

Baptist and Reflector

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TBC Task Force implementation on schedule

By Wm. Fletcher Allen

The Program, Personnel, and Planning Task Force met Jan. 27 at the Baptist Building, Brentwood, to hear and act on progress reports from subcommittees.

James Porch, Task Force chairman and pastor of First Church, Tullahoma, reported that he and Marshall Gupton had met weekly with representatives of the Gresham, Smith, and Partners, architects, and Beers Construction.

The Task Force was appointed in September 1985, Porch said, by action of the Executive Board, Tennessee Baptist Convention. The group began working that December.

"We have been able to maintain our schedule of staff restructure, renovation of the present office building, and construction of a new Baptist Center," Porch said.

Construction of the new building will be completed by next month and renovation of the existing building has already started, he said. Later, Gupton, former Executive Board president and pastor of Una Church, Nashville, said that occupants of the Baptist Center should begin moving in by early March. Gupton is chairman of the construction and renovation subcommittee.

Plans call for a completed building, beginning of renovation, and completion of the divisional structure in 1989. The restructure includes three divisions: Convention Ministries, Church

Programs, and Central Administrative.

Construction has been the priority in 1988, Gupton said. Porch added that a search committee is being named to seek directors for the three divisions. Directors will not be named until after the Executive Board meeting in May.

"We have until November of next year to implement the reorganization of the staff as approved by the Executive Board," Porch added. Executive Secretary Tom Madden said "the heart of the reorganization is already in place, and when the Executive Board funds it, it will go."

Madden also reported that he and D. L. Lowrie, executive director-elect, are functioning as division directors "until those places are filled."

The Task Force set Sept. 8 as a tentative date to start open house programs for the new building. Several dates will be planned to involve different publics that relate to the TBC.

The Task Force will exist until its assignment is completed next year, with a complete organizational structure and complete renovation.

Lowrie said he plans to ask the Executive Board for appointment of a Long Range Planning Committee "as we move into the next century, and as we enter 1990-95. There is something exciting and different about moving into a new century, a new millennium. We need to launch out with planning for that time."

The Baptist Center was approved by



TASK FORCE — The TBC Task Force met Jan. 27 for updating and progress reports, and had lunch in the new Baptist Center's "almost finished" dining room. From left: Mrs. Richard Hawkins, Marshall Gupton, Mrs. Jerry Trivette, Executive Secretary Tom Madden, Executive Board President John Laida; Raymond Boston, James McCluskey, James Porch, Calvin Harvell, Past TBC President Jerry Oakley, Executive Director-Elect D. L. Lowrie, Ronald Hicks, and Fred Isaacs.

the TBC, with plans "not to exceed \$4 million." Beers Construction company's bid was \$3,523,393. "Thus far," said Gupton, "we are well within that figure."

Calendar days allotted for the project, which began last March, amount to 450. The projected completion date for construction and renovation is June 12. Through December, \$2,100,000 had been expended. Major "unforeseen" costs thus far are \$80,044 for correcting bad soils on the site, \$17,755 for a different electric transformer, and \$28,912 to Brentwood for an impact fee.

About \$8000 will be used, said Gupton, in moving and placement costs for occupants of both buildings. The Tennessee Baptist Children's Home offices moved to the Franklin Road campus in December to alleviate some of the problems in renovation. Other offices will be moved — and some will have temporary housing in the new building during the process.

The \$4 million figure includes construction, renovation, moving, architects' fees, paving, landscaping, and

miscellaneous costs.

The Task Force was appointed by the then president of the Executive Board, Jerry Oakley, and approved by the board.

Members include Porch, Gupton, Raymond Boston, Calvin Harvell, Mrs. Richard Hawkins, Ronald Hicks, Fred Isaacs, James McCluskey, Fred Steelman, and Mrs. Jerry Trivette. Boston is chairman of the staff structure subcommittee.

Search for directors begins

Tennessee Baptists are invited to nominate persons for two division leadership positions, according to Calvin Harvell, chairman of the Division Directors Search Subcommittee.

Harvell, pastor of Eudora Church, Memphis, said the cutoff date for nominees is March 9 and resumes must accompany nominations. "We are seeking directors for the Convention Ministries Division and the Church Programs Division," Harvell said. "We will work on the Central Administrative Division at a later date."

Letters and resumes should be sent to the Executive Office, Tennessee Baptist Convention, P. O. Box 728, Brentwood, 37024.

The search committee was named by Executive Committee chairman Ray Fowler, pastor of Highland Heights Church, Memphis.

"We think it is best to have one committee for the three positions," said D. L. Lowrie, executive director-elect, who is working with

the committee. "It will promote efficiency and coordination — and will help with expenses. The division directors will relate to each other and to the executive director."

Members, all pastors, include Harvell, who is a member of the personnel subcommittee of the Executive Committee; Herschel Chevallier, Cumberland Church, Knoxville, chairman of Convention Ministries Committee; James Hutson, First Church, Rockwood, chairman of the Central Administrative Committee;

John Laida, interim for First Church, Jackson, president of the Executive Board; Dennis Pulley, First Church, Ripley, immediate past president of the Executive Board; Emerson Wiles Jr., First Church, Fayetteville, chairman of the Church Programs Committee; and Fowler, ex-officio.

The subcommittee had its first meeting Friday at the Brentwood Baptist Building. The next Executive Board meeting is May 9.

An inside look

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Bills introduced

Anti-gambling forces optimistic

By Connie Davis, assistant editor

Some middle Tennessee Baptists were jubilant last week as bills were introduced in the House and Senate to repeal legalized gambling — pari-mutuel betting on horse racing and charitable bingo.

Tennesseans Against Pari-mutuel Gambling, a Political Action Committee or PAC which met as recently as Jan. 23, has been working to that end. Now the interdenominational group asks Tennesseans to join the fight by contacting their legislators in support of HB 396 and SB 525.

The bills, which would repeal all legalized gambling, came about after a number of forces came to play on legislators.

Gerald Stow, executive director-treasurer of Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes, represented the group in a meeting with Gov. Ned McWherter in which McWherter said he would not fight the legislation.

Gov. McWherter signed a bill in May 1987, that legalized pari-mutuel betting on horses if municipalities of 100,000 or any county passed a referendum to permit it.

On Jan. 31 The Tennessean reported Gov. McWherter had promised to repeal legalized gambling following the guilty plea by lobbyist W. D. Walker who was charged for making bribes and accepting payoffs to support the

(See page 3)

Editorials**February 19 is special day for Tennessee Baptist schools**

A wise university administrator once addressed a group of proud parents on parents' day and said to them what he had said to the state Baptist convention messengers.

"Don't expect us to turn out bands of little angels, armed with diplomas and ready to face the world with no problems," he told them. "We will always try to give our students the best education, based on Christian principles and a sense of selfworth.

"There is no halo over the gates to the campus," he said. "And there is no guarantee your young people will achieve all their goals. There will be that opportunity here — and they will be encouraged to be active participants in changing the world for Christ.

"But we want you to remember this. We get them just as you send them to us. We treat them as responsible adults — until that theory is disproved."

He told them, with candor, that few college students escape college days unscathed. The majority will be involved in at least one or two escapades that might embarrass their parents, pastors, or Sunday School teachers, he said.

"We know as well as you," he concluded, "that the solid spiritual foundation of the Christian family and church will enable the student to be prepared to excell, do their best, participate in the best campus community sup-

port systems offered — and emerge with a valuable education."

He also spoke to them with pride about the faculty and administration of the university, whose salaries were provided in part by Baptists across the state. He said the university was cognizant of ideals espoused by convention churches and individual Baptists — people who really care about Christian citizenship.

He might well have been speaking for Union University, Belmont College, Carson-Newman College, and Harrison-Chilhowee Academy — and presidents Hyran Barefoot, Bill Troutt, Cordell Maddox, and Bill Palmer.

In retrospect, we recall that the same administrator had once sharply rebuked university critics who made unfounded accusations. They had been victimized by rumors and "they said" and "it is well known."

"Please know the truth about those rumors," he said. And he implied that the university did not respond to rumors. "We are just like a train on track to its destination," he said. "And if the rumor bug gets on the track — well, you get the picture."

Surprisingly, he received a standing vote of thanks from parents.

Of course all colleges do not get along that well with their constituents and supporters.

But it is possible.

On Sunday, February 19, we observe Southern Baptist Seminary, College, and School Day. The observance is appropriate.

Though our Baptist schools are sometimes the most maligned members of the family, we cannot get along without them. They produce quality leadership for our state, our communities, our churches. They have profound influence in their attitudes and the development of their potential — which can greatly determine what they will be.

Not only is leadership evident as the diplomas are given out, most parents and supporters realize that most of the graduates will be ordinary — but solid citizens. They will have impact on their homes and communities.

In order to provide the highest quality Christian education possible, Union University, Belmont College, Carson-Newman College, and Harrison-Chilhowee Academy need and deserve the help and cooperation of all Tennessee Baptists.

Pray for the professors, administrators, students, of our schools. Speak up for them. Baptist schools also have influence on the non-Baptists enrolled. They provide enlightening light, and savory salt for our society. God bless them. — WFA

Pari-mutuel gambling, bingo, hit legislative snags

In a somewhat surprising turn of events, the hopes of Tennessee Baptists and others who oppose pari-mutuel gambling on horse racing, were boosted last week.

Even as an interdenominational group, including several Tennessee Baptist pastors, was meeting, legislative leaders were discussing the situation with gambling on horses and bingo.

Bills now have been introduced in the Tennessee state legislature to repeal legislation allowing pari-mutuel gambling on horse racing (if approved within a county), and charitable bingo.

Senate majority leader Riley Darnell, Gov. Ned McWherter, House speaker Ed Murray, and Lt. Gov. John Wilder last week spoke against legalized gambling in Tennessee.

Speaking to reporters, McWherter said he favored repeal of both gambling measures and would sign the bills if the legislature passes them. He also said he had asked for "repeal of both statutes if it's (legalized gambling) going to bring shame and disgrace to our state."

The governor said the potential for corruption should be removed.

Tennessee Baptists can help put these bills

on the governor's desk. In a calm and positive manner, we can give valuable assistance to legislators who are working to repeal gambling measures.

It is time to halt the process which puts gambling opponents on the defensive year after year. We encourage Tennessee Baptists (and others) to contact their senators and representatives and register their opinions.

As the process continues, all of us must remain alert and involved. We express appreciation to state leaders who actively oppose gambling in Tennessee. — WFA

Japanese Baptists concerned about emperor deification

TOKYO, Japan (BP) — Will Japan's new Emperor Akihito be declared a man, a god or something in between?

Japanese Christians, along with others concerned about the future of religious freedom in Japan, are waiting for an answer to that question.

"We feel a kind of crisis for our freedom of belief," said Takayasu Furukawa, a Japanese Baptist now studying at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

Ultra-nationalists and traditionalists in Japan "are trying to have the emperor be a kind of god again," Furukawa said. "They may force us to worship (him) again, which is against our Christianity."

For 26 centuries, Japanese viewed the emperor as a divinity to be venerated like their ancestors. The late Emperor Hirohito, who died Jan. 7 after 62 years on the Chrysanthemum Throne, shocked a defeated Japan after World War II, when he declared he was not divine. Japan's postwar constitution guarantees religious liberty, a right precious to Christians who remember the persecution and humiliation of the old days.

The 55-year-old Akihito, a quiet man like his father, studied with an American Christian tutor as a youth, married a commoner, rides the Tokyo subway, and is said to see himself as a man of the people. He shows little interest in being divine, observers have said.

But the government-sponsored Shinto religious observances that began when the nation realized Hirohito was dying — and will continue up to and after his funeral in February — have outraged many Christians, opposition parties, and factions opposed to the imperial system.

"Most of them feel these ceremonies scheduled for the new emperor would be a violation of the constitution and also a threat to religious freedom," said veteran Southern Baptist missionary Calvin Parker.

Particularly controversial is the "Great Rice-Tasting Ceremony" scheduled for late next year, during which Akihito will present rice to the gods and "commune" with the Sun Goddess. The ceremony supposedly completes the new emperor's ascension to divinity. Without it, officials in-

sist, Akihito will be only a "half emperor."

Numerous Protestants, including Baptists, have participated in protests and demonstrations against the mixture of government and religion. The United Church of Christ in Japan con-

demned the "sinister program" to use the death of Hirohito and the mourning period afterward to "revive imperial authority and its Shinto ideological but-tress."

Japanese Baptists published a pamphlet expressing concern.

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CLC trustees take anti-racism stance; end Baker matter

By Lonnie Wilkey, associate editor
Trustees of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission took steps to rid themselves of two matters which have plagued the agency since last September during a called meeting Jan. 30-31 in Nashville.

At the September annual meeting, CLC trustee Curtis Caine Sr. of Jackson, Miss., called Martin Luther King Jr. a fraud and said apartheid in South Africa "no longer exists," but was "beneficial when it did."

As a stand against those statements, CLC trustees adopted a seven-point resolution against racial injustice and racism.

The resolution was first introduced and approved at the CLC's race relations conference Jan. 16-17 in Nashville (See Jan. 25 issue of Baptist and Reflector for story and resolution).

CLC trustees adopted the race statement without a dissenting vote. Caine abstained from voting, and made it clear the vote was not "unanimous."

After the resolution was adopted, trustee Richard Elkins of Albuquerque, N.M., asked how Caine, with his views, could serve on a commission which has taken its stance against racism.

Before Caine could respond, CLC trustee chairman Joe Atchison, of Rogers, Ark., ruled Elkins out of order, noting, "Our reply has been taken care of in this resolution."

Racial views

"We clearly affirm to our convention and to our society where we stand on the racial issue," Atchison said.

Following the meeting Atchison recalled the CLC was criticized in September for being silent after Caine's remarks.

The adopted resolution deals with the issue, not personalities and is "a

response to the silence we were criticized for last time," Atchison said.

When questioned by reporters after the meeting, Caine remained silent.

Trustees also dealt with the matter of a financial dispute raised last September regarding former Executive Director N. Larry Baker who resigned last June under fire to accept a pastorate at First Church, Pineville, La.

Money returned

Baker received a severance package of \$41,835.45 and a 1984 Oldsmobile. In September, Baker returned \$2808 and presented a one-way release protecting him from any possible legal action. CLC trustees did not agree to the release and referred the matter to the board's executive committee.

Regarding the repayment made in September, CLC Attorney James P. Guenther said it was unclear about what the money was for, but noted it had been marked for "services rendered" and had been given to Baker in June.

As for the controversy since September, CLC Executive Director Richard Land told the Baptist and Reflector there "was a difference of opinion between the board (CLC board of trustees) and Baker over whether a salary increase Baker granted himself during his tenure was authorized."

Commission policy

Baker, however, in a statement issued to Baptist Press, said he had been told it was a commission policy to automatically increase one grade step upon completion of six months employment. He authorized his salary to increase from step one to step two.

According to a report from the CLC's auditors, Baker was overpaid in the

amount of \$6635.27, the difference between step and one and step two.

Baker agreed to repay the sum, noting in his statement: "During December, 1988, I concluded that I would reimburse the commission for the purported overpayment and that I would enter into a mutual release with the CLC. I have taken these two actions as means of bringing to closure an extremely painful era in my life and ministry"

"In my view, I did not owe any money to the CLC"

According to Guenther, the mutual release noted Baker did not owe the sum and repayment was not an admission of debt or misconduct on his part. Some CLC trustees questioned whether they should sign the release which would end the matter and the possibility of future lawsuits by either side.

Guenther said he did not think Baker has "any potential cause of action" to sue the commission, but advised the trustees to sign the release for their protection.

"The commission needs to know the relationship (with Baker) and the controversy surrounding it is at an end," Guenther said.

As fair as possible

The motion passed with about five dissenting votes.

Atchison noted the executive committee "deliberated in order to be fair" and felt "we've been as fair as possible."

Land observed the commissioners dealt with "two very emotional and potentially divisive issues in a very unifying way."

CLC trustee Ben Mitchell, pastor of Middle Valley Church, Hixson, told the Baptist and Reflector he agreed with

the Baker settlement and felt the matter now is in the past.

In regard to Caine, Mitchell said, "It is clear from statements made at the recent race relations conference we'll hear more about the Caine matter." He added it is possible messengers to the SBC in Las Vegas will ask for Caine's removal as a commissioner.

Mitchell, however, was satisfied with the CLC's action on race relations.

"I'm very pleased with the resolution as being a strong statement against racism," said Tennessee's representative on the CLC.

Mitchell added he is happy with the progress Land is making as executive director. "The hiring of additional staff will facilitate the direction and progress in the work of the Christian Life Commission," he predicted.

Bylaws changed

In other action, CLC trustees:

- Selected Larry Lewis, president of the SBC Home Mission Board, and Fred Lackey, an Athens, Ala., pastor and former CLC trustee, as recipients of the board's distinguished service awards.

- Approved the employment of Lamar E. Cooper as an associate director and Louis Moore as media consultant. Cooper formerly was dean of graduate studies at Criswell College in Dallas and was an associate pastor at First Church, Dallas.

- Changed the bylaws to allow a semi-annual meeting during the first week of March.

- Approved a new abortion pamphlet to be written by HMB President Larry Lewis.

- Heard a report from Land regarding the CLC's financial improvement and plans for the agency's annual seminar to be held March 27-29 in Kansas City, Mo.

Anti-gambling forces optimistic . . .

(continued from page 1)

gambling industry.

"The fact that the legislators are now beginning to see that gambling is really sanctioned by criminal activity has led to this change," said F. Murray Mathis, pastor, Third Church, Murfreesboro, and a member of Tennesseans Against Pari-mutuel Gambling.

Although that group had worked to draft bills to repeal pari-mutuel gambling, the bills exempt Shelby County.

The group had been advised that a repeal effort would not be passed by legislators because although pari-mutuel gambling was defeated in referendums in Williamson, Rutherford, and twice in Davidson counties, it passed in Shelby County, the home of

Memphis, explained Frank Ingraham, an attorney who is a member of Franklin's First Church and of the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee.

Legislators Doug Henry, Bill Richardson, Fred Hobbs, Roscoe Dickson, Riley Darnell, Randy McNally, and Bill Purcell assisted Tennesseans Against Pari-mutuel Gambling.

Smithville church calls Livingston as pastor

David Livingston Jr. has accepted the call as pastor of First Church, Smithville.

A graduate of Mercer University in Macon, Ga., and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., he has held pastorates in Georgia and Kentucky.

Livingston and his wife, Mary, have two sons, Timothy and David III.



GAMBLING FIGHTERS — A meeting of Tennesseans Against Pari-mutuel Gambling in Nashville drew, from left, area Baptist ministers, Paul Durham; Carl Price; TBC executive director-elect D. L. Lowrie; James Averitt (independent church); F. Murray Mathis; attorney Frank Ingraham; Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes director Gerald Stow; and Wayne Simpson

To Cooperative Program

Tennessee Baptists' gifts increase

"Thanks to the stewardship commitment and generosity of Tennessee Baptists, January was a very good month for our Cooperative Program budget needs," said Tom Madden, TBC executive secretary.

Madden, in reflecting on January totals, said gifts put the first quarter (Nov.-Jan.) very close to the convention's CP budget.

January CP receipts amounted to \$2,386,294.92, an improvement of \$159,367.21 over January 1988.

Total CP receipts for the year now stand at \$6,217,059.68, said Madden. That is an increase of \$761,099.04 over the same period last year, \$5,455,960.64, or 13.95 percent.

First quarter receipts failed by 1.63 percent of meeting the budget (to date) of \$6,320,250.

Messengers to the Tennessee Baptist Convention meeting in Jackson last fall voted an annual CP budget of \$25,281,000. One-twelfth of that budget is \$2,106,750, or one month's gifts.

Madden expressed appreciation to Tennessee Baptists for "seeing needs, understanding the great Commission, and being willing to participate in our cooperative effort through every stewardship channel."

"It is significant that we are well above last year's figures and only slightly below our approved budget," he said.

Our Readers Write

On tribulation

I haven't read George Ladd's books supporting post-tribulation rapture. One only needs God's Holy Bible to know he is wrong.

The promised second coming Mr. Eyler spoke of is after the tribulation but is entirely different than the "rapture" (catching away the church in the air). 2 Thessalonians 2:1 speaks of the catching away (which is before the second coming) and verse 3 covers a period 7 years later! "For that day (the Lord's return to earth) will not come until the rebellion occurs and the lawless one revealed, etc." Go to verse 6 and find out why: "And now you know what is holding him (anti-Christ) back (the Church) so that he may be revealed at the proper time.

If the church is what is holding back the coming of the anti-Christ, then it must be removed (raptured) before the anti-Christ takes power.

Revelation 3:10 (the last chapter in the Bible in which the church is referred to as being on earth) says (speaking to the church) "Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth," (NIV).

Among those who support this theory: Billy Graham, James Kennedy, Charles Stanley, Adrian Rogers, John G. Hall, Jerry Falwell, and Richard DeHahn.

I hope you will again be comforted by the knowledge that true Christians will

not have to face the tribulation.

Mrs. J. R. Testerman
Rt. 3, Box 145
Hohenwald 38462

Tribulation, hope —

Lately, there has been more challenge brought against the "rapture" of the Church before the tribulation" doctrine.

It is my opinion that this doctrine will be tested in the very near future. Either Jesus will come secretly and remove the Church from the earth, or specific hardship will come against the Church and inhabitants of the earth.

The Bible equips the Church with knowledge about God's plan of judgment and tells of certain events that must come to pass.

Jesus spoke of great persecution in Matthew 24:9-14. John saw persecution when the fifth seal was opened (Revelation 6:9-11). It was given to the beast, that arose out of the sea, to make war with the saints, and to overcome them, wrote John, in Revelation 13:7.

This persecution directed against God's saints is coming. If we (Christ's Church) are on the earth when it comes, we would have to deal with it. Therefore, let us prepare.

Let us remember that as the world hated Jesus, so it will hate His disciples. But Jesus promised there shall not a hair of our heads perish (Luke 21:17-18). Let us realize that Savior Jesus invited us to fight with Him the spiritual war that will

... on tribulation,
Las Vegas, and more ...

soon be over. Lord Jesus has equipped us, and given us a great commission (Ephesians 6:10-18). Let us go forth, with Christ Jesus, through the end of this age, and then on to resurrection day. Let us continue into an eternity of peace with King Jesus and all the saints. This is the blessed hope.

Tom Benedetti
Route 9, Box 273
Sevierville 37862

Thankful for preachers

I must respond to Bob Mowrey's letter of Feb. 1, when he says that he is "deeply troubled by some young men coming out of some of our schools ..." I don't know where Bob encounters these that "trouble" him. This has not been my experience.

Since 1970 I have worked as a volunteer in leading Lay Witness Weekends, Lay Evangelism Schools, Lay Led Revivals, and Lay Renewal Weekends. This has been in the states of South Dakota, Indiana, Kentucky, Alabama, Ohio, and Tennessee. Most of the churches I have served in have been small town and rural churches. And most of the pastors have been young men recently out of the seminary.

I have not been troubled by these young men, rather I have been encouraged by them. I have found them to be very intelligent and dedicated men. They are dedicated to Jesus Christ first and foremost. They are dedicated to the authority of the Word of God and are seeking to be obedient to that Word as they preach and teach. They are dedicated to the people of God where they serve and they are dedicated to reaching lost people for Jesus.

I thank God and praise Him for the young preachers He is calling out to serve His churches. I thank God for the seminaries that further equipped them for the pastoral ministry. My daughter is enrolled in one now.

Tom Brown
407 East Main St.
Murfreesboro 37130

Las Vegas decision

Where did we go wrong? What motivated Southern Baptists to make the decision to pay millions of dollars to help support the gambling capital of America? Has the liberal media influenced our thinking so much that our families will enjoy going to a city that is known for its gambling, drinking, nudity, and prostitution? A city that is said to be controlled by the mafia?

If those who made the decision were Godly people, their thinking must have been confused by the "master deceiver." In supporting these hotels, a terrible message is given to the world and to our own that we approve of "sin city."

I am knowledgeable about the city as I

Doctor with AIDS dies at Baptist

Harold Dennison Jr., a Nashville physician who recently was diagnosed as having AIDS, died Jan. 29 at Baptist Hospital in Nashville.

According to news reports, Dennison believed he contracted the deadly disease while operating on a patient with AIDS.

Dennison was chief of surgery at Baptist Hospital but had staff privileges at other local hospitals in the city.

He is survived by his wife and two children.

GUIDELINES: Opinions of Tennessee Baptists on religion-related subjects are welcomed. Letters should be brief and concise, no more than 250 words. Letters may be shortened and edited at discretion of the editor. Unsigned letters will not be read or used, but writer's name may be withheld for sufficient reason. There must be at least one month between publication of letters from the same writer. Letters must not make personal attacks on the character or integrity of anyone. Writers are encouraged to write in a positive, Christian manner. Short letters are preferred. Address and phone number must be included.

visited there several times before Jesus changed my life. If we are interested in reaching the lost people who come there, I am sure a special mission established there would be much more effective and a small fraction of the cost of our convention.

I feel that Southern Baptists should be well aware what they will see in Las Vegas before taking their children there because they will, indeed, be taking them down into Egypt.

W. M. McMahan
Rt. 2, Box 1141
Spring City 37381

In 1983, messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention, in annual session, voted to meet in Las Vegas in 1989. Messengers to this convention are being asked to arrive early to take part in an evangelism effort. — Editor

Church needs pastor

Trinity Baptist Church, Baumholder, West Germany, is in need of a pastor, effective in June.

A pastor search committee is in the process of seeking an individual who, in accordance with God's will, desires to be the spiritual leader of our congregation.

The congregation is mainly people connected with American military forces. We are affiliated with the European Baptist Convention, English language. We are founded on principles and doctrines of the Southern Baptist Convention.

If God is leading you to pastor in a missions setting, please contact me as search committee chairman.

Terry J. Stockman
OSJA-BHR
APO New York 09034

Former editor recovers at home

Several weeks ago the Baptist and Reflector carried the news that retired editor Richard N. Owen had fallen and broken a hip, and had been hospitalized.

A note from Editor Owen, who passed his 90th birthday last April, informs us that he is at home and recovering.

"Thank you for the news item about my broken hip," he writes. "People from all over the state have written to express concern and prayer. I cannot answer all of them, but I do want to let them know they are appreciated."

He has been at home in Nashville since Jan. 11, continuing therapy with help from his son and daughter-in-law — and making progress.

"I am grateful to so many who have given encouragement," he writes.

The Baptist and Reflector joins all well-wishers for Editor Owen's quick recovery.

One Word More

They sat exhausted on the floor of the locomotive engine. The iron monster hurtled across the frozen wilderness.

The two men had escaped from a maximum security prison, making their way across deep drifts of snow and ice-covered streams to the railroad yard. The older man spotted a train headed in the right direction. They jumped aboard.

By quirk of circumstance, the train's engineer was dead of a heart attack — and there was no other crew for the work train. It began to roll out of the yard, gathering speed, without a steady hand at the controls.

Eventually the escapees realized their predicament and tried desperately to reach the main engine and power source.

The leader forced the younger man to try to inch his way, outside, along the engine's great girth, in sub-zero blasts of air. He could not do it, and after one final effort, he fell back into the cab — half-dead from the cold.

His waiting partner now lunged at him, kicking and beating him, threatening his life — because he had failed.

After a cruel struggle as they battered each other, they sat on the floor, unable to continue the assault.

"Manny," said the disillusioned young man, "Oh, Manny. I thought you was my friend. You was my hero, Manny. You was my hero. And I thought you was my friend."

Switch the scene. Paul the Apostle is

By Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor telling the Philippian church, "For me to live is Christ, to die is gain!" There is excitement in his voice and he is saying that all he does is important when gauged against eternity — and he is willing to keep on doing that — but, to die is so much better, it is life face to face with Christ.

John the Baptist came preaching in the barren wastes of Judea, preaching repentance.

He was like the fresh crescent moon, early in the morning and low in the sky. "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!"

The sun was yet below the horizon, but already its brilliance lit the eastern sky and created dawn. The first rays illumined John's message, "Bear fruit that befits repentance ... He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire!"

And then, almost as suddenly as he burst on the scene, he was gone. The sun's fierce beauty filled the sky.

So we can see why Paul, a few years later, would be able to say, "For me to live is Christ, to die is gain." He knew Him, the sun, the Son, and he lived for Him.

Look again at the two hapless men, sitting on the floor of the hurtling train. No hope.

"Oh Manny, I thought you was my friend! You was my hero, and I thought you was my friend!"

Then they wait for that lost train that will take them straight to death.

No friend, no family, no power, no prestige, no job — nothing, said Paul, nothing can compare to Jesus the Christ. John knew that. We know it. Every person must know it, they truly must.



ALLEN

In Lawrence Association

Black, white churches unite efforts for survey

By Lonnie Wilkey, associate editor
LAWRENCEBURG — Lawrence County Association, like the majority of Tennessee Baptist associations, does not yet have a black Southern Baptist church in its midst.

That may soon change, however, thanks to the efforts of two Anglo churches in the association — Faith Church, Loretto, and Meadow View Church, Lawrenceburg — and a black Baptist congregation from Clarksville.

Members from Tabernacle Church in Clarksville came to Lawrenceburg Jan. 28 and, with the assistance of the two local churches, conducted a survey in the city's black communities to see if there were sufficient interest in beginning a black Baptist church, possibly beginning as an adult Bible study group.

The church came at the invitation of Bob Polk, director of missions for the Lawrence Association.

At least two churches believed there was a need based upon their work with black children through their Vacation Bible Schools.

Bill Brown, pastor of Meadow View Church, noted his church ministered to about 45 black children, almost one-third of the attendance, during last year's VBS.

Bob Jones, pastor of Faith Church, related that during an evangelistic

crusade held in Lawrenceburg last year several black families attended, and some were saved.

And while they were welcomed at his church and others in the association, the need for a black church became evident, the men agreed.

Currently, there are only three black churches in the county, and none have a full-time pastor active in the community, Polk said.

According to Sam Beene, coordinator of the Baptist Sunday School Board's black church development section, it is easier "to reach black people for Christ through a black church because most blacks prefer their own cultural setting."

Beene was in Lawrenceburg to discuss strategies for beginning a new black work should the survey prove successful.

And, the results were better than most anticipated.

Polk reported the group surveyed 89 houses and received favorable responses from 50 adults, 18 youth, and 27 children, from a total of 44 households.

"I'm well pleased with the results," Polk said, adding there is a "good possibility" of a new work beginning soon.

He added they plan to do additional followup in the community and



MAPPING STRATEGY — Plotting areas to survey for a new black work in Lawrence Association were, from left, Bill Brown, pastor, Meadow View Church; J. C. Carpenter, TBC Missions Department, Bob Jones, pastor, Faith Church; Bob Polk, director of missions; Sam Beene, Baptist Sunday School Board; and Jimmy Terry, pastor, Tabernacle Church.

possibly begin an adult Bible study that would grow into a mission, and then a church.

Jimmy Terry, pastor of Tabernacle Church, agreed the possibility is good for a new work in the area.

Terry, who brought eight of his members to conduct the survey, noted the endeavor was beneficial not only for the association, but to his church

as well.

"It gave our people a greater desire to initiate the same type of work in our immediate community," Terry said.

J. C. Carpenter of the TBC's Missions Department said the united effort was a "positive" approach.

"We had blacks and whites working together to reach out in a combined missions effort," Carpenter said.

91-year-old church treasurer ends 53-year tenure

By Joy Jordan, news assistant

Four decades after the American Association of Retired Persons would have solicited his membership, Elba Thomas was still working for his church.

Now nearing a 91st birthday, Thomas still drives a car, lives alone — and only recently terminated a 53-year tenure as treasurer of China Grove Church in Rutherford. His last

year in that position was highlighted by an anonymous \$100,000 gift to the small, rural church, the interest of which will go to missions.

Though he is adamant in insisting "I never was much on telling people about my life," members of his church family don't hesitate to sing his praises.

One of Thomas' most ardent fans may be Bettye Smothers, whose hus-

band, J. O., is pastor of China Grove.

"He has the best sense of humor," she attests, "always trying to pull something over on someone."

And a bent toward mischief was apparently no mid-life altercation in his character. Frequently in trouble at school as a boy, Thomas admitted, he was sent to the peach tree to cut the instruments of discipline. But Thomas and a trusty pocket knife habitually ringed the switches so that they splintered on first contact.

His church record, however, has been more respectable. Making a profession of faith at nine, Thomas joined First Church, Dyer, transferring his membership a few years later to China Grove, where he has been active since.

A graduate of Hall-Moody Business College in Martin, the West Tennes-

sean was employed several years at Rutherford Bank and for 20 years at Kell Garment Factory.

In 1919, he married Mae Halliburton. Together, they made two trips around the world, one of which included representing China Grove Church at the 1970 Baptist World Alliance conference in Tokyo, Japan.

Though his wife is deceased, Thomas has lived to see the births of a son, two grandchildren and two great grandchildren. The longevity that seems to run in his family (Thomas' father directed China Grove's choir for 60 years), he attributes "to my Heavenly Father."

"He's a person to be admired," avows Smothers. "He's loved by everyone. I reckon I've never heard anything to the contrary."

Personal Perspective

By Tom J Madden

Hebrews 13:20-21 has been a special blessing to me across the years of my ministry. These verses have spoken to my heart and as pastor I have used them many times in benedictions, particularly in weddings. "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant.

Make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen."



MADDEN

These verses remind us that peace resides in God. There is no peace to be found in the world. There is no purpose or direction in the things of this world; peace belongs to God. This peace was secured by the blood of Jesus Christ, "through the blood of the everlasting covenant." The covenants of men are destined to pass away but God has given us an unending covenant through

the blood of Christ. This peace is certified by the resurrection of Christ. He did not stay dead, but was brought again from the dead by our God.

It reminds us that the God of peace will make us perfect. The word used for perfect is a medical term. It was used to refer to a broken bone that was separated or torn apart and then the bone was reset so it could be used again. It would be "perfect." This verse indicates that man is out of joint or disconnected with God, and that the God of peace now sets things straight so that we can do what He has called us to do.

It pleases God when we do His will. When we do the will of God we bring comfort and strength to those who are weak. Whatever God calls us to do, He enables us to do. He becomes a power to perform it.

When we pray and work to please God then we will praise Him "to whom be glory forever." Our prayers please God. Our peace pleases Him. Our work adds pleasure to God. All of it comes together in a praise to God.

It pleases our God when we honor Him with our lives and bring praise to Him. I suspect that far too often far too many of us neglect Him in our praise.

SBC giving sets two-month record

NASHVILLE (BP) — The Southern Baptist Cooperative Program enjoyed its second-best month in January, completing its best two-month combination in its 63-year history.

The convention's national unified ministry budget received \$15,083,953 in January, announced Harold C. Bennett, president and treasurer of the denomination's Executive Committee. The monthly record is held by January 1988, with a \$15,514,367 total.

The latest December-January combination totals more than \$27.2 million, almost \$500,000 more than the previous two-month record, set in January-February 1988.

January 1989 receipts brought the Cooperative Program year-to-date total to \$47,242,141 after four months of the current fiscal year, Bennett said.

The year-to-date total represents a 3.53 percent gain over the amount for

the same period last year, he reported. That compares to a current U.S. inflation rate of about 4.4 percent.

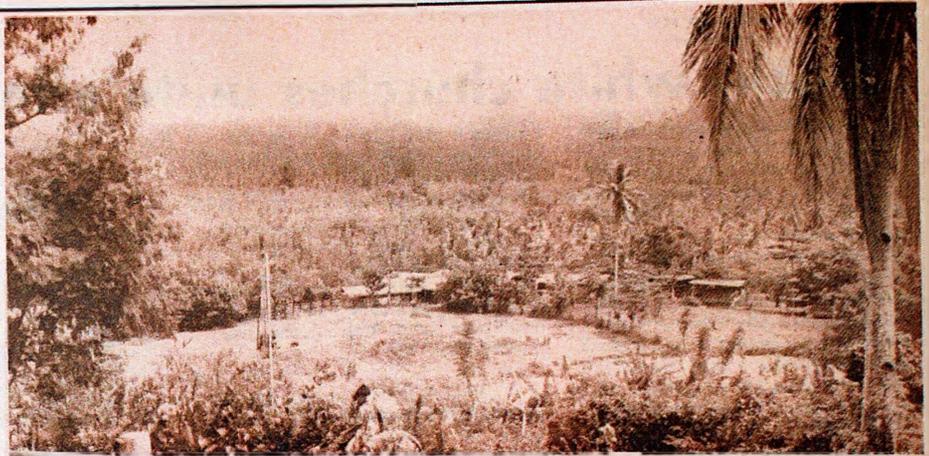
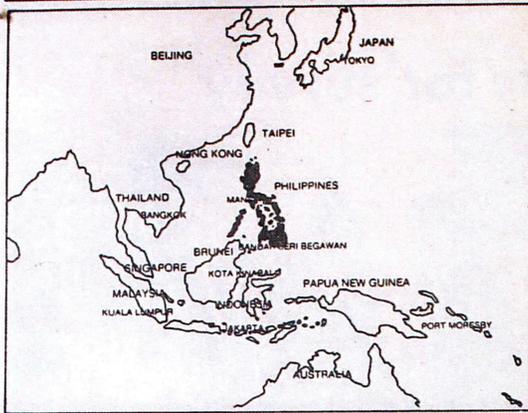
The Cooperative Program must average \$12,294,732 per month for the balance of the fiscal year to meet its \$145.6 million overall goal.

Dumser accepts call to Edgefield Church

Thomas E. Dumser II accepted the call of Edgefield Church, Nashville, as pastor, effective Jan. 25.

Coming from the pastorate of Pump Springs Church, Harrogate, Dumser holds degrees from Union University, Jackson, and New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary.

He is married to the former Elise Crook, who also earned degrees from Union University and New Orleans Seminary. The Dumsers have a daughter, Lauren.



PANORAMIC VIEW — A portion of the Rural Life Center can be seen in this panorama from the home of Harold and Joyce Watson.

RLC, UPLIFT, SALT, BOOST, FAITH — spread Gos

This is another in a series about the Philippines. The Tennessee/Philippines Partnership Mission begins April 1, and plans are underway for projects during the three-year partnership. Future articles will tell about the island nation, the people and culture, the Baptist churches, and possibilities of the joint effort to share Christ.

By Wm. Fletcher Allen

Harold and Joyce Watson are thousands of miles from Mississippi and Texas, but their house that sits atop a lush green hill at the Rural Life Center is the place they call home.

They are agricultural evangelists, commissioned by the Foreign Mission Board.

Harold, not a big man, is impressive when he pulls on his western-style boots and his wide-brimmed straw hat. Joyce makes you feel at ease with a tall glass of iced passion-fruit juice — and her gentle chiding of Harold.

We met them just before noon after a two-hour ride from Davao City to the remote center near Bansalan. The van, driven by Tennessean Charlie Hawkins, and loaded with 11 Baptists, careened down the highway with several intermittent stops before we reached our destination.

From the time we arrived in Manila about seven days earlier, we had heard of Harold and Joyce Watson. Each time we talked of partnership projects with the Baptists there at the Manila Mission they did not neglect to mention the work of the Watsons — several hundred miles south and in another Filipino Baptist Convention.

So when we flew down to Mindanao that Sunday to renew friendships with Charlie and Bette Hawkins, the Wat-

sons tripped lightly across our minds.

The Hawkins had been back in Mindanao only a couple of months. They had spent most of their furlough in 1988 as missionaries in residence for the Tennessee Baptist Convention. We had made friends — and they had been ecstatic upon learning of the tentative plans for a Tennessee/Philippines Partnership Mission.

Charlie was our host in Davao, and he was our driver that morning.

Grandeur and garbage

The road out of Davao City carried us almost due south. We traveled through several small towns — and Charlie stopped for a few moments beside a gigantic garbage dump.

The contrast was overwhelming. In the distance we saw Mount Apo, poised in stark grandeur against a high blue sky. Apo is "the grandfather" of Philippine mountains. A dormant volcano with no recorded eruptions, it is the tallest peak of the nation at more than 8000 feet.

Apo is a huge green cap, and many local people call it Sendawa, or Mountain of Sulphur, because of yellow crater rocks. There is a trail leading to the peak — and Lake Venado, but this was not a day for us to make the trek.

Charlie brought us back to the garbage heap from our reverie of Mount Apo. Stretching for about half a mile along the highway, the scraps and refuse of Davao sprawled before us. We asked about the huts alongside the garbage, and the ever-smiling children who waved "hello" to us.

Making a living

"Well," said Charlie, "people stake a claim out here. This is how they survive; they sell garbage to the passers-by. They have specialties. Some gather

plastic, some gather rubber, some pick up bottles and other things — and they try to make things to sell."

We moved on, deep in thought about people who make a living from the garbage piles of Davao. (They were still there, of course, when we returned several hours later).

We stopped later to drink visually of the beauty of a fresh mountain stream that splashed across rocks and sand with wild abandon. Later, we made a short detour to visit Bansalan Church, and met Pastor Romulo Solana, his wife, and children. We gave them a brief explanation of our reason for being there, and news about the proposed Tennessee partnership.

They responded with that warm Filipino smile. "Pray for us," they both said, "pray for us. That is the most important thing, and your best gift to us."

Rural Life Center

We arrived at the Rural Life Center, and the gracious home of Harold and Joyce Watson with two hours to spare

before the mid-day meal. Joyce provided us with frosty glasses filled with passion fruit juice.

Harold gave us a brief summary of the projects there, and the cool juice rejuvenated us from the long and hot ride from Davao. Joyce cautioned us about the tropical sun — and Harold provided hats for all.

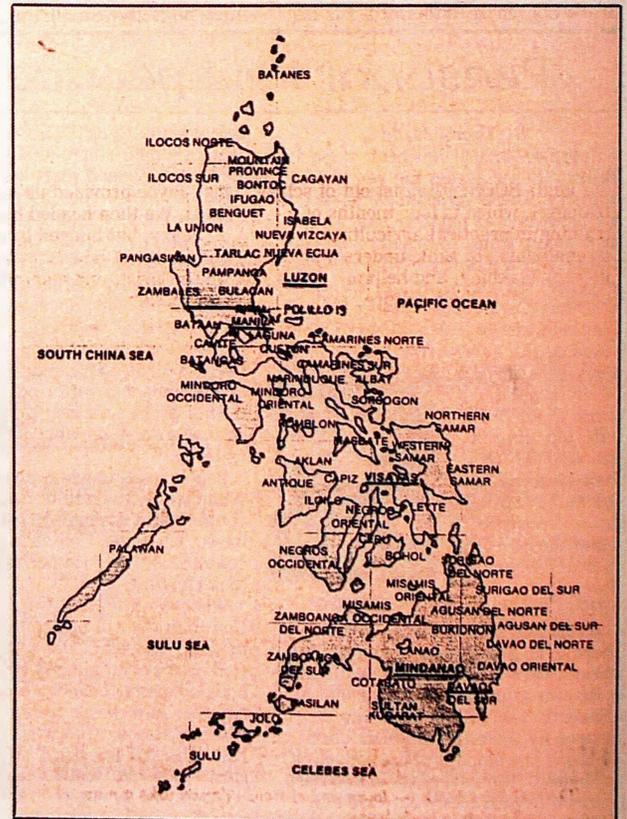
The Rural Life Center, Harold told us, is located on 38 acres. He has been an agriculturist for many years, a graduate of Mississippi State University. The Watsons were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1964, and after several years in agriculture extension work, moved to the Rural Life Center in 1971.

"We have to learn methods of soil and forest conservation," Harold said. "Less than five percent of former forests remains. The trees have been logged for use in wood products such as furniture. That means there is a gigantic loss of export income, and loss of building materials."

He guided us around the RLC as we

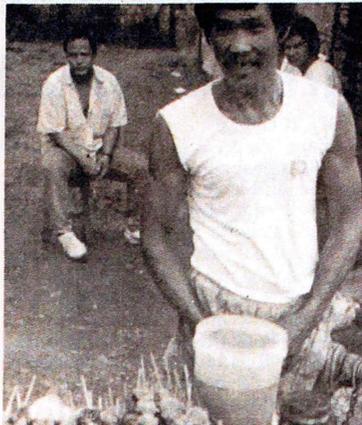


LOOKING AT PROJECT — Harold Watson, second from left, explains some of his RLC conservation work to Tennesseans.

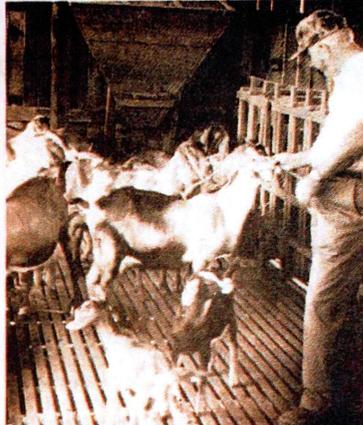




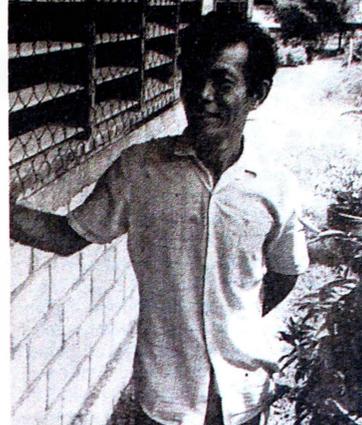
WELCOME OFFERED — Bansalan Baptist Church, near the RLC, says "everyone is welcome" to hear God's Word.



FRESH FOOD — Gourmet delights are produced by vendors in villages and towns on populated islands.



GOATS GALORE — Ray Fowler, Memphis pastor, is interested in Harold Watson's goat management at the RLC.



STAFF MEMBERS — RLC staff members assist Filipino farmers in farming techniques and Bible study.

el in Philippines

cursorily examined most of the projects. To combat soil erosion, Watson is teaching and training groups of farmers how to grow crops and conserve the soil.

Training farmers

He told us that 10,000 visitors toured the RLC in 1987 — to see what was happening. "We trained 1500 farmers and technicians from Mindanao and other islands," he said.

One of the plans is UPLIFT, an acronym for "using properly lowland integrated farming technology." The plan integrates rice production with vegetable, firewood tree, aquatic animal, poultry, and livestock production by recycling and utilizing organic resources found on the farm.

The Mindanao Baptist RLC has tested the UPLIFT farming system in its model farm. Watson explained as we walked and looked. Even small farms can be productive with the UPLIFT system.

The Philippine government (Department of Agrarian Reform) has sent groups to the RLC to undergo hands-on training. Warlito Laquihon, associate director of RLC, says UPLIFT is one farming technology that can help solve the needs of agrarian reform.

Other programs of RLC include SALT (sloping agricultural land technology), which involves planting crops following the contour of the sloping land; BOOST (Baptist out of school training), which is four months of training in practical agriculture, strengthening of Bible understanding, literacy teaching, and help in understanding their culture; and

FAITH (food always in the home) gardening.

BOOST really boosts

There are now three BOOST centers. Unlike other RLC programs, it is specifically for Baptists. Those who are involved are able to teach others. And church growth is a part of the teaching. BOOST is "an exercise in self-reliance and self-sufficiency," and provides skills to those who are out of school.

Laquihon and Watson produce The Baptist Farmer, a small newspaper with agricultural and home information, and Scripture.

They were reluctant to tell us, but others said the National Department of Agriculture had recently chosen RLC for a special citation, given during Farmers' Week in Manila. The award noted the success of SALT as "an effort to improve the delivery of services to farmers and the initiative to increase total farm productivity and income."

And the Gospel is not left out. Bible teaching and Christian living are incorporated into all RLC projects. For example, The Baptist Farmer has as its motto, "A message of good news and abundant life" and "to farm with faith."

When we finished looking at the astounding techniques of RLC's training, Joyce provided us with a bountiful meal. We then headed back to Davao — weary, but buoyed by new knowledge of how Baptist missionaries share Christ, and excitement about the partnership.



A MOMENT TO RELAX — Joyce and Harold Watson take a moment for rest as they host Tennessee Baptists in their home.



FOOTHILLS BEAUTY — Fresh water flows in this foothills stream on the route from Davao City to the Rural Life City.

Giving beyond the mainline

Unparalleled opportunity for missions support

Harold Watson's revolutionary farming method is helping to reclaim eroded land in several Asian countries. Expansion is impeded by lack of funds. Volunteers from Tennessee may be able to help. And Jeff and Regina Palmer, Tennessee Baptist missionary appointees now in orientation at Rockville, Va., will join the RLC staff in early summer.

The Foreign Mission Board says that Watson's request for expansion of the Philippines Rural Life Development Foundation cannot be met because of insufficient funds. It is a strategic priority need.

The project was developed by missionary Watson to make use of hillside farming techniques that he calls Sloping Agricultural Land Technology (SALT). The use of natural terracing and hedges of fast-growing trees planted across hillsides causes fertile soil to accumulate between the hedges and flatten strips of land for crops.

The success of the project has brought three national awards as well as international interest. The first award came in 1985 when Watson received the Roman Magsaysay Award, known as the "Nobel Prize of Asia." More recently the government's agriculture department gave the Baptist Rural Life Center a special award for the SALT program. And the Anwar Fazal Award

went to the center, termed a "model worthy of emulation."

More than 10,000 people come to the center each year for training. All hear the Gospel and have opportunity for Bible study. Many have made professions of faith as a direct result of this work. Persons who have been influenced by the Gospel while receiving training at the center have established at least 20 churches in the immediate vicinity of the center.

In other satellite rural life centers, some 450 established churches benefit from involvement of Baptists in the lives of the local people.

To expand this training to people of other Asian countries, \$50,000 is needed to increase housing, office space, and training facilities, as well as staff, at the center.

You may help meet this strategic need by making your contribution to the Foreign Mission Board. Indicate on your check that the funds are for the Philippines Rural Life Development Foundation. Address your envelope to the Development Office, P. O. Box 6767, Richmond, Va. 23230, or telephone (804) 353-0151 for more information.

Some material adapted from the Feb.-March issue of FMB magazine, The Commission.

From Belmont College

Church custodian earns degree after 24 years

By Frances Meeker

Sam Wright begins the new year with the satisfaction of obtaining a goal he began pursuing 24 years ago — graduating from college.

Wright, 49, began taking classes at Tennessee State University in 1964, the same year he began working as a custodian at First Church, Nashville.

Last month he graduated from Belmont College with a degree in social work. His work at First Church helped him decide to change his major from business education to social work. The downtown church is active in work with the homeless.

"A lot of times I am the only staff person here when the street people come to the church for help," said Wright, who works a 2-10 p.m., shift. "The church officials pretty well let me use my discretion about helping the people."

Wright has measured up to the responsibility, according to Associate Pastor William Blackwell.

"We depend on him to make the decision about distributing food and clothing," said Blackwell, who has responsibility for the counseling center and social ministries of the 2600-member church. "He has always done a good job."

So by the time Wright enrolled in 1974 at Belmont, he already was practicing many of the techniques he was to learn later in such courses as counseling and guidance, industrial psychology, abnormal psychology, and crisis intervention.

If the Pearl High School graduate seems to have taken his time in finishing college, it is because he always paid his way cash in advance.

"I would save my money until I had enough for a quarter or semester and then I would go to school," he explained. "Then I would stay out a while and save my money again until I had enough to go back."

A number of people at First Church also helped Wright pay for his first

years at college.

"Sam is a great example of someone setting a goal and then sticking to the course until he reached that goal," said retired Nashville attorney A. O. Buck, a member of the church.

"Everyone who has been involved in his education over these years is as excited as he is about this," Buck said.

Wright, who now is academically qualified to do the social work that was thrust upon him by necessity several years ago, has no plans for an immediate change in his career, however.

He said he feels the Lord may have placed him at the downtown church which is in the area most frequented by the down-and-out population of the

city.

The church maintains a food pantry and clothes room for needy people and also participates in numerous city-wide welfare and humanitarian projects.

"They said that First Baptist is located in the heart of the city and I would add that First Baptist's heart goes out to the city," said Wright, who outranks all other First Church staff people in seniority.

"And I like it here," he stated simply.

—Meeker is religion editor for the *Nashville Banner*. The story is used with permission.

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- 4:30-5:30 p.m. Registration
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... from Nutbush to
Wartrace — passing through
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Leadership ...

Kevin Kunce is the new minister of music at Rock Springs Church, Greenbrier, effective Feb. 5. Kunce is a job and salary analyst in the personnel department of the Baptist Sunday School Board. He is a graduate of the University of Southern Illinois, Carbondale.

First Church, Humboldt, called Randy Graham as minister of youth and recreation. He holds degrees from East Texas Baptist University, Marshall, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

He and his wife, Tammy, have a one-year-old daughter, Ashley. J. Edward North is pastor.

Signal Mountain Church, Signal Mountain, called Deborah Hageman as youth choir director. Majoring in music education, Hageman is a junior at Covenant College, Lookout Mountain.

Jack C. Bishop Jr. is Signal Mountain's pastor.

Bubba Campbell has accepted the call as interim minister of music at Charlotte Road Church, Nashville, where Joe Estes is pastor.

Olive Hill West Church, Ramer, has called Eddie Martin as pastor, effective Jan. 15.

He comes to Shiloh Association from Corinth, Miss.

Raleigh Church, Memphis, welcomes to its staff Jane Stehle, who will serve as the pastor's secretary/computer operator. The Memphis native is married and has two children.

Greenback Memorial Church, Greenback, called Ronald Bailey as pastor.

Michael Stephen Day has accepted the call of First Church, Memphis, as minister of education and evangelism. He comes from the Baptist Brotherhood Commission in Memphis where he was editor of High School Young Men's materials.

Day holds degrees from Belmont College, Nashville, and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

He and his wife, Debra Susan, have two daughters, Meredith and Rachel.

Ernest Condee has resigned the pastorate of First Church, Philadelphia, in order to accept the pastorate of Oak Street Church, Maryville.

Brownsville Church, Brownsville has called Bob Elliott as interim pastor. Elliott is vice president for business affairs at Union University, Jackson.

Ardmore Church, Ardmore, gave Sue Beck a reception Jan. 29 honoring her 22 years as pastor/church secretary.

Marvin Fowler accepted the call of East Cleveland Church, Cleveland.

Director of the Baptist student center of Jackson State Community College, Jackson, for the past eight years, Maurice Hays has been elected to the Jackson city council.

Colleges ...

Vickie Burkhart Butler has been appointed alumni director of Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City. She was coordinator of the state volunteer program during the administration of Governor Lamar Alexander and was responsible for restructuring the volunteer support committees in 95 counties.

Professor Robert E. Mulloy, a member of the faculty of Belmont College, Nashville, since 1961, has been named director of the school's music business program.

Mulloy received his bachelor's degree from Belmont and his master's from George Peabody College, Nashville.

Roy A. Dobyns has been named president of Bluefield (Va.) College.

The Bristol native succeeds Charles L. Tyer who resigned last April. Gary N. Garner served the past nine months as acting chief executive officer.

Since 1975, Dobyns has been vice president for academic affairs at Carson-Newman College.

People ...

Leon Dunsmore resigned as treasurer of First Church, Waverly, a position he held for 17 years. He is also a deacon.

Paul Tirey is pastor of the church.

Churches ...

J. L. Shoun, pastor of Demory Church, LaFollete reported that the church's Lottie Moon Offering goal this year was approximately \$2000. Just six years ago the church, which has an attendance of about 50, did not give to the offering.

Sandra Smith will be the featured speaker at an area-wide ladies' prayer luncheon Feb. 20 at Colonial Heights Church, Kingsport.

The event precedes a March 19-24 crusade in Kingsport to be led by Smith's husband, Bailey, former president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Holden accepts call of Lenoir City church

Richard Holden resigned as pastor of First Church, Mountain City, in order to accept a call to the pastorate of Calvary Church, Lenoir City, effective Feb. 5.

The Knoxville native graduated from New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Terry, have two children, Jesse and Callie.

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For more information write: Dr. Timothy George, Dean Beeson Divinity School Samford University Birmingham, AL 35229



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The witness of Stephen

By Charles D. Williams, pastor; Shelbyville Mills Church, Shelbyville

It almost seems the early church went from problem to problem. But the truth is it was growing from victory to victory, despite the fact that from without and within Satan was moving against that which was of God.

There was in the church a natural division, largely along linguistic lines, but Satan tried to make the barrier a point of contention.

The problem of meeting daily needs is not the primary focus of our test, but rather the remedy "the twelve" (6:2) found in the church. We see in these first seven verses the beginning of the office of deacon.

While the word deacon is not used, the ideals of that high office were manifested here. The selection of these first "deacons" introduces us to Stephen and Philip, used of God not just to wait on tables but also to minister the Word.



WILLIAMS

Stephen's mission (6:8-7:53) With the beginning of the ministry that is attributed to Stephen, we see an advancement of the Gospel beyond the bounds of the Jewish nation. As the church grew in power and grace, there was an increasing need for disciples like Stephen, filled with the Spirit, to minister for the Lord.

After waiting on tables and proving himself there, Stephen was sent on a new mission. After being arrested and brought before the council, he spoke the Word of God with power.

His message had two primary themes. He accused the nation of Israel of repeatedly sinning against God and rejecting God's messengers (prophets) and their message. Secondly, Stephen wanted those in the synagogue to know that God was not limited to specific places or to a specific people.

Perhaps the church today needs to hear again that the message of Jesus is for people everywhere.

Stephen's martyrdom (7:54-60) The response of the council to Stephen's message was, to say the

least, violent. Their reaction could be compared to a lynch mob that had lost all control and all semblance of order. There is no record of a trial, so we can assume that this was mob action.

LIFE AND WORK LESSON SERIES

February 12 Lesson

Basic Passage: Acts 6:1 to 8:3

Focal Passages: Acts 6:1-6, 8-9, 12-14; 7:59 to 8:1a

Stephen's reaction manifested calm and real peace. Note Acts 6:7, where his accusers saw what is described as the look of an angel on Stephen's face. The inner-assurance that was Stephen's at the beginning of his "trial" was present in even greater power as the mob rushed at him.

Imagine the glory on his face as God gave him a vision of Jesus, standing with the Father to welcome him home. What a joy it has been for me to stand by the deathbeds of saints of God and note the peacefulness on their faces as they slipped out of this life into eternity with their Lord.

The world cannot understand this "peace that passeth all understanding." The picture painted in Scripture

leads us to understand that the look on Stephen's face and the assurance in his voice so enraged the council that "with one accord" they stoned him.

We can surmise that Stephen followed the example of his Savior, even in death. No doubt Stephen remembered the words of contentment and assurance Jesus spoke from the cross: "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit" (Luke 23:46).

Then in the ultimate word of intercession, Stephen again followed his Lord in praying for his persecutors, as he "cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge" (Acts 8:60). What a difference we could make if we were able to show our contentment in Jesus and intercede for those who would come against us!

Our lesson ends with an introduction to Saul (8:1-4). His part in the persecution of the church was not as an innocent bystander, but as an active participant. The martyrdom of Stephen seems to signal the beginning of wholesale persecution of the church. As the persecution became extreme the church was scattered and everywhere they went they sowed the seed of the Word.

Expressing gratitude

By Joe Wiles, pastor; Silverpoint Church, Silverpoint

Four lessons ago we looked at the significance of showing gratitude toward Jesus for our salvation. This lesson attempts to help us be grateful for all that God does for us.

Recently, two hotel maids returned \$65,000 in cash to a woman. The woman did not give a reward or even say "thank you." Such ingratitude, for whatever reason, seems callous. The Lord surely must think the same thing.



WILES

The longer way (Luke 17:11)

Jesus had chosen to go the traditional way to Jerusalem. He passed between Samaria and Galilee. This was the choice of all "good" Jews. In Jesus' case, circumventing Samaria placed Him where He needed to be in order to minister. Sometimes we must go out of our way to help others and do the tasks Jesus wants us to perform. Most often, it is by serving in the ordinary places of our lives that we minister best.

Shared suffering (Luke 17:12-13)

Ten lepers, those suffering probably from Hansen's disease, had banded together, less because they loved each other than because they hated being totally alone. Lepers were shunned. Many felt the disease was punishment from God for sins. The lepers called on

the Lord for cleansing.

They did not approach Jesus more closely than the law allowed. They must have believed that He had the power to make them whole again even at a distance.

UNIFORM LESSON SERIES

February 12 Lesson

Basic Passage: Luke 17:11-19

Focal Passage: Luke 17:11-19

Only one? (Luke 17:14-19)

Jesus did not hesitate to help, giving them specific instructions. The ten lepers had to do what was ceremonially necessary to be allowed back into society: see a priest and be pronounced clean. As they turned to do as Jesus told them, they were cleansed. When they put faith in to practice, they were made whole. This act of obedience on the part of all ten showed the necessary faith.

One of the men healed was a Samaritan. He was a foreigner whom the Jews saw as contemptible. When the Samaritan saw that he was cleansed, he immediately returned to thank Jesus. As he bowed at His feet, Jesus asked where the other nine were. Nine went home cleansed, whole, and ungrateful. This one in ten was not only thankful but said so.

Because the Samaritan paused to thank the Lord, he received a special blessing. Jesus, as his priest, told him to go. His faith had given him that right. He was now well. Can you imagine the peace and wholeness the man must have felt? I believe he got this special blessing because he was grateful.

I have often wondered about these ten men. They were all in desperate need. They all asked for and were given healing. Why did only one return to show his appreciation and gratitude? Did the nine others ever try to thank the Lord for His healing?

Obviously, we cannot answer these questions. However, do we act much the same? It surely grieved the Lord that only one cared enough to be thankful. It surely hurts Him when we leave unexpressed our gratitude for all He has done for us.

Gratefulness explored

Preachers talk frequently about ingratitude, and well they should, for it is a most disgusting sin. I suspect that all of us are, at times, very guilty of not being thankful.

There is, however, a greater reason for gratitude, more than just avoiding the guilt placed on us by a sermon: God is a gracious Father. He loves us and does what is best for us — and more. He abundantly bestows riches

upon us daily. Ingratitude blocks these blessings because selfishness is a sin that keeps us apart from fellowship with Him.

Jesus came to earth to make us truly whole. His graciousness is an example we are to follow. His public prayers involved thanksgiving. If we are to be like Him, we too are to be thankful to the Lord and those whom He allows to minister to us.

Which of the ten are we most like?

Long earns degree from Southwestern

Phillip S. Long was among Tennesseans who graduated from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, in December. The Jackson native received his master's in religious education.

Long graduated from Union University, Jackson, and was ordained by Englewood Church, Jackson.

A former journeyman to Okinawa, Japan, he is married to the former Beth Petty of Hartsville, S. C.



LONG

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The First Baptist Church of Lewisburg, Tennessee began celebrating its 100th Anniversary on January 1, 1989. In commemoration of this important milestone, a variety of events are planned for the coming year. The focal events will be June 21, 24, and 25. Homecoming Day, with Dr. Tom Madden as featured speaker, will be Sunday, June 25.

The members of First Baptist Church of Lewisburg are using this means to inform and invite all former members and interested persons. We need the addresses of all former members and non-resident members. Please send current addresses and all inquiries to: Centennial Committee, First Baptist Church, P. O. Box 1308, Lewisburg, Tennessee 37091. Telephone: (615) 359-4077.

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Relating to unbelievers

By Phil Jett, pastor; Englewood Church, Jackson

We are in the midst of a series of lessons dealing with how Christians face difficult questions. This lesson considers how a believer should relate to unbelievers. In the focal passages, one overriding question took priority for Paul as he related to unbelievers: How will what I say or do bring the unbelievers to become believers? Paul's greatest joy was to see unbelievers saved. This question must be readdressed by the church today.



JETT

Few Christians seem to care how their actions affect the non-Christian community. Churches often program without any real effort to reach unsaved people. This lesson gives some timely answers for concerned believers and churches who really do want their witness for Jesus to result in seeing people saved.

Paul used his freedom in Christ and his servanthood for the unbeliever for the sake of the Gospel.

Free servant (9:19-23)

If I were asked to write a description of a Christian leader, I could do no better than to turn to this passage. I see Paul saying that a Christian leader is someone whose number one priority is to gain "the more" (v. 19), meaning to see unbelievers converted. He says this is done when we understand that we

are free in Christ to be the servant of all.

What does this freedom include? It includes freedom from cultural background that would restrain an unhindered Gospel; freedom from personal ambition that bogs down the work of Christ in us; and freedom from the fear of failure.

Some never venture far for the cause of Christ for fear they might fail. The freedom to love everyone God loves and to make commitments necessary to show love for all people is also included in these verses.

The other side of this great Christian leader is equally important and just as difficult to carry out in the pilgrimage of faith. This is the concept of servanthood.

The very idea of anyone wanting to be a servant is almost unAmerican. It's a challenge to pride, to ego, and to the self-centeredness that so dominates our day.

Paul, however, with his goal of winning as many converts as possible, did not see any way but to be a servant of all. Might he have taken his cue from Jesus? Jesus was teaching His disciples how to be leaders when He said, "Whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave — just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve" (Matthew 20:27-28).

Discipline (9:24-27)

All of us discipline ourselves in some way or another. The difficult question

here is do we discipline ourselves for the sake of the Gospel? If anyone hopes ever to be an effective spiritual leader, the plan must include spiritual discipline.

In these verses, Paul used two analogies: the track meet and the boxing ring. We live in the "now" generation. We want instant everything. Spiritual growth cuts across this fad and, therefore, is not very acceptable. The training necessary to be a truly effective witness is very demanding and not well-received by the average churchgoer.

LIFE AND WORK LESSON SERIES

February 12 Lesson

Basic Passage: 1 Corinthians 9-10

Focal Passages: 1 Corinthians

9:19-27, 10:31-33

Our church uses Continuing Witness Training, which is a disciplined approach to soul-winning. The presentation is very good; however, the best part is to see the discipline many of our fine laypeople give in preparing for opportunities to share the Gospel.

I encourage every believer and every church not to beat the air (v. 26), but to have a disciplined plan of sharing one's faith that all might follow the pattern of the Master, who said, "I have come to seek and to save the lost."

Responsibility (10:30-33)

Our decision-making must always be in the context of glorifying God and drawing people to Him. We must never make it hard for anyone to trust the Lord. Likewise, we must never make it

hard for Christians within our churches to share their faith.

As we take a look at our strategy for living as a believer and a member of the body of Christ, we must ask ourselves if our decisions and activities are helping win the lost to Christ or turning them away (10:33).

Volunteers top goal

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Southern Baptists have accomplished one of their objectives in a strategy to help reach the world with the gospel — and they did so 12 years early.

One of the denomination's Bold Mission Thrust evangelism campaign goals, adopted more than a decade ago, called for the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board to send 10,000 volunteers overseas each year by the end of the century. In 1988, about 10,800 Southern Baptists worked as volunteers on foreign fields, board officials reported.

Volunteers working in 1988 were spending anywhere from several days to two years overseas. They participated in projects ranging from providing medical care and drilling wells to spreading the gospel door-to-door and speaking at evangelistic crusades. Nearly all of them came home reporting their lives had been changed through their experiences, board leaders said.

Volunteerism changes not only lives but whole churches, said Ron Boswell, director of the board's volunteers in missions department.

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of the Southern Baptist Convention

Hunger gifts increase; first time since 1985

NASHVILLE — Southern Baptists in 1988 reversed a downward trend in giving to the denomination's program of world hunger ministries, according to figures released by the Southern Baptist Foreign and Home Mission Boards. Southern Baptist contributions for domestic and foreign hunger last year reached \$9,009,764, representing an increase of about one percent over similar giving in 1987. It is also the third-largest amount ever given by Southern Baptists to hunger causes.

The figures do not reflect receipts for "general relief" at the Foreign Mission Board nor money given for hunger that was utilized in local Baptist churches, associations, and state conventions. In 1985, Southern Baptists gave a record \$11,830,146 to hunger causes. Giving dropped in 1986 to \$9,089,279 and then dipped in 1987 to \$8,931,339.

"The upswing in hunger contributions in the midst of declining giving across the convention signals that the hunger issue is a priority issue among Southern Baptists and that Southern Baptists have a growing confidence in the hunger ministries of our mission boards," said Robert Parham, associate director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, which coordinates education and action on hunger issues among Southern Baptists.

John Cheyne, director of the human needs department at the Foreign Mission Board, said the increase in giving from 1987 to 1988 is more significant than the figures show. The 1987 figure reflects a one-time \$1 million gift from one individual. Without that money, the decline from 1986 to 1987 would have been much greater, as would the increase from 1987 to 1988, he said.

Two church builders injured in central Texas tornado

DALLAS — Two construction workers at First Church, Troy, Texas, were injured slightly and the church's educational building was damaged when a tornado swept through central Texas Jan. 25.

Two days after construction was begun on a new sanctuary administrative wing at the church, the tornado overturned and blew the top out of a trailer parked at the building site where the superintendent of the building crew and one laborer were meeting. The two men were treated at a Temple, Texas, hospital and released the same day, said Mark Bumpas, the church's pastor.

"Our architect is concerned that the air pressure changes caused the roof to rise on the educational building," he said, noting bent awnings around the eaves of the building and disturbed acoustical ceiling tiles indicate that possibility. No

other churches were known to have sustained damage other than broken tree limbs. No other serious injuries and no fatalities were reported.

Church planting expert says lack of new churches hurts SBC

FORT WORTH, Texas — Southern Baptists are in the midst of a storm which could destroy their heritage, and it is not the theological/political controversy, an official from the convention's Home Mission Board told students and faculty at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary Jan. 24.

Charles Chaney, special assistant to board President Larry Lewis, said Southern Baptists are "in a tropical depression of declining and plateaued churches that can seriously destroy what Southern Baptists have been." Only 33 percent of Southern Baptist churches are growing, Chaney said, adding 16 percent are in decline and just more than 50 percent are "barely holding their own."

"And I personally don't believe it's related to the controversy," he said. "I think that's another storm. We've been in a growth crisis since 1955, and if we don't do something about it, this storm is going to engulf us."

Chaney made the remarks during a visit sponsored by Southwestern's Church Planting Fellowship. He challenged the students "to evangelize this whole nation" by "planting churches in every segment of American society."

BWA youth president experiences new freedom

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Growing up under white minority rule in Rhodesia, the country now known as Zimbabwe, Chamunorwa Chiromo viewed Christianity as a "channel of oppression." Today he sees it as a means to set people free. Chiromo, president of the Baptist World Alliance Youth Committee, spreads a message of freedom that transcends economic and political lines.

"In Christ I have found a freedom that encompasses and transcends political liberation," said Chiromo, a student at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. "Now I have a sense of freedom because of who I am in Christ. My own dignity and self worth are found in Christ."

Chiromo, a 33-year-old father of four, was elected president of the international organization for Baptist young people under age 35 at last summer's BWA Youth Congress in Glasgow, Scotland.

Pharmacist prescribes church starting to reach lost

BUFFALO, N.Y. — A pharmacist from Rome, Ga., has discovered that starting new churches is the best prescription for winning people to Christ in upstate New York. As a pharmacist, Allen Baldwin said he knew the prescriptions he gave people ultimately would not save them from death. But as a church planter, Baldwin dispenses eternal medicine.

Baldwin changed careers ten years ago after his wife took him to West Rome Church, where he became a believer in Jesus Christ.

Today, the 37-year-old Southern Baptist home missionary is a church-starter strategist in New York's Frontier Baptist Association. He makes half the salary he did as a pharmacist but claims he is twice as happy.

Good marriage needs nurture, couples told

By Terri Lackey

NEW ORLEANS — Sales have dropped. The money flow is dwindling. The air about the office is apathetic.

You're the boss. What do you do — ignore the situation or take action? Chances are if you do nothing, you won't be the boss much longer.

So what's the difference between letting your employees stretch and yawn and letting your marriage dawdle along at a boring pace?, a couple heading a conference at a Festival of Marriage in New Orleans asked.

"If your business gets dull, you spiff it up; if your home gets dull you spiff it up," said Margaret Hensley, a marriage and family enrichment leader from Northminster Church, Jackson, Miss.

BSSB sponsors doctrine conference

"The Doctrines Baptists Believe" will be the focus of the 1989 National Baptist Doctrine Conference to be held Feb. 20-22 at First Church, Charlotte, N.C.

The conference, sponsored by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's church training department, begins the afternoon of Feb. 20, and concludes Wednesday at 11:30 a.m.

Speakers include Roy Edgemon, director of church training department and author of the 1989 Baptist Doctrine Study textbook; Charles Fuller, pastor of First Church, Roanoke, Va.; Frank Pollard, pastor of First Church, Jackson, Miss.; Joe McKeever, pastor of First Church, Charlotte; and Bill Stephens and Art Criscoe of the board's church training department.

She should know. She and Clark Hensley, state family ministry program leader for the Mississippi Baptist Convention, have been married 42 years.

"Romance lifts life out of its ordinariness," she said. "So many routines mire us down with dullness. A dull, boring routine produces dull, boring people, and dull, boring people produce dull, boring marriages. When there is no romance, growth ceases."

The Hensleys listed several "romance killers" a couple should try to avoid.

"Rigid role patterns can kill a romance," Clark Hensley said.

"The macho image, perpetuated by television and movies, is a sick, sick image and very mentally unhealthy,"

Topics to be addressed include God's sovereignty, the Bible, the doctrine of the fall and sin, the doctrine of Christ, the doctrine of atonement, the doctrine of salvation, doctrines of heaven, hell, and judgment, and the doctrine of the second coming.

The conference is planned to provide educational enrichment about key doctrines and to help pastors and church leaders prepare to conduct Baptist doctrine studies in their churches, according to Steve Williams, conference coordinator.

No advance registration is required. For more information, contact Williams at the Sunday School Board, Church Training Department, 127 Ninth Ave., North, Nashville, Tenn. 37234.

said Hensley, who noted he has no problem with cooking supper occasionally if his wife will mow the yard.

Bad communication can kill a romance. Margaret Hensley said.

"Have you ever been talking to your mate, and you look over and notice he isn't listening?" she asked. "You just see this glazed look in his eyes."

"When we are saying something from our inner being, we want to be heard and understood," she added.

Not managing anger in a mature way and withholding expression of needs are other romance killers, Clark

Hensley said.

A couple can nurture romance with a good sense of humor, frequent touching, offering compliments, and gift giving, he said.

"A sense of humor is one of God's greatest gifts, and we should use it to the advantage of our marriage," said Margaret Hensley.

The festival was sponsored by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's family ministry department, the Mississippi and Louisiana Baptist Conventions and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Nigerian missionary calls for more blacks to serve on foreign mission fields

FORT WORTH (BP) — More black Southern Baptists should be foreign missionaries, David Cornelius, a Southern Baptist foreign missionary to Nigeria, told participants at the annual Texas Baptist Black Pastors'/Wives' Banquet here.

"My desire is to see more people of color appointed by the Foreign Mission Board," Cornelius said during a missions emphasis at the banquet, held in conjunction with the Texas Baptist Evangelism Conference in early January.

Cornelius noted that he and his wife, Elwanda, are two of only five blacks currently serving as missionaries appointed by the Foreign Mission Board.

"I don't feel that it is representative of our part in this great convention," he said. "Surely God has called more of us to foreign missions than have responded."

At a recent international missions conference, Cornelius said, he was asked two questions by fellow participants: "Are there not very many black Christians in the United States?" and "Why don't they come to us?"

He urged the black ministers to recognize their dual responsibility to educate church members about missions and personally to be sensitive to God's call to foreign missions.

In the keynote address, Leroy Gaines, associate professor of religious education at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif., pointed to the healing of the paralytic in Mark 2:1-12 as a case study in "learning how to pull together." He called on individual churches and people within those churches, as well as the Christian church as a whole, to learn the lesson of cooperation.