-president. Laura Monroe, a pastor's wife from Fort Walton Beach, was elected second vice-president.

Only two resolutions were adopted by the convention — one in appreciation of the host city and the other opposing a state-operated lottery.

Sullivan to teach study on Hebrews

NASHVILLE — John Sullivan of Shreveport, La., will teach the 1986 January Bible Study book on Hebrews on Dec. 10 at Belmont College.

Sessions will be held from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in White Dining Room of the college's Gabhart Student Center. Lunch will be available for \$5.

Pastor of Shreveport's Broadmoor Baptist Church, Sullivan is a former vice-president of the Southern Baptist Convention. The Hebrews study is expected to attract an audience of middle Tennessee pastors and other church staff members.

For further information, contact Belmont College's office for religious affairs.



Sullivan

New Englanders shun controversy

PORTSMOUTH, N.H. (BP) — James E. Wideman, pastor of Screven Baptist Church in Portsmouth, N.H., the first Southern Baptist church in New England and the host church for the annual meeting of the Baptist Convention of New England, was elected convention president.

Jack Schneider, pastor of Fellowship Baptist Church, Columbia, Conn., was elected first vice-president and David Waugh, pastor of Woodstock Baptist Church in Woodstock, Vt., was chosen second vice-president.

The non-controversial convention attracted 231 messengers and visitors from the six states which make up the convention. Resolutions included support and prayer for the Southern Baptist Peace Committee and support for Good News America, a Southern Baptist plan for simultaneous revivals across the United States during 1986.

A budget of \$1,659,266 was approved for the coming year with \$402,000 expected to be contributed by local churches affiliated with the Baptist Convention of New England. The bulk of the remaining money will come from the Home Mission Board and the Sunday School Board.

The convention will send 20 percent of its undesignated receipts to the worldwide mission and education programs of the Southern Baptist Convention through the Cooperative Program, the same percentage as last year's budget.

N.M. sets budget, re-elects officers

CLOVIS, N.M. (BP) — New Mexico Baptists adopted a \$2.3-million Cooperative Program budget at their annual meeting at First Baptist Church, Clovis, Nov. 5-7.

The state's total budget for 1986 is \$4,942,074. The \$2.3-million budget will be raised in the state and the additional budgeted amount will come primarily from the Home Mission Board, the Sunday School Board, and special mission offerings. The budget will be divided on a 70-30 ratio — 70 percent to be used in New Mexico with 30 percent being sent through the Cooperative Program for missions ministries around the world.

Re-elected convention officers were: Milford Misener, pastor of First Baptist Church, Belen, president; Luis Gomez, pastor of El Buen Pastor, Gallup, vice-president; and Wesley McAfee, pastor of Sandia Baptist Church, Clovis, second vice-president.

Michigan convention elects Rochelle Davis

MONROE, Mich. (BP) — Rochelle Davis, pastor of Temple of Faith Baptist Church of Detroit, was elected president of the Baptist State Convention of Michigan during the annual session at Monroe (Mich.) Missionary Baptist Church.

Davis, vice-president the past two years, is the first black to head the BSCM.

Messengers also adopted a budget of \$2,452,793 with \$982,588 coming from churches affiliated with the convention. Most of the remainder of the budget will come from the Home Mission Board and the Baptist Sunday School Board.

A Constitutional change moved the Woman's Missionary Union department and the Brotherhood department from the church development division to the cooperative missions division.

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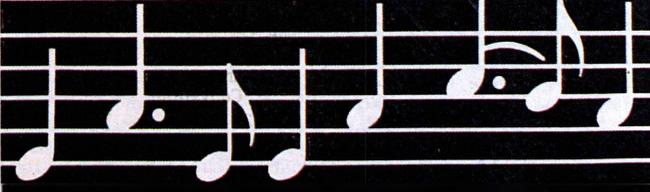
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- To pray for specific unsaved people



BIBLE BOOK SERIES

Lesson for Dec. 8

Daniel's faithfulness

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

Basic Passage: Daniel 4:1 to 6:28
Focal Passages: Daniel 6:3-7, 10-11, 19-22

Loyalty is more than a "one transaction affair." Though we dedicate ourselves to God at the beginning of our Christian lives, we must decide with the coming of each new crisis that we will remain faithful.

Daniel won a great victory when he refused to defile himself with the king's food. He won yet another when he not only told the king's dream to him and then interpreted it, but when he refused to take credit for the wisdom, giving it to his God.

In this week's lesson, we see three other examples of his determination to take God's side whatever the cost.

Chapter four contains another disturbing dream. Daniel was bold to interpret it even though the application was not favorable to Nebuchadnezzar. Chapter five tells how Daniel interpreted the handwriting on the wall at Belshazzar's infamous banquet. This also called for him to show a determination to voice God's Word whatever might be the result.

The focus of this lesson, however, deals with chapter six, which records his experience in the lion's den. Not only is this the best known story about this great man of God but also the one which perhaps tested his faith more than any other recorded event.

The awfulness of jealousy (6:3-7)

Many scholars agree with those earlier texts which consider 5:31 as the first verse of chapter six. If so, the ruler was Darius the Great (521-485). This would mean Daniel was well into his 90s when the events of this chapter occurred.

The reorganization of the empire certainly harmonizes with that of a strong ruler such as the successor of Cambyses (529-521), a weak king who let the strong empire deteriorate.

When Daniel was made chief of the empire's three administrators and also the one to whom the princes must report, both groups chafed. Knowing Daniel's efficiency, they realized the only point where they might attack him was his religion which was different to that of the king.

Being aware also of the king's vanity, they combined the two facts and persuaded the king to decree that no one could pray to anyone but the king for 30 days. The penalty for violation was to be thrown into a den of lions, a possession of the king for hunting, a custom probably borrowed from the Assyrians.

Daniel's determination to pray (6:10-11)
Daniel did not continue his regular

prayer program to flout his religion. Neither was he deliberately placing himself in a position where he would become a martyr. Rather, the decree had forced the issue and he was unwilling to lower his flag of loyalty because of a human decree. Nor did he pray to God with a defiant attitude toward Darius. He was a person whose habit was to pray because of his genuine piety, not because he was hypocritical or ostentatious.

The "three times a day" that he prayed did not represent mechanical repetition. Rather his life was built on spiritual discipline. True, the Jews did have a custom of praying three times a day, but Daniel was praying because he knew he had been called to a high task, a place of responsibility. He was indeed obeying the technicalities of the Jewish law, but he did it because he knew he must stay in fellowship with God to be effective in his work.

Victory for Daniel (6:18-22)

Feeling a personal responsibility for Daniel, the king's early morning trip showed his genuine concern. His fasting the previous night was not a religious act but because he was so upset. His cry in verse 20 helps us understand the one in verse 16. He was not certain Daniel was alive. With voice trembling and filled with anxiety, he wanted to believe but was afraid to be too bold. He was safe when he phrased his call in the form of a question.

Perhaps those scholars are correct who insist that the statement in verse 16 was a form of prayer, "May thy God ... deliver thee." John Calvin said Darius spoke doubtfully "as unbelievers do who seem to have some grounds for hope, but no firm or sure foundation in their own minds." Whether he doubted God's willingness or ability to deliver Daniel, the triumphant voice of the prisoner assured him Daniel's God possessed both. Some scholars attach great significance to Daniel's "O King, live forever," suggesting Daniel realized a change had come over him equivalent to a "conversion."

True, the king's decree in verses 26-27 was a mighty tribute to Israel's God, but he did not command that Jewish worship replace local religious customs. He only demanded that Israel's God be treated with reverence. Consistent with his polytheistic background, he nowhere suggested that Daniel's God was the only God. He did, however, place Him above other gods and proclaimed Him to be the "living God" Whose kingdom would never pass away.

The main thrust of this lesson is not whether or not Darius was "saved," but that Daniel's God has power even today to deliver us when we fall into difficulty because of our faithfulness to Him. Though Daniel claimed his own integrity, he nevertheless gave full credit to God for his salvation. So should we when He rescues us from the evil designs of wicked people!

UNIFORM LESSON SERIES

Lesson for Dec. 8

The birth of Jesus

By William L. Palmer, president,
Harrison-Chilhowee Baptist Academy, Seymour

Basic Passages: Isaiah 11:1-9; Micah 5:2; Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 2:1-7
Focal Passages: Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 2:1-7

The first time I walked into the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, I walked through with some sense of resentment as I observed the religious ornaments, decorations and trappings in that shrine.

Then a sense of awe settled over me. I knew that the cathedral there in Bethlehem might not be anywhere close to the actual manger where my Saviour was born, but across the centuries pilgrims had come to that vicinity to pay their respects to a memorable event.

The Word had become flesh, "God with us." Men have had the opportunity to behold His glory. He dwelt among them. His birth elicited wonder from shepherds and wise men of ancient days. His birth still commands the interest and attention of the masses. People may not understand, but nonetheless they continue to perpetuate the record that Jesus was born in Bethlehem.

The ancient prophet Micah (5:2) foretold the birth and kingdom of Christ when he wrote, "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel . . ."

Bethlehem was a special place. Beth-

lehem in Judea was "the city of David" (Luke 2:4). David's lineage included Joseph. Joseph was "the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, Who is called Christ" (Matthew 1:16).

Joseph was a special person. A man of integrity and honor, he was a thoughtful, considerate, and conscientious person. As surely as God selected Mary to be the vessel of His immaculate conception, God chose Joseph to be the man to care for Mary during her pregnancy and the birth of God's only begotten Son. Joseph was the human instrument of protection for the virgin and her firstborn Son.

Matthew describes Joseph as a "just man" and a man who was "not willing to make her (Mary) a public example." He "was minded to put her away privately" (1:19). Joseph was a good man. God the Heavenly Father entrusted Joseph with the privileges and responsibilities of teaching and training Jesus during the formative years of His life. Joseph fulfilled the role of an earthly father during Jesus' early years. Jesus was known as "the carpenter's son" (Matthew 13:55).

As the angel Gabriel revealed God's truth to Mary about her conception (Luke 1:26f), the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream to tell him, "that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 1:20). Joseph also was informed that the baby was to be a "son," and was to be named "Jesus for He shall save His people from their sins" (1:21).

I like the Scriptural statement of Joseph's unquestioning obedience. Joseph "did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him" (1:24). Joseph refrained from sexual relations with Mary (He "knew her not") until she had given birth to this special child. Joseph "called His name JESUS" (1:25) in obedience to the divine instruction.

God was in control throughout the birth event. Caesar himself was an instrument of divine guidance when he issued the decree "that all the world should be taxed" (Luke 2:1) or enrolled by families in the cities of their ancestral heritage. Being "of the house and lineage of David" (2:4), Joseph went from his residence in Nazareth of Galilee up to Bethlehem of Judea with Mary who was "great with child."

In very simple language, Luke records, "And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son" (2:6, 7).

God does move in mysterious ways to perform His wonders. Prophetic utterance became reality in the birth of the Messiah, Jesus, in the city of Bethlehem, David's royal city. Mary wrapped her firstborn Son in swaddling clothes. She laid Him in a manger.

That manger was "worlds away" from the ornate, curtained, marble spot down under in the "cave" at the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. Luke says, "there was no room for them in the inn" (2:7).

The residents of Bethlehem did not know Him then, but today we recognize Him as Jesus, the Christ, the only begotten Son of God. Today Bethlehemites and pilgrims from around the world recognize the significance of the place where the Word was revealed as flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14).

We magnify and glorify Him.



Wood



Palmer

Louisiana Baptists launch Mission '90

LAKE CHARLES, La. (BP) — Louisiana Baptists launched a campaign, elected officers, adopted a budget, and protested gambling, pornography, and homosexuality during their annual meeting.

The campaign is Mission '90, a program to raise \$10-million to start 250 churches during the next five years.

The convention president is Robert Magee, pastor of Temple Baptist Church in Ruston for the past 21 years.

The 1986 budget which messengers approved totals \$16.6-million, a 3.7 percent increase over the 1985 budget of \$16-million. LBC causes will receive \$10,653,575, or 65.5 percent of the budget. SBC causes will receive \$5,611,425, or 34.5 percent (compared to 34.25 percent in 1985). An additional \$335,000 will be channeled to the Southern Baptist Retirement Program.

Gambling, pornography, and homosexuality were topics of three of 10 resolutions passed by convention messengers. They stated their opposition to gambling and a state-run lottery, pornography, and measures to eliminate Louisiana's Sunday closing laws. They called homosexuality a "lifestyle (that) is unnatural and therefore is an aberration of God's plan for humankind," but they urged Louisiana Baptists to "minister redemptively to homosexuals, calling them to God's love."

In other matters, messengers approved extensions of LBC missions partnerships with Baptists in Nevada and Zimbabwe through Dec. 31, 1987, and amended the LBC Bylaws to allow the Order of Business Committee to solicit convention speakers "up to three years in advance."

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LIFE AND WORK SERIES

Lesson for Dec. 8

Relating works and worship

By Paul Woodford, pastor
First Baptist Church, Lewisburg

Basic Passage: Jeremiah 7:1-28

Focal Passages: Jeremiah 7:3-12, 14

As "God's people solve problems," they find that a recurring problem is that of "relating works and worship." Historical events had so ordered themselves as to make this a peculiarly crucial problem for the people of Jeremiah's day.



Woodford

Josiah upon the discovery of the book of the law by Hilkiah (2 Kings 22) had moved to make great reformation in the religious life of Israel. This reformation would be brought about by adherence to the book of the covenant and the centralization of worship in the Temple at Jerusalem.

Ultimately the miraculous deliverance of Jerusalem from the Assyrian siege in 701 B.C., coupled with a biased interpretation of a prophetic claim (Isaiah 37:35) that God would forever assure Jerusalem's security, led the people into a false sense of security in relation to the Temple. Now in what has come to be called his "Temple sermon," Jeremiah openly confronts the Israelite worshipers with the fact that right worship requires right living on their part.

A challenge to thinking and practice (7:3-4)

If as some think this was Jeremiah's first public address, he must have appeared somewhat as the "first picket line protester" to the great throngs of worshipers on their way to the Temple. Jeremiah stationed himself between the Temple and the worshipers to demand their attention to his sermon.

His first demand, "Amend your ways and your doings," must have been insulting to those self-assured, secure worshipers. Were they not on their way to church? Could he not hear them chanting, "The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord"?

No doubt Jeremiah heard it better than they. Now he wants them to hear what they are really saying and see how their doing differs from their claims. He

wishes to challenge their thinking and its resultant practice. He is so audacious as to charge them in their chanting as speaking lying words. No doubt he got their attention. Now he can continue with his sermon.

A call to faithfulness to the covenant demands (7:5-7)

Jeremiah reiterates his contention that there is only one way to security: "Change your ways, then God will be with you" (vv. 3, 5). The only security is a right relationship with God lived out in relationship with man according to the

demands of the covenant. Verses five through seven make it abundantly clear what the Lord's covenant expectations of them were.

The divorce of worship and life (7:8-11)

Jeremiah charges the Israelites specifically with the breaking of six of the Ten Commandments, and the implication is that they have almost completely broken the covenantal stipulations. Yet such obviously guilty people are continuously coming to the Temple singing their songs of assurance of security.

If they had had it in that day, they would have probably made the chorus, "Saved, Saved, Saved!" their theme song. They had made the "holy place" into a "hiding place" for covenant breakers.

A description of destruction (7:12, 14)

In light of their dastardly deeds, Jeremiah invites them to go to the Lord's former holy place at Shiloh to witness the

destruction that comes upon a people who turn to wickedness rather than to the Lord. The promise is made that unless they desist from their deception and destructive pattern of life, the same thing would happen to the Temple at Jerusalem.

The only basis for security will not be in reverence for any place or thing, however important, but in a right relationship with God which expresses itself in proper obedience to His covenant demands.

During the early days of World War II, a German Nazi guard asked a captured Jewish rabbi, "Well, old man, now just whose side do you think God is on?" Quietly and firmly the rabbi replied: "That question is not one that concerns me. What matters most to me is that I am on God's side."

Jeremiah says, "Get on God's side today! Let your works match your worship."

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Skinner's begin again after 35-year career

By Thomas Law

GUAYAYBI, Paraguay — "Well, it's only a couple of years until retirement. I guess we'll just take it easy."

So go the thoughts, if not the words, of many.

Bill and Fran Skinner easily could have justified such thoughts. After 35 years as Southern Baptist missionaries in Paraguay, the Skinners had reached the pinnacle of their careers.

Skinner, a physician from Nashville, had become chief of the pediatric and medical services departments at Baptist Hospital in Asuncion, Paraguay's capital city. Mrs. Skinner, a native of Florence County, S.C., had worked extensively with the Baptist convention's Radio and Television Commission. Both were elected year after year to mission and convention leadership posts.

The two could have spent their last few years in Paraguay doing what they have done so effectively for so long. But not Bill and Fran Skinner. For them, this time is a chance to "begin again."

Last April the Skinners set out with the mobile clinic of the Baptist Hospital to begin a ministry in Guayaybi, a small town in the state of San Pedro. The only Baptist work in that state had been started by layman Leis Gamarra, who began a mission church in a town called Chore.

The Skinners realized that San Pedro would become an area of intense development as the Paraguayan interior is gradually opened through paved highways. Public health officials had suggested Guayaybi, which is about 10 miles beyond the end of existing paved roads. No other physician works in the area, but the highway will soon be extended through the town, opening the way for hundreds of people to move in.



TELL ME ABOUT IT — Bill Skinner, missionary physician for 35 years in Paraguay, interviews patients at his new medical clinic in Guayaybi.

"When Bill took me there for the first time in January, finding a suitable building seemed unrealistic," Mrs. Skinner recalled. "Driving down the dirt highway, most of the buildings we saw were either one-room shacks or homes and businesses combined. There was one very nice new brick building in the center of the village and we jokingly said, 'We'll take that one,' thinking it was some kind of official building."

The Skinners later met a Peace Corps volunteer working in the area who offered to help them find a place for the clinic. When they returned a few weeks later, he had found one — the nice brick building.

"The owner had a truck which he sold

and he decided to invest the proceeds in a building, he didn't know for what," said Mrs. Skinner. "We told him God had him build it for a medical clinic to help his fellowman. He rented it for a very reasonable fee. We have divided it into four rooms with curtains. We live three days a week in one of the rooms and the clinic occupies the other three, which double as a meeting place."

The missionaries inaugurated the new medical work April 20 with assistance from the Baptist Hospital's mobile clinic and a team of 14 doctors, nurses, and other personnel. They treated 132 patients.

The Skinners plunged into a regular schedule in Guayaybi, driving from

Asuncion each week for three days of clinics and a Wednesday night Bible study. But they soon saw the people hungered to know more about the Bible. Four nights of evangelistic services were scheduled for early September.

Baptist workers visited homes during the day and people showed up in droves at night. Between 400 and 500 people came to each night service, filling the abandoned barn where the meetings were held. They heard the gospel in their native Guarani language and more than 90 made professions of faith in Christ. Many young children also came forward expressing interest in hearing more about Jesus. Nearly 170 people attended a Sunday morning worship service Sept. 15.

The Skinners now spend Thursdays through Sundays at the Guayaybi clinic, treating patients and holding a Thursday prayer meeting-Bible study and Sunday morning worship services. The services attract an average of 40 people, including five baptized believers. More than 15 new believers will be baptized soon.

The mission church in the city of Capiata, 150 miles away, has taken on the Guayaybi congregation as a mission project. The church plans to send a team of workers to Guayaybi soon to do more house-to-house visitation and witnessing.

This is not the first time the Skinners have seen a challenge and grabbed it with gusto. Over the years they have walked for miles, ridden on horseback, and rowed in canoes to places where no physician had been seen in years. Though they will retire in a few years, Bill and Fran Skinner will not sit back and relax. For them, it is a time to begin again.

—Law is a Southern Baptist missionary press representative in Paraguay.

MasterLife turns despair into hope in South Africa

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following is based on interviews with Baptists in South Africa. South Africans' names have been changed or omitted to protect individuals.

By Robert O'Brien

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa (BP) — Black Baptists who tread the line between life and death each day in South Africa's seething townships say what they have learned through the MasterLife discipleship training plan has turned despair into hope.

"If principles of MasterLife would saturate South Africa, we would have revival rather than revolution," said a black Baptist pastor in a riot-torn township.

MasterLife, a Southern Baptist program designed to bring people closer to Christian principles of living and relating to God, has spread among pastors and laymen in the multiracial Baptist Union of Southern Africa and the black Baptist Convention of Southern Africa.

"I would have left the ministry if I hadn't had MasterLife," said Nehemiah, a veteran of 14 years as a pastor. "I wasn't enjoying my ministry anymore, and I had lost hope for the future. All my previous training was impractical for the situation we face here."

Nehemiah lives daily in an environment where black activists threaten the homes and lives of those who do not follow their approach to protesting apar-

theid, especially Christians who choose the non-violent approach. They also face tensions of the normal dangers of living where riots take lives and destroy property.

Believing in non-violent protest, Nehemiah recently drew the wrath of black activists when he refused to discontinue services or allow use of church property for political rallies. His church members, who had taken MasterLife training, backed him and continued to attend, despite threats of death and burning of homes and church.

"Before they grew spiritually through MasterLife," Nehemiah said, "their fear would have overruled. But they were

spiritually prepared to stand up for their principles. So far, prayer has kept our lives safe and our church from burning."

Most South African blacks reject Christianity because they think it is a white man's religion and because many whites have distorted it to support the apartheid system of racial separation, according to black Baptist leaders. That means, they say, that residents of black townships are largely anti-Christian. Even many black Baptist church members do not have a close relationship to Jesus Christ.

They say MasterLife, which more than 1,000 South African Baptists of all races have taken in the past three years, will

become a key to personal and church growth and reconciliation between the races. Already, according to Nehemiah and Southern Baptist Missionary Carroll Shaw, it has begun to attract interest outside Baptist circles.

"MasterLife is revolutionary because it puts people in communication with God. Blacks in the townships don't have that," said Nehemiah, who has progressed through the MasterLife I and II, Survival Kit and Master Builder sections of the discipleship plan. "It brings people close together and makes a church come alive."

"I'm making our church a training church, using MasterLife and other materials, so people won't grow cold and open to satanic attack in this violent situation," he added. "And I'm using it to help other blacks cope with life. Life would be unhappy here without being close to God."

Shaw, MasterLife coordinator for eastern and southern Africa, says MasterLife and its accompanying Survival Kit will be translated from English into at least six other languages of the Southern Africa region next year if budget is available. Eventually, Southern Baptist missionaries throughout Africa hope to translate it into 26 languages.

"If I had only one week to live, I would now use that time to provide discipleship training to someone else to pass on what I've learned through MasterLife," Nehemiah said. "Before, I wouldn't have said that. MasterLife made that change. It's gold to me."

Duke, Welch take new posts at FMB

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Irma Duke and Mary Jane Welch have been given new responsibilities in the Foreign Mission Board's new office of communications and public relations, effective Jan. 1.

Duke will become director of a new print department and Welch will replace her as information coordinator and assistant director of the news and information services department.

The print department, one of two being created from the present product development department, will be responsible for printed products such as brochures, maps, and mission study books.

Duke came to the board in 1976 as a staff writer and assumed her present post in 1980. The former Irma Coleman

is a native of Henry County, Va., and grew up there and in Lakeland, Fla. She is a graduate of Florida Southern College in Lakeland, where she also worked as a staff writer for *The Ledger*.

Welch, a staff writer at the Foreign Mission Board since 1978, will be primarily responsible for providing foreign missions information to a variety of Southern Baptist publications.

She grew up in Aberdeen, Miss., was graduated from Mississippi College, Clinton, and also attended the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. She was an editorial assistant for the *Commercial Appeal* in Memphis, where she also worked for the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission.