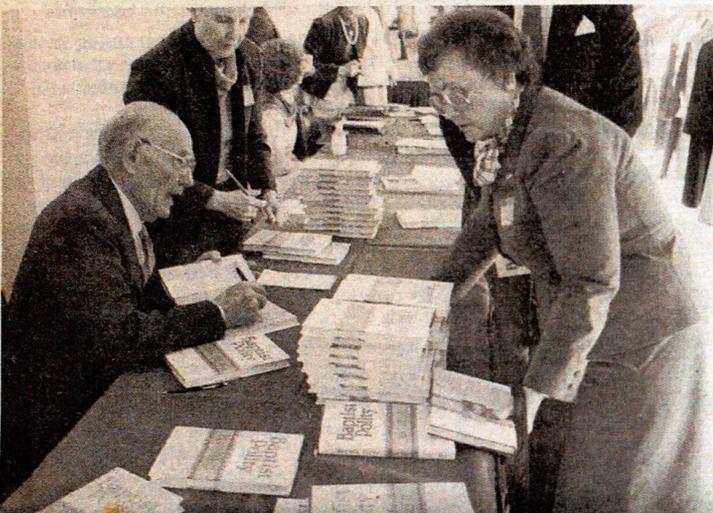


Baptist and Reflector

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Newsjournal of the Tennessee Baptist Convention



TRUSTEES' ORIENTATION — James L. Sullivan signs a copy of his book "Baptist Polity" for Hon. Shirley Underwood, judge from Johnson City, trustee for TBCH. Orientation was held in Nashville last week for all newly-elected Tennessee Baptist Convention trustees.

Tennessean in Haiti reports on violence

By Eric Miller

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (BP)—Southern Baptist Missionary Mark Rutledge feels relatively safe amid the violence in Haiti but asks for prayer for fellow missionaries who are new to Haiti.

The first election in Haiti in 30 years was scheduled Nov. 29 but was called off because of widespread violence shortly after polls opened. At least 15 people were shot or hacked to death at one polling station by killers opposing the election, and 12 other deaths were reported.

"I personally did not go to church yesterday (Nov. 29) on the recommendation from most of the people I know here who said it wouldn't be too safe," Rutledge said. Some polling stations were located at churches, and "the worst place you could have been was at the polls and out on the street," he explained.

Rutledge, a native of Murfreesboro, said he hadn't heard of any Haitian Baptists being attacked or injured during violence. The executive committee of the Haitian Baptist Convention met two days before the election, he reported. The committee met in northern Haiti, where less violence has occurred.

Rutledge and his wife, Peggy, have heard gunfire on many nights and even grenades being set off. They stay away from the downtown area of Port-au-Prince, where much of the violence occurs.

"Pray for this country and for the people here as they go through this problem, that somehow God can use this to change this country," Rutledge said. He also asked for prayer for new missionaries Virgil and Patsy Suttles in their adjustment to the Haiti situation. The Suttles arrived in Haiti Nov. 1. They and the Rutledges are the only Southern Baptist missionaries there.

The Rutledges arrived in Haiti in March, but both had worked in the coun-

try previously. They have had time to adjust to the latest violence, which started in June as anti-government groups instigated strikes calling for a three-man governing council to step down from office. Strikers also called for a general election to choose a new council.

Missionaries are still fairly safe in Haiti, Rutledge insisted: "Although we've had shooting at night, and that's unnerving, it's not aimed at us. There's no antagonism toward us as Americans or foreigners or as Christians. Because of that, I don't see how it would be unsafe to stay here."

The Americans who have been wounded were reporters who "were right in the middle" of the polling places and were wounded by people who did not want the election, he said.

For the missionaries, "it's been a matter of trying to stay at home and stay out of the violence," he said. "They're not attacking individual homes. It's aimed toward specific people."

Until the election, Rutledge had been

(Continued on page 3)

State directors question HMB personnel policies

ATLANTA (BP)—State Baptist convention missions directors expressed concern over the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's new policy on divorce during their annual meeting in Atlanta.

The board's trustees approved a new policy last summer that says divorced people rarely will be appointed or approved for HMB service unless their divorce was based on "biblical rationale." That rationale was defined as limited to adultery or fornication and desertion or physical abandonment by a spouse.

The state missions directors, representing 37 state Baptist conventions, Canada, and Puerto Rico, argued the policy was narrow and restrictive.

Several directors noted cases where a person divorced and remarried before becoming a Christian or where local church pastors are barred from missionary appointment because of the policy.

The missions directors said they perceived the policy not only closed the door to pastors who had been divorced but to all divorced people seeking appointment in any category. They concluded they will address the HMB board of trustees about the policy.

HMB Missions Vice-president Gerald Palmer said the dialogue did not indicate a lack of support for the board by the missions directors. But, he added, the board's staff is committed to carrying out policies set by its trustees.

Home missions endeavors are made

possible by cooperative arrangements with state conventions and the boards, Palmer said, noting, "We are laborers together with God."

Since 1958, the board has worked cooperatively with state Baptist conventions in funding, appointment, and supervision of missionaries.

If the board and state Baptist conventions fail in their goals, it will not be because they lack resources or they did not work toward the goals, but because they did not work together, according to Palmer.

The board's expansion will be accomplished through cooperative arrangements with the states, said Palmer, explaining the board is committed to starting 50,000 new churches by the year 2000.

Slaughter grieves Baptists

HARARE, Zimbabwe (BP)—The slaughter of 10 Pentecostal church workers and six children in Zimbabwe Nov. 25 brought sorrow to the entire missionary community, but will not affect Southern Baptist work in the country, according to Foreign Mission Board administrators.

Zeb Moss, associate director for Eastern and Southern Africa, spoke with Southern Baptist mission personnel in Zimbabwe after 20 anti-government rebels attacked a Pentecostal agricultural mission in a nighttime raid.

The incident in the southern province of Matabeleland was isolated and distant from areas where the 39 Southern Baptist missionaries and one volunteer now on the field are working. Mission work in the rural areas of Zimbabwe will continue on course, Moss said.

Most of those killed were Zimbabwean citizens, but David Emerson, 35, and Karen Alice Sharon Ivesdahl, 34, were identified as Americans.

TBC CP gifts show decrease

A look at Cooperative Program giving for Tennessee Baptist Convention in November shows a decrease of \$137,470.25 for the month — when compared to figures of the same period in 1986. That's a downturn of 10.72 percent.

However, December's first days ushered in a gain, according to Tom Madden, TBC executive-secretary treasurer. Through Dec. 4, a total of \$889,493.18 had been given for the month — an increase of \$376,671.07 over the same 1986 period.

Total Cooperative Program gifts for November amounted to \$1,144,322.21, compared to last year's \$1,281,792.46.

Messengers to last month's Annual meeting in Nashville approved a \$23,850,000 Cooperative Program budget goal for the November 1987-October 1988 convention year.

One-twelfth of that goal would be \$1,987,500. So the November CP gifts were short by \$843,177.79.

"We see that November was not a good month," said Madden, "but it follows October, traditionally one of our best. We are greatly encouraged by the first offerings of December."

Last year's November gifts also were substantially below the CP monthly goal (31.64 percent). The books closed on Nov. 30, a Monday this year.

Editorials

Theological education — look before leaping

One of the stated reasons for the founding of the Southern Baptist Alliance is to support theological education tuned to traditional Southern Baptist methods and structure.

Now the moderate group has voted to study the feasibility of initiating a Baptist seminary in the Southeast. The idea stems from resignations of President Randall Lolley, Dean Morris Ashcraft, and several administrators at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary — and the fact that the seminary is now led by more conservative trustees.

A task force is investigating possibilities for such an institution or divinity school at one of several locations in the southeast — based on the Alliance's founding principles which include inclusiveness for women and minorities and cooperation with other Christian faiths.

The task force's preliminary work is predicated on the possibility of drastic changes in Southeastern's faculty and administration, and operating principles. The new trustees' leadership has said that new administrative positions and faculty vacancies that occur will be filled with people who believe that the Bible is inerrant, without error even in matters of history and science.

The Alliance is carrying out what it believes the correct strategy to make certain Southeastern Seminary will live on — even if with another name in a different location — if it should lean too far to the conservative side.

We suggest that Alliance leaders request a meeting with Southeastern trustee officers. Trustees are not required to meet with every group that has a disagreement, but in this case such a meeting could dispel some fears that Alliance members and other Baptists have. New trustee leaders could share more complete plans for faculty and administrative leadership.

The swiftness with which the new trustee leadership stated policies and plans for changing

the faculty and administration to a more conservative stance is disturbing. But trustees do not literally "own" our institutions — they are caretakers. And a meeting with a caring but disgruntled group would be helpful, especially if that group intends to start a competitive seminary.

* * *

On the other hand, another theological babe is about to be born in the northeast. Child of at least three years of hard work and intensive study, the Northeastern Baptist School of Ministry will open in the autumn of 1988.

The new school has the blessing and cooperation and help of five northeastern Baptist state conventions, the Home Mission Board, and the presidents' council of the six Southern Baptist seminaries.

The founding group and the coalition involved will quickly tell you that this is a new concept. The school will offer a master's degree and a ministry diploma at several teaching centers in the northeast. Rather than calling it a seminary, the Task Team (planning group) insists that Northeastern School of Ministry will emphasize contextualized learning, strengthened by strong field ministry.

Dealing with tough issues

In one of his favorite stories, Erwin L. McDonald, editor emeritus of the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*, recounts an exchange he had with a Baptist messenger at an associational meeting years ago.

McDonald explained to the messengers some of his work as editor, and told them that part of his work was making up the pages.

The messenger at the back piped up, "I always knew somebody was making up that stuff we read about."

The distinguished editor, of course, meant that he helped put items in the right places on the pages. The messenger evidently thought the editor took liberties with the truth.

Nothing that appears on the pages of the *Baptist and Reflector* is "made up." For sure we can be tricked, but to the best of our knowledge, we print only the truth.

All Baptists will defend their paper when they agree with it. Most will defend it all the time — as a messenger of news. Some, however, will defend it only when it agrees with them.

So we get differing views on all "big" or "important" news items. We defend the right of every Tennessee Baptist to have access to the truth, to know what his convention or association is doing, and to be equipped to be a productive, cooperative, and participating Baptist.

The tough issues for us right now are ordination of women, abortion, more conservative or less conservative, resignations at Southeastern Seminary, priesthood of the believer, pressured retirement of Georgia editor Jack Harwell, autonomy of the local church or association. These filter down to specifics — disfellowshipping of Prescott Memorial Church by Shelby County Association, approval of political endorsement of Robert Bork, etc.

Individual Baptists have a right to speak to the tough issues. They have a right to state opinions — but with Christian attitudes and words.

We have tried to allow free discussion. We have kept such discussions within the family as much as possible.

NBSM is for laypersons and pastors, but its main thrust is ministry. Ministry training will be taught at several places conveniently located for those in the northeast who need and want additional training and ministry skills.

Classes, says the Task Team, will begin in a year, and build on already strong courses offered through Southern Baptist Seminary Extension.

With the Home Mission Board's commitment and active assistance, and with cooperation among the five conventions, NBSM looks more and more like an idea whose time has come.

NBSM will answer ministry training needs and solve some problems for Baptists in the northeast. Three years of work has culminated with a solid plan, ready for execution.

We hope the Southern Baptist Alliance will approach its idea for a seminary in the southeast with the same careful study and commitment to cooperation that NBSM used. Though the two concepts are somewhat different, both involve Southern Baptist life at the theological level. This is one place where we need steady thinking, devout praying, and a will for courage. Let the standards be high, but let the efforts be for the glory of Christ Jesus. — WFA

We called for a moratorium on letters about Shelby County Association and Prescott Memorial Church. Actions of at least two associational executive groups have made recent news on the subject — and letters relating to that action do not break the moratorium.

We say all this to say that very soon we will reach a time when all relevant words about this particular matter will have been said. That may be very soon. This is reasonable and necessary. The subject is important, but there are yet more important matters for us.

Let's not let the process of stating our opinions delay our troops from reaching the front. — WFA

BSU notes 50 years

By Betsy Ponder

KNOXVILLE — The Baptist Student Center at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, celebrated 50 years of student ministry at its annual Alumni Banquet on UTK's Homecoming Day, Nov. 14.

Over 100 alumni, spouses, and friends traveled from across the country to attend this golden anniversary homecoming dinner. Their graduation classes ranged from 1944 to 1987.

A large part of the evening was spent reminiscing about past directors, shared mission trip experiences, and fun times on campus. Dayspring, a Christian vocal group that toured the United States and Africa representing the BSU in the 1970s, gave an impromptu concert.

Ruth Adams, BSU secretary for the past 16 years, was honored for her service at the banquet. Adams, who will be retiring Dec. 31, came to UTK while Bill Lee, who is now working at the Home Mission Board, was BSU director. To honor Adams, several alumni made presentations to her after recounting her helpfulness to them through their years as UTK students.

Also at the banquet, Jim Mongold, class of 1985, reported on the growth of alumni giving to the BSU's alumni student scholarship fund. He announced that the scholarship would be renamed to honor Adams.

The BSU began at UTK in 1937 when Leonard Rogers, later mayor of Knoxville, became part-time director. The original building on Cumberland Avenue was bought in 1941 by the Executive Board of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. In 1962 the center now in use on Melrose Avenue was purchased in cooperation with the Knox County Association of Baptists and expanded to meet ministry needs.

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Moderate group meets in Dallas-Fort Worth

DALLAS (BP)— More than 40 moderate leaders from a dozen states met at Dallas-Fort Worth Airport Nov. 30-Dec. 1 to review events in the Southern Baptist Convention over the past several weeks and to look "for ways to retrieve our national convention from the hands of the fundamentalists and return it to the mainstream Baptist people."

Norman Cavender, a layman from Claxton, Ga., distributed a prepared statement following the two-day meeting and answered questions from the media.

Contrary to what others might think, Cavender said, the meeting was not to discuss plans to elect a president at the SBC annual meeting in San Antonio, Texas, next June, although the presidential election was mentioned briefly and is "the bottom line" in the struggle. He added Arizona Pastor Richard Jackson is a likely nominee.

The meeting was closed to the public, although Toby Druin, associate editor of Texas Baptist Standard, who had learned the meeting was being held, was told he could sit in on the initial session. The offer was refused when he was told that not all of the meeting would be on the record.

Cavender distributed a list of signatures of 25 of the people who attended the meeting. He said 42 had been in on the various sessions, but some had left before the paper asking for the signatures had been distributed and a few had chosen not to sign it.

Both the statement and Cavender noted conservative leaders had met Nov. 16 in Atlanta and had described their gathering as a "private fellowship meeting" and had declined to discuss the purpose of their meeting, who attended, what was discussed, or who invited them.

"We are not engaging in this kind of cover-up," the statement from the moderate group said. "We still believe Baptist people are entitled to honesty."

The Dallas-Fort Worth meeting was called by Winfred Moore, pastor of First Baptist Church of Amarillo, Texas, to discuss "the wrongs being inflicted upon the SBC, including the wrongs of dishonesty, secrecy, and private agendas aimed at giving one faction total control of our convention and its agencies."

Interfaith group elects M. Nail

Marvin Nail, pastor of Whitsitt Chapel Church, Nashville, and writer of the Baptist and Reflector's Bible Book Series weekly lessons, has been elected president of the Nashville Association of Rabbis, Priests, and Ministers.

Nail is the first Southern Baptist to head the association in its 13-year history. NARPM is known as one of Nashville's most active interfaith organizations.

There are about 140 members in the association which meets monthly to keep members aware of pressing inner city-related problems such as poverty and homelessness.

One of the projects of the group is Second Harvest Food Bank, and others include a Metro jail visitation program for volunteers, programs on AIDS and problems of stress in ministers' families.

Nail said NARPM allows "the meeting of minds, the coming together on issues we can agree on beyond doctrinal questions." He said members can work together on some things that involve "the worth of human beings."

He said it is sometimes easier for churches to donate money rather than get involved in hands-on service.

boards, and institutions," the statement said.

Attending were pastors and laypeople from a dozen states "who are concerned about what the Pressler/Patterson coalition is doing to our convention and the serious damage we see it inflicting on our agencies and institutions."

Paul Pressler, a Houston appeals court judge, and Paige Patterson, president of Criswell Center for Biblical Studies in Dallas, are considered the leaders of the conservative group in the SBC and were present at the Nov. 16 meeting in Atlanta.

The statement from the DFW group said items discussed included the results of the recent state conventions, "which demonstrated that mainstream Baptist people back home have rejected political fundamentalism. The people are beginning to see proof that the fundamentalists

are systematically trying to seize control of local pulpits and state conventions, as well as the SBC."

The purpose of the meeting, the statement said, was to discuss events of the last several weeks on state and national levels and "to react for the growing number of Baptist people who are fed up with fundamentalist control of the SBC."

"We are trying to give shape to that grassroots Baptist reaction. We are looking for ways to retrieve our national convention from the hands of the fundamentalists and return it to the mainstream Baptist people. The purpose of the meeting is simple: to resist fundamentalist control of our local churches, our state conventions, and our national convention.

"We see a new energy and wisdom among the people. Baptists in the in-

dividual states want an end to fundamentalist control. We are working to cooperate with them and coordinate these Baptist efforts."

The statement was signed by both Cavender and Jim Slatton, pastor of River Road Church in Richmond, Va. Cavender said the two of them and Moore were spokesmen for the group, but Moore was unable to attend because of illness.

The Dallas-Fort Worth meeting had been in the planning stages for several weeks, Cavender said, and was not in response to the Nov. 16 meeting in Atlanta.

The room at the DFW Airport Hyatt Hotel was arranged by Claudia Barner, a layperson from Wilshire Church in Dallas, Cavender said, and was paid for by participants in the meeting, all of whom paid their own expenses to attend.

For the most part, the meeting was a sharing of what is going on in the SBC and state conventions, how the various issues are viewed there and how to give focus to those issues, Cavender said. Participants did not discuss, per se, a candidate for president of the Southern Baptist Convention to be presented at the annual meeting in San Antonio next June, he said.

However, a candidate will be supported for election in San Antonio, and "there is a good chance it will be Richard Jackson," Cavender said. Jackson is pastor of North Phoenix (Ariz.) Church and lost to incumbent President Adrian Rogers for the 1987 SBC presidency.

The moderate group is not monolithic, however, Cavender said. While some have encouraged support of Jackson, "as a group we haven't. We haven't met with him. We couldn't give group support to somebody who we don't know what they are going to do, where they stand."

But the bottom line "is winning the presidency back from the fundamentalists," he said. "Unless that can be done, I don't see any realistic way of stopping the fundamentalist control. . . . The power is centered in the office of the presidency."

Both Cavender and Slatton denied their meeting was in conflict with the admonitions of the SBC Peace Committee Report, which recommended political meetings be discontinued.

"The Peace Committee understands that Baptists are free people who have the right to meet together," said Slatton. "We are just exercising that right."

"We didn't start the political activity," Cavender said. "They started the political activity. We met first to respond to what they were doing. The only reason we are meeting now is that Adrian Rogers, like all the other presidents before him since 1979, has violated Recommendation 2 of the report, which calls for fairness in appointments. They have practiced pure unfairness and intolerance in their appointments."

The group at DFW made no plans for getting messengers to the SBC annual meeting or for getting hotel rooms, Cavender said. Those things will be handled by state groups such as Friends of Missions in North Carolina and Laity for the Baptist Faith and Message in Texas, he noted.

No additional meetings of the DFW group have been planned, he said, but more will be held over the next several months leading up to San Antonio.

"We are going to continue opposing this fundamentalist movement," he said. "We are going to oppose it as hard as we can. There was a strength, a sort of recommitment of that resolve that came out of this meeting, and we want to translate it to the folks back home."



CAMPAIGN DIRECTORS — Directors of the Sunday School Enrollment Campaign held in Gibson County Baptist Association include (front row, from left) Carl Kuby of Alabama; Windy Rich, SS consultant of Nashville and coordinator of campaign; Ken Sparkman, associational director of missions; Trevis Oley Jr., associational Sunday School director; Stanley Salchli of Kentucky; Fred Hollbrooks of Kentucky; (back row) Eugene Skelton of Nashville; Tony Long, minister of education at First Church in Columbia; Ralph Thomas of Kentucky; Jack Smith, associational SS director of Hamilton County Baptist Association; Harold Souther of Missouri; Elmer Bailey, church consultant of Memphis; and Loyd Kindiger of Alabama. Tom Melzoni, pastor of Central Church in Oak Ridge, is not pictured.

Campaign helps Sunday Schools in Gibson County association

Thirty-two new Sunday School classes and 1,243 prospects for Sunday School were the result of an effort in 11 churches in Gibson County Baptist Association to develop better Sunday School organizations.

The recent Sunday School Enrollment Campaign is one of four that will be held

Nashvillian graduates

NASHVILLE — Arthur Carney, Nashville, has earned the Diploma in Pastoral Ministries from the Seminary Extension Independent Study Institute, based here.

A member of Harsh Chapel Church, Nashville, Carney completed 16 courses in earning the diploma.

The Independent Study Institute of 400 extension centers is the correspondence arm of the Seminary Extension Department, operated by the six Southern Baptist seminaries.

in 1987-88. The campaign was led by a director who helped each church increase enrollment, improve the quality of the program, and set goals for the next year.

Greer Ruble, Tennessee Baptist Convention Sunday School director, reported that of the 11 churches, nine had shown a decrease in Sunday School enrollment and attendance during the past 15 years.

Chapel Hill Church in Milan had 44 in attendance the Sunday before the campaign, and 82 the Sunday the campaign closed.

Haiti . . .

(Continued from page 1)

going to language school two hours daily and to his office to handle administrative work related to well-drilling projects and an agriculture school. After the violence passes, he said, he will resume normal activities.

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.

Readers are reminded that letters about Christmas are encouraged. The letters portion of the *Baptist and Reflector* for Dec. 23 will be Christmas letters. Please write your letter about the meaning of Christmas — perhaps touching on a personal happening. Letters should be shorter than usual, limited to 150 words on: "Christmas is . . ." We will use as many as possible. — Editor

Baptist pulpits

The reason for the decline of our nation, our homes, our churches, and our denomination is weak pulpits. We have weak pulpits in our Southern Baptist churches because we have weak preachers. We have weak preachers because we have weak professors in our colleges and seminaries.

There was a time when Southern Baptist pulpits had strong doctrinal preaching. Consequently, we had strong leaders who believed God's Word. The entire ministry in the SBC was hinged around the Bible.

We had no women pastors. We had no homosexuals in the pulpits. There were God called and Holy Spirit anointed men gracing the Southern Baptist pulpits. These men were from all walks of life; some from the countryside, some from the cities, some from grammar school, and some from big universities; but all were God called and God sent.

Before some made the Cooperative Program the "golden calf" around which all are to fellowship, rather than seeing the great mission conduit that it is, we had great revivals and our fellowship was around the Word of God. Men and women with heavy burdens prayed for and experienced great Sunday School and church growth. Stalwart men filled the pulpits and their godly wives backed them up. The people followed these great leaders because they were not of the twiddledee and twiddledum stripe; they had backbone.

My prayer is that we shall once again see our pulpits and our seminary classrooms filled with powerful, godly men bearing the burden of the Lord.

Vaughn W. Denton, pastor
Kirby Parkway Baptist Church
4480 Kirby Parkway
Memphis 38115

Differs with action

I write to share my response made concerning the action of the executive committee of the Chilhowee Baptist Association Nov. 16 in regard to women serving as deacons, and reported in last week's *Baptist and Reflector*.

I think this was an inappropriate action because it was a slap in the face to all Baptist women, it gives the impression that all churches and members of the association share the view against women as deacons, it shows blatant disregard for the basic Baptist principle of the autonomy of the local church, and it tends to undermine the work of our director of missions in his efforts to promote

cooperation among our churches.

Further, the action does not promote the cause of Christ. It only inflicts hurt, causes embarrassment, and promises polarization and division of our churches and people. The ordination of women does not need to be a divisive force in our association. It is a matter for the local churches to decide for themselves.

I think it was presumptuous for the executive committee to even hint that it spoke for the people and churches on this matter. I am a member of a church which has accepted the ordination of women as deacons for some years. It has never been an issue with us, nor has it ever interfered with our voluntary participation in the cooperative efforts of this association or the Southern Baptist Convention through the Cooperative Program.

I think the executive committee owes the people of this association an apology for an ill-advised and untimely action.

William H. Savell Jr.
Chairman of deacons
First Church, Maryville 37801

Opposition registered

I want to register strong opposition to the action taken recently by the executive committee of the Chilhowee Baptist Association as reported in the news media concerning action of another association. Both the Baptist Faith and Message and the by-laws of the association specify that no group, association or convention, has authority over local church decisions.

Regardless of biblical and theological positions, we, as a Southern Baptist association, have no business supporting any group which tries to override the autonomy of each individual body of believers.

Greg Price, associate pastor
Monte Vista Baptist Church
1735 Old Niles Rd.
Maryville 37801

New York re-elects Simpson

PLATTSBURGH, N.Y. (BP) — Messengers to the Baptist Convention of New York's annual meeting re-elected New York City clergyman Sam Simpson as president, adopted a budget of more than \$2.3 million, and passed a slate of resolutions.

Simpson is pastor of Bronx and Wake Eden churches.

Messengers adopted a budget of \$2,342,637. Churches in the convention, which includes all of New York and parts of New Jersey and Connecticut, are expected to contribute \$535,433. Of that portion, 24.5 percent will support ministries around the globe through the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program unified budget. That percentage is up 0.5 percent over the current budget.

Messengers ratified a resolution urging Southern Baptist Convention leaders, agencies and committee members to "honor and uphold our historic tradition of non-endorsement of individuals either for political offices or judicial service." The resolution was made in the wake of the Southern Baptist Public Affairs Committee's 7-5 vote to endorse Robert H. Bork for a seat on the U.S. Supreme Court last August.

Messengers also considered a proposal to escrow \$500 of the convention's contribution to the Cooperative Program if the Public Affairs Committee succeeds in its efforts to dissolve Southern Baptists' institutional and financial ties to the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs. The proposal stipulated that the escrowed

Michigan Baptists celebrate 30 years

FLUSHING, Mich. (BP) — The Baptist State Convention of Michigan celebrated its 30th birthday in Flushing during November.

Participants in the BSCM's annual session also adopted a budget of almost \$2.6 million and elected a slate of officers.

The 30th anniversary celebration included a homecoming of former state convention staff members and presidents, publication of the convention's history, and a reception.

The new \$2,582,711 budget is to include \$1,029,232 in receipts from Michigan churches. A total of \$293,331, or 28.5 percent of the amount raised by the churches, will go to world ministries through the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program unified budget. The new budget marks the 17th consecutive time Michigan Baptists have increased the portion of their budget that goes to the Cooperative Program by 0.5 percent.

The lion's share of the budget that is to be received from sources other than Michigan churches will come from the Southern Baptist Home Mission and Sunday School boards.

Convention officers are Damon Patterson, pastor of Monroe Missionary Baptist Church in Monroe, president; Albert Burt, pastor of Baring Cross Baptist Church in Flint, first vice-president; Levi Parish, pastor of Eastgate Baptist Church in Burton, second vice-president; Wendell (Joe) Ryckman, pastor of Mt. Vernon Baptist Church in Redford, recording secretary; and Betty Babb, pastor's wife from Merriman Road Baptist Church in Garden City, assistant recording secretary.

The meeting attracted 617 participants, including 370 messengers.

funds would be sent directly to the Baptist Joint Committee, a church-state watchdog organization comprised of nine Baptist denominations.

However, messengers adopted a substitute motion that put the convention on record favoring continued Southern Baptist participation in the Baptist Joint Committee.

Chilhowee votes to add church

A church was added to the fellowship of Chilhowee Baptist Association during its recent annual meeting, which gathered at Monte Vista Church and Oak Street Church in Maryville and at Alcoa-Way Church in Knoxville.

Parkway Church in Townsend, of which Lum McLemore is pastor, was added to the association.

Officers elected for the next year are as follows: Bob McCullough, pastor of Beech Grove Church in Louisville, moderator succeeding Fred Garner, pastor of Immanuel Church in Maryville; Howard Olive, pastor of Monte Vista Church in Maryville, assistant moderator; Bruce Yates, pastor of Armona Church in Alcoa, clerk; and Joe Ingram, a member of Broadway Church in Maryville, treasurer.

John R. Churchman is the director of missions and the 1988 meeting will be Oct. 29-31 at Dotson Memorial Church, Madison Avenue Church, and Memorial Church in Maryville.

Arkansas focuses on world missions

FORT SMITH, Ark. (BP) — Messengers to the Arkansas Baptist State Convention were confronted by enormous world needs and challenged by both state and national leaders to make missions their "magnificent obsession" Nov. 17-18 in Fort Smith.

Pre-convention rumors reported by Little Rock's *Arkansas Gazette* Nov. 16 — concerning a Southern Baptist Convention-style "conservative takeover" movement never materialized. Instead, messengers found themselves confronted by a call to world missions involvement.

D.L. Lowrie, director of the State Missions Commission of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, delivered four Bible studies to interpret the theme of the annual meeting, "Strengthening Missions." Other messages focusing on the urgency of world missions came from ABSC Executive Director Don Moore; outgoing President Lawson Hatfield; former foreign missionary W. Trueman Moore, pastor of East Side Church of Fort Smith; and R. Keith Parks, president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

Messengers also heard Thome E. Tavaro Filho, executive director of the Amazonas-Roraima Baptist Convention in Brazil, one of two Brazilian conventions with which Arkansas Baptists have just completed a three-year partnership.

Cary Heard, pastor of Park Hill Church in North Little Rock, was elected ASBC president. Heard defeated Rex Holt Jr., pastor of Central Church, Jonesboro, by a 57-43 percent margin.

Messengers to the annual meeting adopted a proposed \$12.8 million budget which will provide \$7.6 million for state causes and forward \$5.2 million to worldwide Southern Baptist causes. The percentage share of the budget that will go to Southern Baptist causes is up 0.76 percent.

Messengers also approved a major emphasis on starting new churches in the state. Called "Church Arkansas," the emphasis sets goals of 25 new church starts in 1988 and 45 in 1989, followed by 30 each succeeding year through the year 2000. Nineteen church-type missions were begun in Arkansas during 1987.

G. W. Bullard dies

SPARTANBURG, S.C. (BP) — G.W. Bullard of Spartanburg, S.C., retired executive director of the Baptist Convention of Pennsylvania-South New Jersey, died Nov. 29 after an illness of several months. He was 76 years old.

He led the Pennsylvania-South Jersey Convention and was editor of the *Penn.-Jersey Baptist* from 1972 until his retirement in 1978.

Bullock suffers attack

MEMPHIS (BP) — Ed Bullock, executive director of the National Fellowship of Baptist Men, suffered a heart attack during the first national meeting of the missions organization in Memphis.

Bullock was stricken at home in Memphis in the early morning hours of Nov. 21 following the first sessions of the three-day meeting. He was rushed to Baptist Memorial Hospital East where an emergency angioplasty was performed.

His prognosis is good, doctors said. He is expected to return to work after the new year.

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Southern Baptist Alliance ponders starting seminary

By Kathleen McClain

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (BP) — Reacting to recent turmoil at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, the moderate Southern Baptist Alliance has voted to study the feasibility of starting a new Baptist seminary in the Southeast.

A task force will study the possibility of using professors now at Southeastern as the core faculty for the new seminary or divinity school, said Alliance President Henry Crouch.

The new institution would be based on the Alliance's founding principles, including inclusiveness for women and minorities and cooperation with other Christian faiths, according to the Alliance's executive committee vote, Crouch reported.

"This could expand theological education for Baptists beyond anything we've ever done before," he said. "I think the money is there. I think the leadership is there."

Crouch said he already had spoken with Thomas Hearn, president of Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, N.C., about creating a divinity school on that campus. He also reported discussions with officials at Mercer University in Macon, Ga.; Stetson University in DeLand, Fla.; and the University of Richmond in Virginia.

The vacant campus of Tift College in Forsyth, Ga., was mentioned as a temporary home for a "seminary in exile" should faculty and students agree to move from Southeastern to a new location.

Fuller addresses Indiana Baptists

INDIANAPOLIS (BP) — Messengers to the annual meeting of the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana approved its Executive Board's report, heard Southern Baptist Peace Committee Chairman Charles Fuller, and elected a new president.

This year, the Executive Board, a 33-member group which handles convention matters between annual meetings, accepted the resignations of three key staff members.

The convention's top officer, Executive Director-Treasurer R.V. Haygood and Missions Division Director Glen Ray resigned in March, and Education Division Director Lew Reynolds resigned in September. The posts remain vacant.

Following the resignations of Haygood and Ray, Reynolds and David Simpson, editor of the Indiana Baptist, were "co-advisors" operating the SCBI. Following Reynolds' resignation, Simpson and James Abernathy, evangelism director, have been "co-advisors."

Don Moore, chairman of the Executive Board, reported on the search to secure a successor to Haygood but said the search committee had no candidate to present.

Messengers adopted a total budget of \$2,548,062. The Cooperative Program goal for the more than 350 churches and missions in the state is \$1,714,614. As last year, 32 percent of that amount will be shared with the Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program.

Charles Fuller, chairman of the SBC Peace Committee, addressed the messengers three times, urging them to repair and maintain their fellowship because of the call of world evangelization.

David Wood, pastor of First Southern Church in Floyd's Knobs, succeeded Don Deel, pastor of Eastlake Church of Merrillville, as president.

The Alliance task force is headed by Mahan Siler, pastor of Pullen Memorial Church in Raleigh, N.C. The task force is to study the possibilities, with a report scheduled for the Jan. 11 meeting of the Alliance board.

Action by the Alliance followed weeks of conversation about establishing an alternative to Southeastern, which came under control of conservative trustees in October.

Seminary President W. Randall Lolley, Dean Morris Ashcraft, and four key administrators have resigned rather than carry out the new trustees' agenda. The trustees have said they will fill the administrative spots — and all future faculty vacancies — with people who believe

that the Bible is inerrant, without error even in matters of history and science.

Moderate Southern Baptists, who believe the Bible is divinely inspired but open to individual interpretation, have rallied to support Southeastern faculty and students.

The Alliance executive committee voted to pay up to \$5,000 in legal fees and other expenses for Southeastern's faculty chapter of the American Association of University Professors. The chapter was organized this fall around the issue of academic freedom.

"I am very encouraged by the action taken to establish this task force and to donate \$5,000 to help with current AAUP expenses," said Richard Hester,

Southeastern's AAUP president, who was a guest at the Alliance meeting.

"One of the most significant actions tonight was to link the Alliance principles to a vision of theological education for Baptists," Hester said.

Southeastern was established in 1950 by the SBC. It took over the Wake Forest College campus in the town of Wake Forest, N.C., when the college moved to Winston-Salem in 1956.

The Southern Baptist Convention provides about two-thirds of Southeastern's operating budget, making it possible for the seminary to give its students free tuition. Baptist students pay a matriculation fee of \$350 per semester. Other funds come from endowment.

Deciding how to raise money for tuition and programs at a new seminary is one of the priorities facing the Alliance task force. Executive committee members estimated the cost per student at \$10,000 to \$15,000, and projected an enrollment of 200 to 300 students.

Southeastern has about 1,000 students and a \$46-million operating budget, with 33 faculty and about 100 support personnel.

The Alliance executive committee also accepted the resignation of first vice-president Susan Lockwood Wright, pastor of Cornell Church in Chicago, due to over-commitment and personal reasons. A new vice-president will be named by the board in January, including a new slate of officers.

A search committee for a full-time executive director was named, to report in January.

The executive committee authorized the publication of a book on the seven principles enunciated in the Alliance's covenant, to be edited by Alan Neely of Southeastern seminary.

It allocated \$1,000 to the Southern Baptist Women in Ministry organization to help with expenses, and the Alliance is studying the possibility of funding a part-time editor for Folio, the Women in Ministry publication. The editor also would be a liaison between Women in Ministry and the Alliance.

The executive committee voted to investigate the need for an endorsing agency for chaplains in the event Southern Baptist women are excluded and creedal statements imposed on candidates. Currently, the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board endorses chaplains on behalf of the convention.

Tentative plans for the Alliance's convocation March 21-23 at Mercer University in Macon, Ga., were presented under the theme, "Mission with Integrity."

—McClain is religion editor for the Charlotte Observer.

Northeast Baptists begin new 'school of ministry'

By Joyce Martin

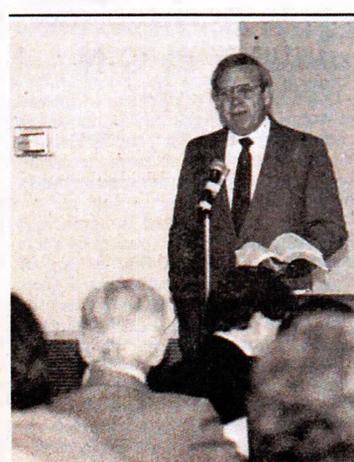
NORTHBORO, Mass. — The Northeast Task Team on Theological Education (NETTE) has announced the formation of the Northeastern Baptist School of Ministry which will offer on-site theological and ministry education in the 12 states served by the five northeastern Southern Baptist state conventions.

The Task Team elected Doran McCarty as the school's coordinator. McCarty is former professor of ministry at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, Calif. The team has representatives from the five conventions.

The school is founded on a three-way partnership between the five conventions, the Home Mission Board, and the Seminary Presidents' Council.

Northeastern School of Ministry will offer a master's degree and ministry diploma at teaching centers throughout the northeast. Emphasis will be placed on contextualized learning with a strong field ministry component, according to McCarty.

The five state conventions in the partnership include Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware, District of Columbia Baptist Convention, New York Baptist Convention, Penn-South Jersey Baptist Convention, and New England Baptist Convention.



TEACHING PREACHERS — New Orleans seminary Professor Harold Bryson recently taught more than 100 Tennessee preachers the Book of Malachi during a session at Belmont College. Malachi is the SBC's featured January Bible Study.

McCarty also said that nontraditional ministry training will be offered for professional and lay ministers. Classes will begin in the fall of 1988, and will build on classes already offered through Seminary Extension and at northeast seminary satellites.

"This is the culmination of several years of prayer and effort and represents a three-way partnership," said Larry Martin, chairman of the Task Team.

Planning for the ministry program actually began in 1984 when a group of Southern Baptist pastors discussed establishing theological education in the northeast. Official approval for a task team was given by the five state conventions that fall. During the next three years the Task Team worked closely with the Home Mission Board and the Seminary Presidents' Council to determine the course for northeast theological training.

Larry Lewis, Home Mission Board president, said the prospect of providing adequate training for pastors and missionaries in the northeast is "thrilling and exciting."

He said the HMB is pledged to assist "because we feel it is vital to the cause of home missions."

Gerald Palmer, HMB missions section vice president, who has been involved in the planning stages of the Task Team, echoed Lewis' statement. He agreed that the reason for HMB involvement and commitment "is our belief that this will greatly affect the progress of work in this area of the country as ministers are trained in their local settings."

The Seminary Presidents' Council said that McCarty will mold the seminaries, Seminary External Education, the Home Mission Board, and the Task Team into a team of ministry partners in the northeast.

Information about the Northeastern Baptist School of Ministry can be secured from 236 W. 72nd St. New York, N.Y. 10023.

Baptists pick layman in Kansas-Nebraska

LINCOLN, Neb. (BP) — Harold Finch, a businessman from Overland Park, Kan., was elected president of the Kansas-Nebraska Baptist Convention during its annual meeting Nov. 9-11.

Messengers approved a 1988 budget of \$3,166,848, of which \$1,685,004 is anticipated to come from the 300 congregations affiliated with the convention. Of the latter amount, 30 percent will be sent to support Southern Baptist causes.

Jordan to address C-N commencement

JEFFERSON CITY — Carson-Newman College will hold its commencement ceremony for winter graduates Dec. 18 at 8 p.m. in Gentry Auditorium.

Moncrief Jordan, pastor of First Church in Jefferson City, will deliver the commencement address.

About 60 Carson-Newman seniors will receive their degrees at the ceremony. Diplomas will be presented to the new graduates by C-N President Cordell Maddox. Special music will be performed by C-N music division faculty members Thomas Milligan, piano, and Clark Measels, tenor.

Foreign teleconference focuses on prayer need

By Susan Todd

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP) — Evidence of answered prayer and a call for continued prayer support were the highlights of the Foreign Missions Teleconference broadcast live Nov. 21 from Nashville.

Bill O'Brien, executive vice-president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board and host for the teleconference, said during the broadcast, "Our emphasis

on prayer during the teleconference is not accidental." He encouraged Southern Baptists' intercessory prayer for foreign missions to "not be accidental either."

"Praying Southern Baptists are essential to the success of our missionary outreach, as any missionary will attest," O'Brien said.

Missionaries did attest to the importance of prayer in their work. Viewers

from across the country were able to see, hear, and experience firsthand the role of prayer in the lives of several foreign missionaries.

Five missionary couples joined O'Brien in the studio to discuss the importance of prayer in their work. Rick and Laura Lane, missionaries to Granada, Spain; and Jill Branyon, missionary to Nyeri, Kenya, joined the teleconference by phone from their respective countries.

Among the prayer requests which surfaced during the teleconference were:

• **Strength** — "Sometimes when the days of discouragement come, I just don't know if I can get up and give again," said Robin Eberhardt, missionary to Grenada, West Indies. "Prayer uplifts me and gives me a special measure of strength to go on. We know Southern Baptists are praying."

James McKinley, missionary to Bangladesh, said, "I look at my feeble self, especially physically, and see that God can multiply strength" through prayer.

• **Unity** — Rick Lane cited the need for unity among Christians and identified prayer as a key factor. "We feel a unity with those who are praying in the United States."

He also asked that Southern Baptists join him in prayer for unity among one another. "We have been concerned about the division of Southern Baptists," Lane said. He cited its possible effect on mis-

sions as a cause for concern.

• **Economy** — One caller questioned R. Keith Parks, president of the Foreign Mission Board, about how recent dollar value plunges have affected mission endeavors.

"The weakening of the dollar overseas is the worst thing that can happen to our missions work," Parks said. The solution? "We will just need to give more dollars," Parks said.

This year's Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions goal has been lowered from \$81-million to \$75-million because of unreached goals in the past few years.

• **Safety** — James and Linda Rice, missionaries to Uganda, have worked in an area of political unrest. Rice told how his thoughts about safety have changed during the past years: "We don't claim that nothing can happen to us. 'Safe' may mean 'safe in the arms of Jesus.' It depends on your definition of safety."

Branyon related by phone an incident of the previous day. She was in a car accident on Nov. 20 and said it was severe enough that she should have been killed.

"I know it (safety) was because of prayer. I would like to say to Southern Baptists, 'Pray.' They can do nothing more important. God can use their power and their resources."

• **Loneliness** — Several missionaries told of battles with aloneness and loneliness. Ruth Dyson, who with her husband, Bert, was the first Southern Baptist missionary couple to Sierra Leone, told of entering the country for the first time.

"Even though we were alone, we did not feel lonely. Prayers helped us feel a surge" of power. "We felt we could almost reach out and touch the prayers," she said.

A highlight of the teleconference came in a phone call from a viewer in South Carolina. George Harbuck, former missionary to Paraguay, called to speak with Bill Skinner, recently retired missionary to Paraguay. Harbuck asked Skinner if he remembered a "miracle" which happened 14 years ago.

Harbuck and his wife were missionaries in Encarnacion. She had just delivered a premature baby boy, Matthew. Skinner, a missionary physician, was called to travel to their town and take the baby to the hospital in Asuncion. According to Skinner, the baby's condition was "touch and go" for some time. But Matthew lived and is today a freshman in high school in South Carolina.

Matthew Harbuck joined his father in talking with Skinner. Skinner beamed as he recalled the trip. He told Matthew he had remembered to take every piece of equipment necessary for the trip except a baby bottle. Skinner's surgical glove had to suffice as a pacifier for the premature baby as they made the trip to the hospital.

Skinner told Matthew he was sure God had a special plan for him. He asked Matthew to keep in touch and promised to pray for him.

Each missionary and agency executive participating in the teleconference underscored the importance of prayer in carrying out the daily tasks of foreign missions.

As Branyon said in her closing statement from Kenya, "When I can't reach around the world, my God can."

The Foreign Missions Teleconference was sponsored jointly by the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission, Foreign Mission Board, and Woman's Missionary Union.

Baptists in Alabama approve bylaw changes, debate women

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (BP) — In a series of razor-thin votes, Alabama Baptists approved a new set of bylaws and debated the issue of women in ministry during their 165th annual meeting in Montgomery during November.

The 2,209 messengers — 500 more than were registered at last year's meeting in Mobile — also re-elected Steve Tondera, a layman from Huntsville, as president.

In the contest for first vice-president, conservative candidate Robert Pitman, pastor of First Church of Muscle Shoals, defeated Dale Huff, pastor of First Church of Montgomery, by a 54-46 percent margin.

Two weeks before the convention, Pitman decided to withdraw his name from consideration for president after officials ruled Tondera, who served 18 days of the previous president's term, could be nominated again.

In other business, messengers approved a budget of \$24,156,000, to be distributed 43 percent to Southern Baptist Convention causes and 57 percent to state missions causes, the same as last year.

Two issues occupied most of the business sessions: a set of proposed bylaws that will have to be approved by two successive conventions before taking effect; and a resolution affirming women "who are so capably serving God" and encouraging them "as co-laborers in their vocational ministries."

Victor Brown retires from Stewardship post

J. Victor Brown retired Oct. 1 from the Stewardship Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention. He worked for 9½ years with the "Together We Build" program.

Born in Sylvia, Brown was graduated from Union University in Jackson, and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

Before working with the Stewardship Commission in Nashville, Brown served as pastor of churches in Tennessee including Central Church, Martin; First Church, Mt. Pleasant; Broadway Church, Maryville; and Saturn Drive Church, Nashville.

Denominational service includes having served for eight years on the Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board. He was clerk for Stone Association of Baptists and moderator for Maury Baptist Association.

For more than 20 years, his column "Religion in Life" has appeared in The Nashville Tennessean.

In his retirement, Brown is serving as minister of outreach at Saturn Drive Church in Nashville.



Brown

According to the convention's Executive Secretary-Treasurer A. Earl Potts, the new bylaws were drafted to respond to the threat of ascending liability, in which the state convention could be legally responsible for the actions and indebtedness of its agencies and institutions.

The proposed bylaws, which combine the present Constitution, bylaws, and business plan into one document, were approved with one change — an amendment offered by Jack Millwood, pastor of First Church of Chickasaw, relating to the convention's control over trustees of its member agencies and institutions.

Millwood recommended messengers retain a provision from the present constitution reserving the right of the convention "to change the terms of service of such trustees and to remove from office any and all of them at will."

After inconclusive voice and standing votes, messengers voted by ballot, approving the amendment 624-617.

Another amendment, proposing to reduce the terms of trustees of the educational institutions from three four-year terms to two four-year terms, was defeated in a close voice vote. Tondera's ruling on the voice vote was challenged by a separate motion but the presiding officer was sustained.

But the biggest procedural wrangle was reserved for a resolution affirming women in ministry.

Pete Tchernesoff, director of missions for Marshall Baptist Association and chairman of the Resolutions Committee, said the committee avoided the issue of the ordination of women in bringing the resolution to the floor.

Pastor Charles Smith of Rosalie Church in Flat Rock said the adoption of the resolution would send a confusing signal to the press. Smith proposed an amendment that would add the words, "except for pastoral ministers."

Again, a voice vote on the amendment was so close Tondera called for a ballot vote. Smith's amendment was defeated by 13 votes out of more than 1,300 cast.

After two hours of voting and discussion of amendments, the vote on the original resolution was delayed until a later session. Then, in the later session, after debate, a messenger moved to table the motion. The motion to table was passed by a ballot vote.

The only other resolution to spark debate was a resolution concerning the three Alabama Baptist institutions of higher learning.

The resolution encouraged trustees of Samford University, Judson College, and Mobile College "to build their professional staffs and faculties from those who clearly reflect the dominant convictions and beliefs held by Southern Baptists at large." The language echoed a provision in the Southern Baptist Peace Committee Report adopted in June. The resolution, passed despite opposition.



SAMARITAN AID — Marshall Hargrave (left), director of Carson-Newman's Appalachian Outreach, and Irene Weber, resident director of Samaritan House, receive a gift from Keith Nickle, pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Jefferson City.

Presbyterians aid ministry at C-N

JEFFERSON CITY — Carson-Newman College's Samaritan House has received a gift of \$1,500 from the Holston Presbytery to aid the shelter in assisting the disadvantaged of Jefferson County and surrounding areas.

The gift was presented to Samaritan House by Keith Nickle, pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Jefferson City, on behalf of the Holston Presbytery. A project of C-N's Appalachian Outreach program, the shelter offers temporary housing for burnout and eviction victims.

Other services provided by the shelter include a food pantry maintained by Irene Weber, the house's resident director. Weber noted that the gift from the Holston group came at a particularly helpful time, as the end of the month is frequently a critical period for the needy.

C-N's Appalachian Outreach is a year-round poverty-relief program. Appalachian Outreach volunteers, most of whom are C-N students, work in providing food, clothing, and shelter to the disadvantaged.

Storms damage churches in Louisiana

ALEXANDRIA, La. (BP)— At least two Louisiana Baptist churches were flooded in the wake of a severe storm system that swept through the state in mid-November.

The system, which spawned several tornadoes and dumped up to 16 inches of rain in less than 24 hours on sections of Louisiana, left one church in the central and one in the northwest part of the state flooded and others faced with ministering to families and communities hard hit by the storm.

Within hours, Louisiana Baptists responded to the task, providing meals for flood victims and cleanup crews to help families clear debris and damage from homes.

In Alexandria, which sustained the most water damage, families were evacuated from their homes by buses and boats. The Louisiana Baptist Brotherhood department, responded to a request from the local Red Cross and provided meals for flood victims in the central Louisiana city.

In Jonesville, northeast of Alexandria, where the storm released high winds and tornadoes, Louisiana Baptist relief crews worked to feed victims and work crews, and Ouachita Baptist Association provided clothes and met other needs of victims in the area through its ministry center, the Breadcrumb.

In Shreveport, where some sections were devastated by several tornadoes, local church members formed cleanup

crews to help clear debris from streets and houses. Local churches also offered housing and food assistance.

Parkview Church in Alexandria, one of the hardest-hit churches in the state, reported some parts of the church plant under six inches of water. Pastor Joe Kite said the church's gymnasium, educational building, church offices, sanctuary, and three church-owned residences sustained severe damage during the two-day storm.

Damage estimates for the educational building alone are more than \$100,000, Kite noted, adding it will be several weeks before full renovation work can begin.

In addition, at least a dozen Parkview families were among the 400 households damaged in the Alexandria area.

The only Baptist church in the northeast area of the state to report structural damage was Calvary Church in Gilbert. Pastor Charles Harris said the sloped sanctuary had three inches of water in front of the pulpit, following 13 inches of rainfall in an 18-hour period.

He estimated the damage to be about \$3,000 to the carpet, floor tile, communion table, and 18 water-stained pews. No members reported injuries although four church families had water in their homes, he said.

In northwestern Louisiana, several tornadoes devastated communities in Shreveport and surrounding areas, said Bruce Parrish, Northwest Baptist

Association director of missions.

Summer Grove Church members were holding their Sunday evening worship service when a tornado hit. Lights went out in the sanctuary and nursery area, but the service continued, using candles and flashlights, said Andy Allen, church business administrator.

Summer Grove is located in the hardest-hit section of Shreveport. Following the storm, Baptist Men, Royal Ambassador, and church staff work crews were organized and went up and down streets in the community, helping clear debris and remove tree limbs from inside and outside damaged homes, Allen said.

The Summer Grove crews focused on helping senior citizens and church members with special needs, Allen said. The crews continued to work through the weekend. The church also housed two families in motels whose mobile homes were destroyed.

Mansfield Road Church members in Shreveport were hit by the tornado before Summer Grove. Pastor Doug Myers said about 30 members stayed after the church's 6 p.m. service for choir practice and were singing when he received a phone call that alerted him to the approach of a tornado. The lights went out and Myers heard the wind begin to howl, he said.

Making his way to the sanctuary, Myers instructed the members to get under the pews, and "I asked everyone to pray that the Lord would spare us," he

said. "It's unreal what happened."

Myers said he could hear the shingles ripping off the roof, and "I prayed that the Lord would spare my mobile home right next door to the church and spare us, too."

In a few minutes, Myers knew the danger was past and went outside to inspect the damage. The tornado destroyed a trailer park and storage building 50 feet from where the church members crouched and prayed, he said. But the church only lost a few lawnmowers, some roof shingles and a few windows, he added.

"There were people injured and hurt and just total devastation," said Myers. "Apparently, the tornado came to the church, picked up and went over it, and sat back down again."

Although many people in the area were injured, no one was killed, he said. For several hours, Myers and church members assisted in a successful effort to free a baby from a collapsed mobile home. Members also helped relay information to authorities and rescue workers because the church had the only phone in operation in the area.

The church members offered shelter, food, and clothing assistance, but so much help was available at the site that the church's help was not needed.

"We were real fortunate," Myers said. "If people don't believe in the power of prayer, they should've been here. They would believe. The Lord did take care of us."

Texas Baptists assist victims of tornadoes

DALLAS (BP)— As relief efforts wind down in Central and East Texas, Southern Baptists in the state prepare to assist tornado victims in recovery and reconstruction.

Tornadoes swept through a wide-spread area on Nov. 15 leaving 10 dead, more than 150 injured, and hundreds homeless. Eight Texas counties have been declared national disaster areas.

The Texas Baptist Disaster Relief Mobile Unit served about 6,800 meals in one week to storm victims in the tornado-ravaged area near Palestine, Texas, before removing the unit on Nov. 22.

The unit was set up on an abandoned discount store parking lot near the most devastated residential area in Palestine.

The Texas Baptist Temporary Emergency Child Care unit was moved

into Palestine on Nov. 19 and was expected to remain there until last week. The unit is approved by the Texas Department of Human Resources as a licensed childcare center in disasters. Care is provided during daylight hours, allowing children to get a hot, balanced meal at noon, and providing parents time to clean up homes and businesses.

In the Central Texas town of Giddings, updated figures show 175 homes seriously damaged or destroyed, according to Terry Bowman, pastor of First Church. Volunteer Texas Baptist work teams are

tentatively scheduled to rebuild these homes after Jan. 1, said Bob Dixon, executive director of Texas Baptist Men.

Surveys continue to determine needs that can be met by the Texas Baptist Family Ministry Task Force, according to Richard Faling, church ministry coordinator for the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

In Ore City, Texas, 36 families from First Church sustained serious damage to their homes. No determination has been made yet as to how many will receive aid

from the state convention.

Those slated to receive assistance at this time include two families at First Church, Diana, Texas; two families at Whitehouse, Texas; eight families in Jacksonville, Texas; and five families in Palestine.

No report has been received yet from Rusk-Panola or Shelby-Doches Baptist Associations, another hard-hit area.

Initially, \$10,000 has been allocated by the BGCT for the family assistance program. Up to \$50,000 is made available to the Texas Baptist Disaster Relief Committee in a time of disaster for use at its discretion. The program is financed entirely by designated offerings, and money taken from the fund set aside by the BGCT is repaid through contributions.

HMB endorses Dunn

Doyle Dunn has been endorsed by the Home Mission Board and selected for active duty as Chaplain in the United States Navy.

Chaplain Dunn is a former pastor of First Church, Harrogate. From Cleveland, he was graduated from Clear Creek Baptist College, Pineville, Ky.



Dunn

After being commissioned a Naval officer in 1984, Dunn participated in the Navy's Theological Student Program while completing the master of divinity degree at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

He is scheduled to leave in December along with his wife, Donna, and their three children, to minister to the 1st Marine Air Wing, Okinawa.

U.S. Supreme Court sidesteps 'moment of silence' decision

WASHINGTON (BP)— Sidestepping a decision concerning the merits of its most celebrated church-state case of the current term, the U.S. Supreme Court instead has ruled that former leaders of the New Jersey legislature had no legal right to appeal lower-court rulings that struck down the state's "moment of silence" law.

That law, enacted in 1982 over the veto of New Jersey Gov. Thomas H. Kean, required a one-minute period of silence "for quiet and private contemplation or introspection" in the state's public school classrooms at the beginning of each school day. More than 20 states have similar statutes on the books.

Following enactment of the New Jersey law, the state attorney general announced he would not defend it should it be challenged in court. When several students, their parents, and a teacher filed suit challenging the law's Constitutionality on church-state grounds within a month of its passage, Alan J. Karcher, speaker of the General Assembly, and Carmen A. Orechio, president of the state Senate, intervened as defendants in their

official capacities.

Both a federal district court and the 3rd Circuit Court of Appeals in Philadelphia struck down the law for violating the First Amendment ban on an official establishment of religion. The district panel held the law failed all three parts of a Supreme Court test requiring that such statutes have a secular purpose, have the primary effect of neither advancing nor inhibiting religion, and not result in excessive entanglement between church and state.

The 3rd Circuit, on a 2-1 vote, upheld the portion of the lower decision striking down the law for failing to have a secular purpose.

Karcher and Orechio, who appealed the decision of the district court to the 3rd Circuit, meanwhile lost their posts as leaders of the New Jersey legislature.

When they next appealed the 3rd Circuit's decision to the Supreme Court, the justices agreed to consider whether they still were entitled under federal court rules to press the case.

By deciding unanimously the pair had no legal standing to appeal, the high court let stand the lower rulings.

Delap highlights Belmont emphasis

NASHVILLE — Home Mission Board Consultant Rollin Delap, speaking at Belmont College's evangelism emphasis day, challenged students to make themselves available to do the Lord's work.

"Are you available to let God work through you and share His Word?" he asked the students.

Along with Ron Alley, church music associate with the Tennessee Baptist Convention; and Jerry C. King, evangelism associate of the TBC, Delap urged students to be more evangelical in their Christian lives.

"Many times people are more interested in hearing the gospel than we are in sharing it," he said.

"I challenge you as a Christian student to share God," he said. "People really want to hear good news."

Delap also urged students to invest time in the Word of God. "Put your life in the hands of something eternal," he said.

Kenya allows missionaries to stay despite suspicion

By Marty Croll

NAIROBI, Kenya (BP) — Nine Christian missionaries have been allowed to stay in Kenya despite previous deportation orders, and newspapers there have published nothing more about an alleged coup plot said to involve the missionaries.

Seven other missionaries expelled from the country in November have not yet returned. A Kenya embassy official in Washington said the Kenyan and U.S. governments are investigating the entire matter. None of the deportation orders involved Southern Baptist missionaries.

The alleged plot was said to link missionaries of various denominations with a white supremacy group related to the Ku Klux Klan and dedicated to overthrowing several African governments.

American officials called the story baseless and patently absurd. But publicity about the affair became "detrimental to missions and missionaries" in Kenya, according to a statement released Nov. 22 by Southern Baptist missionaries in Nairobi.

The seven deportations Nov. 13 were triggered by a memo the Kenyan government claimed to have recovered and used to avert an overthrow. Kenyan newspaper reports about the memo set off a hunt for other "evil foreigners" claiming to do God's work. Nine more missionaries subsequently were ordered to leave.

About a week after the story surfaced, the country's largest English-language newspaper, the Daily Nation, reported the last nine missionaries told to leave would

instead be allowed to stay, said to James Hampton, a Southern Baptist missionary administrator in Nairobi. The newspaper

stated it had wrongly implicated a North Carolina church and its pastor by accepting the memo's authenticity.

C-N announces fund drive for C. Maddox scholarship

JEFFERSON CITY — A drive is being launched to establish a special scholarship fund for church vocational students at Carson-Newman College, Samuel D. Dean, chairman of the college's Board of Trustees, has announced. The fund, which will be known as the Cordell Maddox Scholarship Fund for Church Vocational

Students, will honor the college's President, J. Cordell Maddox.

Maddox, who recently completed his tenth year of service as president, was honored at a testimonial dinner Nov. 10 in Nashville where the scholarship was announced. During his tenure, the number of church vocational students has increased from 213 in 1977 to this year's total of 313. An ordained pastor, Maddox has preached at many Baptist churches throughout the state since he came to C-N.

The fund will be used to award scholarships each year to students who have committed themselves to full-time Christian service and who show evidence of financial need. Fund-raising for the project will be coordinated by the five pastors who are members of the board of trustees, said Dean, pastor of First Church in Clinton. A goal of \$100,000 has been set for the scholarship fund.

For more information about the scholarship fund, please contact Don Mitchell, director of church relations, Carson-Newman College, Box 1843, Jefferson City, 37760.

'Cotton' Wright dies in Richmond

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Elbert L. "Cotton" Wright, business manager of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board from 1953 until his retirement in 1980, died Nov. 27 in Richmond, Va., after a long illness. He was 75 years old.

"May the good Lord — and your luggage — go with you" was the standard farewell the Richmond native gave to some 6,000 missionaries during his career at the board. But handling travel, moving, and visa arrangements for workers headed overseas was only one of Wright's various responsibilities.

Once the missionaries were in place, Wright supervised the U.S. purchase of equipment and supplies they needed for their homes and for chapels, schools, hospitals, and publishing houses.

During much of his tenure, Wright also supervised office personnel, Foreign Mission Board offices and property, mailing and shipping to missionaries, and record keeping. With the growth of the Southern Baptist foreign missions program, his supervisory work today is divided among several full-time staffers.

He is survived by his wife, Maxine Wills Wright; two daughters, Mrs. Janice McClendon and Mrs. Susanne Warren, both of Raleigh, N.C.; six grandchildren; two sisters; and a brother.

Union elects Rose

Sparta was the site of the recent annual meeting of Union Association of Southern Baptist Churches in which Quinton Rose, interim pastor of BonDeCroft Mission in Sparta, was elected moderator.

The messengers also elected Doug White, pastor of First Church in Sparta, as assistant moderator; Greg Boston, a member of First Church in Sparta, treasurer; and Louise Howard, a member of Bear Cove Church in Sparta, clerk.

Ray Maynard is the association's director of missions. The Oct. 6, 1988, gathering will be at First Church in Doyle.

One Word More

By W. Fletcher Allen

They were almost twins, but, because of the couple of years that separated them — not quite.

She was older, and his "defender." He was the follower. Funny sometimes it is, how it happens that way.

Browned by the sun, the tow-haired two were carefree on the farm. True it is, they went everywhere together.

Private trails to creek banks, solitary sun-spotted meadows, tall trees to climb (oh, the views!), garlands of fresh-picked marguerites, moss and violets, a rugged log to cross the creek — their treasures.

Far away sometimes their dreams were. Could the sky stretch to a girl and boy — like them — that even spoke a different language? Did that star there on the tip of the Milky Way (at least ten miles away) see them, as they saw the star?

Were there somewhere — anywhere — a mother and a daddy as warm and sweet and strong and perfect as theirs?

Somebody said the horizon curved — if you could see enough of it from side to side. Did it? What's a horizon? Is that where God lives?

If there were one wet pillow from a little bit of sadness, well there were two that were wet. If one heart ached from disappointment or hope or desire, there were two aching hearts. One laughed, the other echoed just as loudly.

One's best Christmas gift belonged to the other. One's new spring blouse or shirt was enjoyed by the almost-twin.

We know how it is, years pass. As Reb Tevye said, sunrise, sunset, where do the moments fly? After school, paths were different, but they were always almost-twins. They both found Christ, they married and had families, they grew older and somehow wiser.

And then yesterday became today and the blonde hair begins to show gray here and there. Years tell their stories, full and fragrant, fragile too.

Now she is sitting at a witness table before a National Mental Health Commission convened to hear witnesses tell about what happens to farm families when they have reached the end of the road and nobody seems to care — proud families. The witnesses have gathered to explain what it means to feed the world and owe

everything you have to a federal credit company.

They want someone to listen to how it feels to give up, slowly and surely, every inch of precious soil that your ancestors willed to you — land that has in it sweat, tears, and blood of generations of your own family. And someone needs to know — really know — that it didn't have to be that way.

She tells her story with calm resolution, not a trace of anger. There is more of sadness and anguish. She and the other witnesses empty their souls of the hurting that is there, knowing that some, however, will always be there.

She had married her high school sweetheart when they were college kids and he was the football hero. After college, he took the family farm, and worked it for thirty years. Then it happened. There had been a few lean years before. But now — drought, loans, poor crops, government restrictions, foreign competition, low prices. He was broken — body and mind and spirit, she said. Death came for him, a silent heart attack that was more likely a lethal heartache. He lost the land. He was one of thousands.

She told her story, representing thousands, with the ring of truth. I sat behind her, ready to touch her shoulder if she should falter. It was as if we had become a part of the passing parade. But time waited and the Commission members heard. "Somebody has to hear this, and help our farmers," she said. "When my husband died, he had \$11.32 in his pocket — that was all."

We were almost twins, my sister and I. Her story is true. The important part is that America has to be cured of its tunnel vision regarding farms and farmers; they love and protect God's earth. Our farm families need help and understanding — now.



Allen



Personal Perspective

By Tom Madden
TBC Executive
Secretary-Treasurer

I have been pondering the statement our Lord made in John 14:6, "I am the way . . ." My Indian friends call following Christ, "the Jesus way!" I have been thinking of the implications of the "Jesus way." Here is a little cluster of thoughts.

The Jesus way is the way to live. It is different from the worldly way. Worldly people live for sin and pleasure, profit, prestige, and power. They live a vain, empty, meaningless life. The Jesus way is a way of service, of love, of servant-hood, of pleasing Jesus.

The Jesus way is the way to die. When I was a college student I heard that Samuel Palmer Brooks, who served as President of Baylor University for 25 years, said, "For all these years I have been trying to teach young people how to live and now as I face death, I want to show them how to die." They said he did. The Apostle Paul was a Jesus way person when he said, "O death where is thy sting." "Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

The Jesus way is the way to the Father's house. Death is but another experience of life. We walk through death into the presence of Jesus. Jesus was not through when He died. He went to His Father's house to prepare a place for us. He is alive.

The Jesus way is a familiar way. It is an old way. Many have walked the way ahead of us. It is the only way. There is no substitute. Only the way of the cross leads home.

Jesus is still the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Him. He is the Jesus way.



Tennessee/Venezuela prayer net partnership

—Celebrating birthdays on Dec. 12 are Dave Grossman, a general evangelist attending language school in Costa Rica, and Tom Watson, a general evangelist in Caracas.

—Pray for Joy and Brent Jump, Carl and Charles Hawkins, Lori and Chris Adams, who are missionary kids, that God will use them to be a witness in the International School in Valencia.

—Pray for transportation to be made available to the Gujira Indian Mission.

—Pastors and leaders who are the target of individuals involved in witchcraft.

Tennessee

LEADERSHIP ...

Larry Thompson resigned as pastor of First Church, Englewood, to accept a pastorate in Loganville, Ga. Born in Raleigh, N.C., Thompson previously served as pastor of Harbison Mission in Columbia, S.C., as pastor of Hillcrest Church in North Charleston, S.C., and as minister of youth at Calvary Church in New Orleans, La.

Boulevard Church in Memphis has added David Smith to the staff as associate pastor, minister to the family, youth, and children. He was graduated from Union University in Jackson. Mike Boyd is pastor of the church.

Mike Young, Baptist Student Union director at Chattanooga State Technical Community College, has accepted the call of Pleasant Grove Church in Hixson, to serve as interim pastor. He began Nov. 1.

Knoxvillian Karen Metcalf has accepted the call of First Church, Ponca City, Okla., to serve as minister of childhood education. Stephen Earle, also from Knoxville, is the pastor. Metcalf was graduated from Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C. Churches she previously served in include First Church, Spring Hope, N.C.; Wake Forest Church, Wake Forest, N.C.; and Central Church of Fountain City in Knoxville.

Indian Ridge Church in Blaine has called Ben Knisley as interim pastor.

Elmer Bailey has accepted the position of staff coordinator at Germantown Church in Germantown. After serving as associate pastor/education director at Bellevue Church for 21 years, Bailey retired and has been doing consulting work in the area of church growth. A graduate of Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee, Okla., Bailey also attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, and the University of Tennessee in Knoxville. Ken Story is pastor of the Germantown church.

Jim Markle has joined the staff of Whitten Memorial Church in Memphis to serve as minister of education. He previously served as youth minister at Davis Boulevard Church while attending Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He was also graduated from Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio. Kenny Bruce is pastor of the Memphis church.

Memphis native, James Watkins, has accepted the pastorate of Emory Church in Atlanta, Ga. He began Dec. 6, after leaving the pastorate of Elk Creek Church in Taylorsville, Ky. Watkins was graduated from Memphis State University, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., and Memphis Theological Seminary.

Danny Davis has joined the staff of Mt. Olive Church, South, in Knoxville, as minister of education. He comes from First Church, Pineville, Ky. He is a graduate of Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, and is presently enrolled at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. Ken Hubbard is pastor of the Mt. Olive church.

Emmanuel Church in Gatlinburg has called Ken Casey as music director. Earl Jones is the pastor. Casey formerly served at First Church, Wears Valley.

First Church, Huntingdon, called Chuck Carothers as associate pastor and minister of youth, education, and activities. Carothers has served in several churches in Texas, Tennessee, and Mississippi. He is a graduate of Union University in Jackson, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. Fred Ward is pastor of the Huntingdon church.

PEOPLE ...

Bob Anderson was recently ordained as deacon at Mt. Harmony Church in Knoxville where Jerry Heflin is pastor.

Darrell Davenport was ordained by Spring Creek Road Church in Chattanooga on Nov. 9. Davenport formerly served as minister of activities at the church and is now associate pastor/minister of activities.

Recently ordained as deacons at Lincoln Park Church in Knoxville were Chuck Donovan, L. P. Ford, Roger Green.

Pistole calls pastor

William Stockton now serves as pastor of Pistole Church in Sparta. He comes to Sparta from Chattanooga, where he served in Tremont Church. Stockton began his new pastorate Oct. 1.

Bill Gregg, and Bob Rogers. Melvin Faulkner delivered the ordination sermon at the church where Ted Ingram is pastor.

Ewtonville Church in Dunlap recently ordained Larry Miller, Larry Eddins, and Joe Beavers as deacons.

First Church, Oliver Springs, recently ordained David Barger, Rick Barger, and Don Parten as deacons. The charge to the candidates was given by Mark Umbhagen, minister of youth and education. Pastor Charles Parker gave the charge to the church.

CHURCHES ...

Charlotte Road Church in Nashville celebrated with a note burning service in conjunction with their anniversary on Oct. 4. Guest speakers were Harold Gregory and Charles McMinn. Joe Estes is pastor.

Elizabeth Church in Lansing celebrated their 100th anniversary Nov. 1. The program, led by Billy Lowe, the pastor, also included former pastors: Gilbert Phillips, James Byrd, James Blakely, Homer Hooks, Kelly Sexton, and Arnold Hamby.

Shiloh Church in Woodbury celebrated their 125th anniversary and honored those who have been members for over 50 years. C. E. Clay is the pastor. Thurman Seber, director of missions for Salem Baptist Association, was present for the service. Roy Pitts, chairman of the deacons has been a member of the church for more than 60 years.

An old-fashioned harvest day was held at Maple Springs Church in Medon on Nov. 22. An offering was collected to pay the debt on the new sanctuary. Donations exceeded the amount of the debt by \$3500. Kenneth Basham is the pastor.

REVIVAL RESULTS ...

First Church, South Pittsburg, participated in a lay renewal weekend Oct. 23-25. Tom Brown, Brotherhood president for Tennessee Baptists, served as coordinator at the church where William Fox is pastor. Several commitments to greater participation in church work were made.

In an Oct. 25-30 revival at Northside Church in Columbia, there were five professions of faith, one addition to the church by letter, and 36 other decisions. Wilson Allen, from Madison, was the evangelist at the church where John Rushing is pastor.

David Ring, evangelist from Orlando, Fla., led a four-day revival at Hildale Church in Clarksville, that resulted in 40 professions of faith, 10 additions to the church by letter, and many recommendations. Verlon Moore is the pastor. Rick Harris served as minister of music.

Fellowship Church in Knoxville had revival services Oct. 25-28, led by William Boyd Bingham III, from Middlesboro, Ky. Fred Berry Jr. directed the music. There were several rededications at the church where Arnold King is pastor.

Parkview Church in Jackson had revival services Nov. 1-6. The pastor, Jimmy Breedlove, led with Bill Kerr coordinating the music. There were several rededications and one profession of faith.

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BIBLE BOOK SERIES
Lesson for Dec. 13

God tests Abraham's faith

By Marvin P. Nail, pastor
Whitsitt Chapel Baptist Church, Nashville

Basic Passage: Genesis 22:1-24
Focal Passages: Genesis 22:1-3, 9-13, 15-18

"Nobody knows the trouble I've seen." That's the way an old spiritual song begins. It's also the way I hear a lot of Christian people talk. To hear them tell it, their life with Christ has been one problem or one heart-ache after another.

I don't know about you, but when I hear God's people start feeling sorry for themselves like that, my "righteous indignation" begins to flare up. At that point I usually take the time to tell them about some dear saint I know who is really having trouble but is still glorifying God.

Sometimes in our Bible study we seem to get the idea that the great leaders of the faith really didn't have it too bad. We act as though they had some extra measure of grace we don't have.

One example is this man Abraham. He have seen in recent weeks how he waited so many years to finally see the birth of the promised son in his old age. And now we see this time of decision which surely ate away at the depths of his soul.

The demand of faith

Isaac was surely a young teenager by this time. In his father's old age he had surely been all the joy God had promised he would be. Abraham's life had reached its peak and he was now prepared to see the promise of God carried through in the life of his son.

His enduring faith had brought about the promise. It would surely be smooth sailing from this point. He had been faithful to God for so long and now it had paid off.

But as Abraham lays awake in the night he feels a life-shattering urge of God to destroy the very centerpiece of God's promise of a nation. "Take your son, your only son, whom you love, and offer him as a burnt offering to Me."

We are not told what happened the rest of that night. The story picks up with the next morning. But Abraham was a father who had waited many years for this son. Surely he had more to say than quiet acceptance. Even Jesus in Gethsemane sought some other way.

None of us can fully understand the agony that must have been Abraham's that night as he saw the promise in his mind's eye literally go up in smoke.

But that was the demand of Abraham — that he sacrifice the dream, the promise, out of his devotion to God.

The commitment of faith

All those years he had waited. The years of doubt and resignation to lesser hopes had dimmed the voice of God's promise. Finally it had really happened. He and Sarah had given birth to the promised son.

As they watched him grow the picture of the promise grew clearer and clearer.



Nail

God had been faithful to His word. They could go to their death fulfilled.

Now God wants their son back. Surely it didn't seem fair. Surely the promise seemed for a moment to be a cruel joke on them.

You probably have children of your own. What would have been your reaction to such a command? Would you have believed it to be from God or from Satan? Would you have quietly agreed without question? I think not. I certainly wouldn't.

Whatever struggle Abraham went through that night, we know where he came out. Whatever agony may have filled his heart, he had come too far in faith to turn back from God now.

The words of verse 8 ring down through the centuries as the truest form of faith in God. In response to his son's question about the animal for the sacrifice, Abraham replied, "God will provide for Himself the lamb for the sacrifice."

The heart of faith always understands that God Himself will provide what is needed for our deliverance. There may be many things about theology we don't understand, but our faith always knows that God will make a way for us in His love for us.

The blessings of faith

Abraham sacrificed Isaac that day on the mountain. No, he didn't slit his throat and burn him on that pile of wood. But he did sacrifice him that day.

Abraham learned that day a lesson we would all do well to learn for ourselves. The blessings of God are never really ours until we offer them back to Him.

Isaac was already loved greatly because he was their only son. But he was never loved more than he was the day they offered him up to God.

As you and I have children and watch them grow and dream of what they will become and plan for their future, don't we often leave out the most important thing? Until we, like Samuel's mother of long ago, are willing to commit our children to the Lord we cannot hope to be good parents for them.

As you and I recognize and develop our God-given talents for our own benefit, haven't we forgotten the source of those abilities? Wouldn't we be wiser to commit those talents to God first?

Only as our talents and possessions are committed to God can we ever know the fullness of their blessing.

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UNIFORM LESSON SERIES
Lesson for Dec. 13

Jesus' genealogy and birth

By Rice A. Pierce
Deacon and Sunday School teacher, Goodlettsville

Basic Passage: Matthew 1
Focal Passage: Matthew 1:17-25

Verse 1 of the first chapter of Matthew helps sum up the whole purpose of the apostle's book. Jesus' ancestry was shown clearly for the benefit of Jewish readers, especially, and to inform others as well.

Jesus Christ was the Messiah, the anointed One, the descendant of David and of Abraham. Matthew seems to have drawn a clear parallel between God's beginning with mankind in creation, His beginning again with Abraham, and His beginning redemptive action with Jesus Christ.



Pierce

A beginning from Abraham (Matthew 1:1-17)

Remember that Matthew was led of the Spirit to focus not only on Jesus' Jewish roots but also on His mission to all mankind. We do not know for sure why Matthew divided Jesus' genealogy into three groups of 14 each. But Jesus was shown to be the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy.

Also, the Spirit led Matthew to include, contrary to Jewish traditional thinking, the names of four women. Two of these women who were especially named as ancestors of Jesus were foreigners (Rahab and Ruth), two were women of soiled virtue (Tamar and Rahab), and Bathsheba had been despoiled by David. Matthew would show that God's love is universal and His redeeming grace all-

Portuguese seminary sees record growth

LISBON, Portugal — Thirty-nine students are taking fall classes at the Portuguese Baptist Theological Seminary in Lisbon. It is believed to be the highest enrollment in the seminary's 18-year history.

Among the new students are a pastor's daughter and a biology teacher. Seminary graduates now number 52, including 23 pastors, nine pastors' wives, and two foreign missionaries, one in South Africa and the other in Cameroon.

inclusive. Barriers between racial groups and male and female would be overcome. All would share fully in Christ's new kingdom. The righteous and the unrighteous would be used of God to carry forward, by His providence, the redeeming of mankind.

A new beginning with Jesus (Matthew 1:18-20)

Mary was Joseph's "espoused" wife (v. 18). This relationship was a type of engagement, but as binding as marriage. Very simply and briefly Matthew wrote that Mary was pregnant by the power of the Holy Spirit. Joseph was a "just" man. He lived by prescribed Jewish law and practice. But he also was a compassionate man. So he was thinking about meeting this tragic turn of events by quietly and secretly divorcing Mary. Possibly people already were beginning to talk.

But then an angel of the Lord told Joseph in a dream not to fear disgrace as a descendant of David (v. 20). Mary's child was conceived of the Holy Spirit.

The meaning of it all (Matthew 1:21-25)

The angel explained to Joseph that Mary would bear a son, to be called Jesus (Savior in Hebrew). This Son would save His people from falling — from missing the true mark of life, the purpose and will of God for their lives. God's prophecy was being fulfilled (v. 22). See Isaiah 7:14. Immanuel was coming — God with us.

Joseph awoke from his dream and did just as the angel told him. He took Mary as his wife. But he had no union with Mary until her baby was born. Joseph called His name Jesus. The coming of Jesus had fulfilled God's promise to Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3) and to David (2 Samuel 7:16). And it had fulfilled the obligation of a divine, loving Father to instruct His wayward children to love, be ready to forgive. He provides a way of forgiveness and redemption to all who would believe.

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LIFE AND WORK LESSON SERIES
Lesson for Dec. 13

Joy and peace

By William F. Northcott, associate pastor
West Jackson Baptist Church, Jackson

Basic Passages: Philippians 3:17 to 4:9, 11-13
Focal Passages: Philippians 3:20-21; 4:4-9, 12-13

A lady called her TV repairman and said, "Something's wrong with my television." "What is it doing?" he asked. "Well," she replied, "the news is on and the anchorman is very long-faced." "Lady," the repairman replied, "if you had to report what's happening these days, you'd have a long face, too!"

Sad but true — much of today's news centers in conflict: war or terrorism in different places of the world; conflict between persons and/or nations. But perhaps the most disturbing malady in our day is the conflict that goes on inside people's lives. An old seaman was asked what he feared most on the sea. He said that his greatest fear was of the storm getting inside the ship. As long as the storm is kept on the outside, there is little danger. But when the storm gets inside, the danger and risk is great.

Two thousand years ago the birth of a baby in a hamlet called Bethlehem was

announced with the message of joy (Luke 2:10) and peace (Luke 2:14).

The only way to keep the storm of conflict from getting on the inside is to be so full of the peace of God that there is no room.

Citizens of heaven (Philippians 3:20-21)

In the previous section (vv. 7-16), Paul describes the direction of his life. He is in the process of becoming what Christ envisioned him to be. Others are of a different persuasion. It is this understanding and not pietistic pride which moves Paul to present himself as a model (v. 17).

The "enemies of the cross" in verse 18 are the Jews whose religious approach to salvation is based on dietary laws (god is their belly), circumcision (whose glory is their shame), and life ordered according to worldly measures (they mind earthly things).

In contrast to those whose minds are set on earthly things, and whose end is destruction, Paul underscores the heavenly citizenship of the Christian, and his hope for the future.

The Christian's life is influenced not by earthly controls but by heavenly con-

sideration. This does not mean, as some have accused, that the Christian is so heavenly minded that he is no earthly good. It means rather that he seeks first the kingdom of God, with the consequences that all these other things (including the things of the earth) will fit together in their proper places.

Paul goes on to affirm the second coming of Christ, at which time our earthly bodies will be gloriously transformed into the likeness of Christ's resurrected body.

Dependence on God (Philippians 4:4-7)

Always rejoice! That is a tall order; but it comes to us as a divine imperative. Barth says, "To rejoice, to comfort himself, to strengthen himself, to be cheered, is — as understood by Christians — a command just as any other." How is that possible? Remember what Jesus said, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible" (Matthew 19:26). In context, Jesus was speaking specifically of salvation, but He does affirm that all things are possible with God. In the spirit of prayerfulness and gratitude we relate our lives through faith in Christ to the God for Whom all things are possible, and the result is that He sets His peace as a guard over our hearts. It is not in circumstances but in Christ that we have our peace and joy.

Faithful living (Philippians 4:8-9)

It is impossible to separate "being" and "doing." What a person does is a reflection of who he is. As the sage observed, "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Proverbs 23:7a). And Jesus said, "You will know a tree by the fruit it bears" (Matthew 12:33).

In this section, Paul challenges his readers to incarnate the virtues of the Christian life. Using himself — his in-

structions and the example of his life — he admonishes the Philippians to practice what they have seen and heard, with the guarantee of God's peace in their lives.

Contentment and strength
(Philippians 4:12-13)

Paul had graduated at the top of his class in the school of hard knocks. He had learned the hard lesson of being content in all situations and circumstances of life. This was made possible not because of Paul's personal resources but because of the presence and power of Christ in his life.

Hospital building honors Stringfield

NASHVILLE — The Baptist Hospital board of trustees voted unanimously to name the new West Tower patient wing the "C. David Stringfield Building," in honor of the hospital's president.

Public dedication ceremonies for the \$30 million, eight-story addition are set for Dec. 16 at 1:30 p.m.

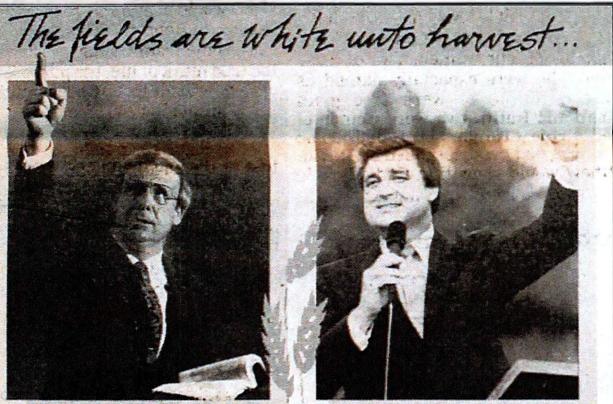
"David Stringfield, president of Baptist Hospital and the Baptist Health Care System, has rendered 20 years of outstanding service to us as a healthcare professional," said H. Franklin Paschall, chairman of the trustees. "Naming our hospital's newest, most modern building in his honor is our way of paying tribute to his unparalleled leadership abilities."

Stringfield joined Baptist Hospital as administrative director in 1968, became executive vice-president in 1970, and was named president in 1982.

The dedication of the new building will mark the completion of a five-year, \$100 million modernization and expansion program.



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Students take gospel to Fort Worth's poor

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — If Jesus had brought his earthly ministry to Fort Worth, Texas, he surely would have visited Butler Housing Project.

Instead, two Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary students are walking where Jesus would have walked, taking the gospel to those who might not hear it otherwise.

Radio ministry starts churches

CARACAS, Venezuela (BP) — Ten times a week, a Venezuelan broadcast is sent out to start and then nurture Baptist churches throughout Latin America.

"Christ the Only Hope," now in its 20th year, has been instrumental in starting 15 churches in Venezuela alone. The radio ministry probably has sparked a sizable number of churches in other Spanish-speaking countries, says Larry Rice, a Southern Baptist missionary who has worked with the program since 1971.

It's one of the few religious broadcasts with a church-planting emphasis, Rice notes.

The program is aired 10 times a week over a 500,000-watt AM and 50,000-watt short-wave Trans World Radio station on the island of Bonaire, Netherlands Antilles, 90 miles north of Venezuela. It also is aired on various AM stations in Venezuela and several other countries.

"Christ the Only Hope" builds churches in two ways, recounts Rice, the program's music producer: "Someone will listen to the program and receive Christ as their Savior. Many of them will tell their families, who also begin to listen to the program. One by one, they, too, receive Christ. Then they invite their neighbors to come and listen. And the next thing you know, a group is formed."

Often, after correspondence with the radio ministry, a fledgling group gets help in forming into a church from a nearby pastor, a home missionary, or a Southern Baptist missionary.

A second way the program helps start churches is by providing missionaries intending to start new churches with lists of listeners in an area who have written for a correspondence course. "That provides open doors," to people who are familiar with the program, Rice says.

Two men who turned to Christ while listening to the program later became Baptist pastors.

The 15-minute evangelistic edition is broadcast Tuesday through Friday and Sunday in the evenings, and early on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings. A 15-minute youth program airs during the same time slot on Saturdays. And a 30-minute session on the Bible and Baptist beliefs is heard each Friday night.

Typical of the program's church-planting impact is a new congregation on Venezuela's Margarita Island in the Caribbean. Letters arrived from two men wanting to know more about faith in Christ. A Venezuelan home missionary, Arnoldo Aray, who was working with four other congregations on the island, went to visit. The missionary learned that the first man already had become a Christian and a church member.

In the other visit, the man readily accepted the missionary's encouragement to give his life to Christ. The new convert then told of a friend who wanted to start a church. They went to visit the man who affirmed, "I want to start a church here. Would you help me?" Aray soon was working with his fifth congregation on the island.

Jesus often ministered to the poor and downtrodden of His society. And the 1,400 residents of Butler live in the poorest, most crime-ridden section of Fort Worth, isolated from the community by a triangle of major highways.

Most residents don't own cars and can't even afford 75 cents to ride the city bus. So-called friends who do have cars may charge \$3 for a ride downtown.

"These people aren't going to hear the gospel unless we take it to them," said Jacque George, a social work student intern with Tarrant Baptist Association. Through the association's Urban Allies program, George is assigned to meet the needs of Butler residents.

Although the material and physical needs are obvious, spiritual needs may not seem as pressing to residents, she said: "Their focus is on right now — how

I'm going to put food on the table, how I'm going to put clothes on my kids. Spiritual needs aren't a priority.

"But they're hungering spiritually, even if they don't know it."

She tries to visit every family that moves into the project. In that initial encounter, she lets them know how the Baptist churches of Tarrant County can help meet physical needs and how the Baptist mission in Butler can meet spiritual needs.

Brighter Hope Mission began with two women George led to accept Christ in 1985. They began a home Bible study which has grown into a mission meeting in the project's community center.

Carl Burns, a doctor of education student, is mission pastor. He commutes to Dallas to teach in a public school every weekday, is writing his doctoral thesis,

and ministers in Butler several days each week.

That means the mission's greatest need is volunteer teachers, he said. At least three area churches have joined the effort, lending members to teach Bible classes and direct the mission's activities.

In its first 19 months, Brighter Hope has baptized 22 people and accepted 16 others by profession of faith. Members plan to have a church building by 1990.

"The residents don't expect us to be permanent. But we've already been here longer than any religious organization. I'm proud of our track record."

Burns said his greatest ministry is evangelism: "I'm trying to move the gospel into the hearts of these people. We're drilling in them Jesus, Jesus, Jesus all the time.

"The gospel is being carried."

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