

# Baptist and Reflector

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STATEWIDE EDITION

NEWSJOURNAL OF THE TENNESSEE BAPTIST CONVENTION

## Tennessee Baptists continue Hugo relief efforts

By Ben Bagwell

MACEDONIA, S.C. — Less than 24 hours after Hurricane Hugo rained terror on the Carolinas, residents of rural Macedonia, S.C., had disaster relief on the way from the Tennessee Baptist Convention's disaster relief program.

"Someone has to help them with basic needs," said Cameron Byler, director of the Tennessee Baptist Brotherhood Department.

"People are in such shock. They have lost everything they have," added Byler, a veteran worker at 31 previous

disasters.

Within six days after Hugo struck the Macedonia community, which is 40 miles inland from Charleston's oceanfront, the Tennessee Baptist contingent of 11 men and nearly 100 community volunteers had fed 11,455 warm meals to hungry people from seven remote communities.

The number of meals had increased to 37,550 through Oct. 1, according to Curtis Fowler, a layman from West Lonsdale Church, Knoxville.

Fowler said a disaster relief team from Alabama assisted with 6000 meals Sept. 27-29. Last weekend (Sept. 30-Oct. 1), 13,200 meals were prepared with the assistance of cafeteria workers from a local high school.

The cafeteria crew also were feeding breakfast and dinner to about 400 Marines who were sent to work in the community.

### Power of God

"We've seen the power of God, and now we're seeing His grace and mercy right behind it," deacon Dave Tracey of Macedonia said as Southern Baptist disaster relief volunteers scurried about him attending to the aftermath of Hurricane Hugo.

The demonstration of God's power came in the hurricane itself, which swept across the South Carolina coast and then moved inland to wreak havoc on rural communities such as Macedonia, he added.

The demonstration of God's mercy has come through the efforts of Southern Baptist volunteers from Tennessee who have worked nearly around the clock at Providence Church in Macedonia.

The Tennesseans were among Southern Baptists from 11 states who manned 13 disaster relief units in the aftermath of the hurricane.

Although Providence Church was one of the smallest churches hosting disaster relief efforts, it had the largest sustained effort of any church in the state. The 17 Tennessee volunteers and dozens of local workers converted the church's modest facilities into a bustling relief center.

The fellowship hall became a warehouse for boxes of food brought in by the American Red Cross and other donors. The kitchen and two porches were used for cooking massive quantities of food.

A funeral home canopy and a small revival tent provided refuge from the heat and rain for people who came to eat. And the Sunday School rooms became distribution points for baby supplies, medical attention, and building materials.

Because the Tennessee group brought several large power



**LONG LINES** — Tennessee Baptist disaster relief volunteers serve food at Providence Church in Macedonia, near Moncks Corner, approximately 40 miles from Charleston. The area was devastated by Hurricane Hugo. Relief volunteers are still on the scene providing hot meals to residents of the community.  
— Photo by Ben Bagwell

### Relief help needed

Tennessee Baptists are involved heavily in disaster relief for victims of Hurricane Hugo which recently devastated almost a third of the state of South Carolina.

Many volunteers and much food and other supplies have helped relieve the situation from the day the hurricane struck. Those who wish to volunteer for work projects, food assistance, etc., should call 1-800-Disaster-Relief Department director Cameron Byler, who is on the scene at (803) 565-3945 or 565-3295. Money should be sent to the Tennessee Baptist Convention at P. O. Box 728, Brentwood, 37024; or the South Carolina Baptist Convention, Disaster Relief Unit, 907 Richland St., Columbia, S. C. 29201; telephone (803) 765-0030.

All supplies and all funds will go directly to disaster relief in South Carolina. Money should be earmarked "Disaster Relief, South Carolina."



**WHAT'S THIS?** — Libby Williams invites history buffs and other curious Tennessee Baptists to turn to page 3 for explanation of her display. She presided over a bicentennial "showcase" at First Church, Sevierville, Sept. 24. — Photo by Wm. Fletcher Allen

generators with them, the church was the only place in town with electricity. With that power, the church hosted the local fire department and several ill children who needed electricity to operate life-support systems. One generator was placed on the church's water well to provide the only clean drinking water in town.

### Word spreads

A deacon from Providence Church drove the church van around back roads for miles and miles, using a loud speaker to inform people that free warm meals were offered at church, where the Tennesseans had established their headquarters.

Six days after the post-midnight storm hit Macedonia, the community was still without water and electrical power. Fifty families were completely without homes due to the destruction. The hungry, the homeless, the bewildered, the terrorized... they came for the warm meals being distributed from 11 a.m. until 9 p.m. daily. "We will be here as long as they need us," said Jack Valentine of Knoxville.

Since then, more than 40 additional homes have been found in the community which were destroyed. "We're finding more and more people without food and electricity," Fowler told the Baptist and Reflector on Oct. 2.

Fowler noted numerous mobile homes were destroyed. Fowler, who has participated in a number of relief efforts including Jamaica which received considerable damage last year from Hurricane Gilbert, said "this is the worst one I've seen."

He added, "In my opinion, the Macedonia area was hit harder than Charleston and Myrtle Beach.

"People's life accumulations have been wiped out."

As of Oct. 2, electricity was in the process of being restored, but many of the community's residents still did not

have power.

Power has been restored at the church and generators are being used in some areas, Fowler said. He added that a large generator is desperately needed.

He noted there was a six-month-old baby in the community at a nearby hospital. The baby recently had open heart surgery and the hospital wants to release the child, but cannot do so until the baby's home has electricity and hot water. The baby must be connected to

(See page 7)

### Missions director search continues

The Missions Director Search Committee, Tennessee Baptist Convention, met last week in the Baptist Center, Brentwood.

The committee reviewed resumes already received and established a search procedure.

Chairman James McCluskey, pastor of Wallace Memorial Church, Knoxville, reported from the meeting that written recommendations from Tennessee Baptists, will be accepted until Oct. 12, along with resumes.

Resumes and recommendations should be sent to the Executive Director/Treasurer D. L. Lowrie, Tennessee Baptist Center, P. O. Box 728, Brentwood 37024.

Other members of the search committee include Ray Fowler, pastor of Highland Heights Church, Memphis; Doug Baker, pastor of Parrans Chapel Church, Bolivar; David Crocker, pastor of Central Church, Johnson City; Fred Pinkard, Cleveland layman; Lon Shoopman Jr., pastor of First Church, Madisonville; and Hershel Chevallier, pastor of Cumberland Church, Knoxville.

SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES  
Nashville, Tennessee

## Editorials

# Following the news, making right choices

Baptists are among the most prolific newsmakers in the world. We are constantly acting and reacting, working, to take the message of salvation through Jesus the Christ around the world.

We begin in our own Jerusalem — else we cannot serve Him effectively in other places. Jerusalem it is then, and on to Samaria, Judea, and to the very outposts on the fringe of this firmament.

Earth is our field of harvest — and beyond when there is knowledge of intelligent beings and the wherewithal to get us there. It is said that the Christian motive, deep in the heart, to tell Christ's love to others, is a magnificent obsession.

Lest we soar past our goals in imagination and visionizing, we must remain rooted to the necessity of plans and goals. And while we plan, we remember that the world moves on, not waiting for the witness in its frenetic pace. Millions of empty people search, and we can provide the answer to what they seek.

Sometimes our planning for methods, strategy, and goals can benefit from information gained from unlikely sources. To help us make news and attain results in the name of our Lord, we must stay alert to all available, appropriate data. Sifting is the next vital step. We learn what to do, what to omit.

News and data worthy of processing and sifting:

- The Baptist World Congress meets in Seoul, South Korea, next summer. Dates for the 16th congress are August 14-19. The program includes Billy Graham, Southern Baptist evangelist with worldwide recognition; Joel Gregory, Texas pastor; Billy Kim and Stephen No, Korean Baptist leaders; Noel Vose and Denton Lotz, BWA officers; and speakers from

Argentina, Jamaica, USSR, Nigeria, India, and elsewhere.

Comment: It is not too early to plan to attend this congress of Baptists. In a land with a 5000-years-old culture, over 35 million Baptist believers from more than 140 unions will be represented at the congress. The Baptist World Alliance meets every five years, meeting last in Los Angeles in 1985. Tennessee Baptists can share in this wonder of fellowship, inspiration, study, and worship.

- October is observed by Southern Baptists as Cooperative Program month.

Comment: Never was a time more appropriate for an awareness of the CP — and how it undergirds Baptist life. Observing CP Month means we join with thousands of churches in evaluating our partnership with Christ in His purpose to share the Gospel to everyone.

Overall strength of the Cooperative Program has eroded in recent years. Some say internal conflict has weakened our attitudes for cooperation. Some lay the blame to economic stress in several state conventions. The real culprit is that thousands and thousands of Southern Baptists do not know the CP, nor understand that it is the lifeline to all we do cooperatively. When giving through the CP slacks, the SBC suffers, no matter the reason.

- Hard-core pornography enslaves a large percentage of Americans with devastating results.

Comment: This is not a trivia statistic. It is not idle chatter to be ignored. The first of many public meetings about the pornography epidemic in Nashville was held last week. A few other Tennessee cities have fought successfully for strict enforcement of current anti-pornography law. Nashville is revving up. Through the Nashville Coalition Against Por-

nography and similar organizations, a coalition of Nashville Christian groups, including Tennessee Baptists, intends to articulate strongly the evils of pornography. NCAP is planning a January blitz. Be prepared.

- A panel of scholars gathered in Nashville last week and declared some peculiar, perhaps far-fetched ideas about Jesus Christ. The panel centered on questions raised by the movie "The Last Temptation of Christ," which was shown for several days on the Vanderbilt University campus as part of a seminar.

Comment: It was asserted that the historical Jesus "will always be an elusive figure who bears little or no resemblance to the Scriptures Christians use in worshipping Him." What does that mean to the Christian who has known the Savior firsthand since experiencing salvation? It was also said that perhaps only fifty "sayings" in the New Testament are actually Jesus' own words. One member suggested that Christ "flunked" the Fifth Commandment when He said, "Unless you hate your father and mother you are not ready for the kingdom of God." Rhetorically, it was asked, "Was He ready for the funny farm?"

There is no need to go much further here with this "news." John 3:16 and John 14:6 are sufficient when we are pushed to the wall of reckless doubt. Some scholars at times have a way of striking the fear of doubt, and striving to sound scholarly. Who doubts the fifty "sayings"? We will take the Biblical total.

What the world says and does cannot be ignored but Christian people must stay on course. The strategy is to "be all things to all men, so that by all means we may save some." — WFA

## Restore the Biblical role of laity, task force urged

By Mark Wingfield

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP) — Churches have "pooped pastors and passive pews" because they have distorted the roles of laity and clergy, a marketplace evangelism expert said.

Pete Hammond, director of marketplace evangelism for InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, spoke to a Southern Baptist task force studying evangelism in the workplace. The marketplace evangelism task force, which has met three times this year at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, is coor-

### Ministers' wives set TBC meeting

The annual luncheon meeting for the Ministers' Wives Fellowship, auxiliary to the Tennessee Baptist Pastors' Conference, will include a riverboat cruise on Knoxville's "Robert E. Lee."

The Nov. 15 event will be held in conjunction with the Tennessee Baptist Convention sessions, Nov. 14-16, at Central Church, Bearden, Knoxville.

According to Fellowship president Lib McCluskey, the program will feature ideas and inspiration for ministers' wives, including lunch and the Tennessee River cruise.

Buses will be provided from Central Church to the cruise departure site. Call McCluskey at (615) 689-2306 for reservation information.

Theme for the meeting is "That Personal Touch."

minated by the lay evangelism department of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

Because of this clergy-laity distortion, "pastors are now addicted to power and congregations are addicted to passivity," he explained. "That's why we have pooped pastors and passive pews."

Hammond called on pastors to "close the gap between the world of the Bible and the world of real people," noting that the Bible is a book about lay ministers rather than about professional clergy.

"We have successfully convinced the pew sitters that 90 percent of the people in the Bible work for the Home Mission Board or the Foreign Mission Board as full-time, paid religious professionals," Hammond said. "That is a lie."

Hammond said his own study of Bible characters revealed that:

- 75 percent of the major characters of the Bible never held a religious job. Most held common jobs in areas such as construction, agriculture, and household service.

- 25 percent had criminal records.

- 25 percent were aliens, immigrants, and refugees.

"Do the people in our pews find themselves in the Bible because of our preaching?" Hammond asked pastors in the group. "Our people need this connection. God wants to display his power through nobodies, but we have

tricked the kingdom into believing God wants to work only through somebodies."

Hammond urged pastors to rediscover the Bible as a book full of working people. "We need to knock the Bible saints off their pedestals and put them in work clothes our people can identify with," he said.

Darrell Robinson, new vice president of the HMB's evangelism section, echoed this thought. "Baptists at one time realized there was no distinction between clergy and laity. We've short-

circuited that in recent times."

The pastor's role is to understand Scripture and lead the congregation to interpret it in light of their marketplaces, Hammond said.

As an example of how to accomplish this, Hammond said he will not preach in any church now without allowing for a response by a lay person immediately after his message. Hammond and Robinson said a better understanding of the role of laity in ministry would change the church's evangelism practices.

## Baptist and Reflector

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# 'Forks of the River Church' celebrates 200th Sevierville congregation pays tribute to heritage



**PRESENTATIONS** — D. L. Lowrie, executive director, Tennessee Baptist Convention, right, presents an historical plaque denoting the church's 200th anniversary, to Pastor Joe Wren, center. Harold Ownby, left, waits to present Lowrie with a copy of his history of the church, "Forks of Little Pigeon River Church."



**BUILDING COMMITTEE** — Members of the building committee, First Church, Sevierville, from left, with new Family Life Education Building cornerstone: Charles Ownby, Glenda Johnson, Richard Wallace, Clara Carroll, Chairman David Goode, Dottie Simpson, and James Temple Jr.



**HISTORICAL AND OLD** — Original minutes of the first records of what is now First Church, Sevierville, are dated Sept. 29, 1789. The book is encased in glass in the church's new library.

First Church, Sevierville, has one of those rare histories — a long one. Founded in 1789 as Forks of the River Baptist Church, its life is older than the city which built up around the meeting house.

The congregation and many friends celebrated that 200th anniversary Sunday, Sept. 24, just five days short of the date inscribed on the first minutes of a fledgling group of Baptists.

Along with the bicentennial celebration, the church observed homecoming and dedicated a new family/life education building. Joe Wren has been pastor since 1982.

D. L. Lowrie, executive director of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, preached the morning's message, "The Future of Your Church and You." Everyone was given a picnic basket of food for lunch "on the grounds." During open house in the

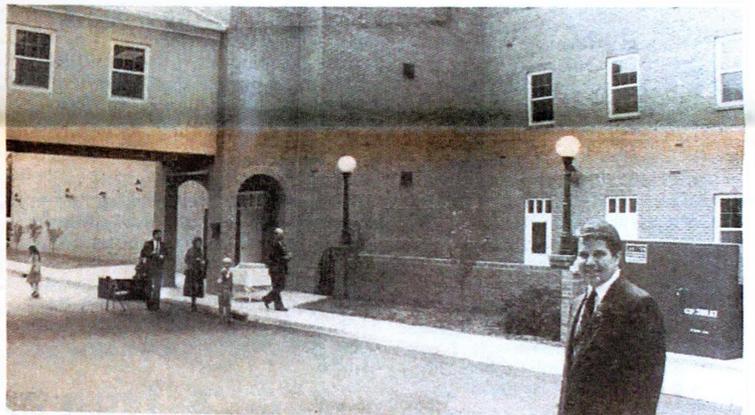
afternoon, the new building was open, and special attention was given to the historical records in the library.

The church's first minutes were on display along with other memorabilia from other decades of history. A video about the church's history, written and produced by Harold Ownby, was shown during the day.

Ownby also wrote a church history and a pageant which was presented on Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday evenings.

First Church, Sevierville, has survived several fires and other potential interruptions. Church membership declined during Civil War days, and disbanded in about 1861 for several years. It was re-established in 1876. The church has had several buildings through the years, and 33 pastors. — *Story and photos by Wm. Fletcher Allen*

**SURVEYING ADDITION** — Pastor Joe Wren is proud of the new family life and education building which was dedicated Sept. 24.



## Daniel Vestal announces candidacy for SBC presidency

ATLANTA (BP) — Daniel Vestal, an unsuccessful candidate for president of the Southern Baptist Convention last June, announced to his Atlanta church on Sept. 24 he is willing to be nominated for the SBC presidency when the convention meets at New Orleans June 12-14, 1990.

Vestal made the announcement at Dunwoody Church during a Sunday night sermon in which he called for Christians to become servant leaders.

He acknowledged it is unprecedented for any candidate for the SBC presidency to announce publicly his willingness to be nominated in September, pointing out this is usually done in the spring.

"But frankly, we are not living in normal times," he said. "We are living in times of crises and controversy in the SBC."

At the Southern Baptist Convention in Las Vegas last June, Jerry Vines, pastor of First Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Fla., was re-elected to a second term as SBC president, defeating Vestal 10,754 to 8248.

Vestal, who was pastor of First Church, Midland, Texas, before coming to the suburban Atlanta church in 1987, said he had decided to allow himself to be nominated after much prayer and soul-searching.

He said he is convinced "this is God's will for my life, and part of my service to him."

Vestal said he wants to be a peacemaker who brings reconciliation and renewal with integrity to divided forces in the nation's largest Protestant denomination.

Later in an interview, Vestal said Gregory's sermon at the convention in 1987 was "a prophetic word from God" which had made a profound impact on him personally. Gregory is pastor of Travis Avenue Church, Fort Worth, Texas, and current president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

Vestal said he would do as Gregory proposed in his sermon and extend his arms in openness to opposing denominational leaders in an effort to bring the divided convention together.

He declined to answer specific ques-

tions on his next steps in seeking to bring about reconciliation between leaders of factions within the SBC.

"That is something that should be done privately, secretly, and not discussed publicly in the press," he said. "But I will take steps in the future to do this."

Repeating a stance he took last year, Vestal said he was not the candidate of any faction or organization within the convention, but is taking the stand as a concerned individual.

He said "several" individuals had asked for permission to nominate him as president at the New Orleans convention, but he had not agreed to allow anyone to do so yet. "There is no rush on that; there is plenty of time."

He said he announced his plans in September so that he would be able to deal with issues confronting the convention with honesty and integrity as a recognized candidate.

"I am announcing this decision in September because it is my desire to be open, honest, and transparent in all that I do. I do not want to be coy or

cunning. I do not want to pretend I won't be a candidate when I will be."

Vestal specifically asked for the support of theological conservatives in the denomination, as well as "those who feel they have been offended and wronged by the present theological-political movement that now controls the convention." He asked those on both sides of the controversy to "join hands with me in putting an end to this division in the denomination."

Opposing the constant use of labels to describe factions in the denomination, Vestal said he is not a "moderate" or a "fundamentalist."

In coining his own phrase, Vestal described himself as a "denominational conservative" who is conservative in theology but loyal to the denomination and its institutions.

Vestal said he believes in the literal interpretation of the Bible, and believes there should be theological parameters in Baptist institutions. "But I also treasure those institutions and believe they should be handled with care. . . ."

# Our Readers Write

## Supports CP

I feel sick and sad that our state convention last year backed away from Bold Mission Thrust by having a preferred item in the budget of almost a million dollars. That meant about \$370,000 less to national and world causes. Then this year our Executive Board is going to back off of a previously announced increase of one fourth of a percent or \$60,000. We are sure going backward!

We have so many churches here in Tennessee to preach the Gospel and relatively so few in the dark places of earth and yet we keep spending a larger percentage on ourselves and less on our world. The percentage is what we must go by, not dollar amounts.

It is a poor pattern to our churches when the state convention urges increases for the local church and decreases its own participation. It is hard to take when you have led the local church to deny itself and increase mission support, and then have the state to violate that trust and sacrifice.

Clay J. Frazier  
Alpha Church  
245 St. John Rd.  
Morristown 37814

## Tithing principle

I would like to ask a question about Charles Fuller's article, Biblical tithing principle would solve crunch. Rev. Fuller states the wonderful potential we Southern Baptists would have if all 14 million were tithers. I agree that this would be a wonderful experience and could be a reality. However, I want to question his and our use of the statistic, 14 million Southern Baptists.

I have read articles and heard ministers relate in their messages the following statistics: out of 14 million Southern Baptists, seven million cannot be found or even attend church services, 3.5 million are nominal members (a better name would be inactive), 3.5 million are active members (this includes those attending sporadically).

If this is true, it hardly seems right to speculate on 14 million tithers. It appears to be condemning and negative to those two million who are faithful tithers. We ought to thank our Lord for their faithfulness.

I am frustrated with statistics that bear no semblance to reality. I read articles in associational papers, church bulletins, and denominational material exploiting tremendous growth and listing large numbers as evidence of such growth.

What about professional or at least Christian ethics? Should a church count people who never attend? Should we sign up people for Sunday School or church

membership merely to "look good" to others?

Maybe we should look at our methods of record keeping. Numbers on paper look great until they are compared to attendance, giving, and witnessing.

I would welcome insight or comments on this subject. I want to be all Christ wants me to be.

Terry Stewart  
Greenhills Church  
300 Powell Rd.  
Collierville 38017

## Seeking repentance

Issues surface in our convention often. Issues will be confronted, congested, and continue to no end. The issue in our convention centers in whether we desire legalism or love.

The legalistic voice has been thundered these many years. This voice has brought cutting shocks to many fine individuals, produced winds of turbulence, and left stormy results in our churches. It has hurt many fine leaders, hindered our progress in reaching the unchurched, and hammered wedges between laity and leaders alike.

It is time we let God do away with legalism and replace it with His love.

Legalism leaves doubt in the mind, disunity in the spirit, and distrust in the heart. The love of God puts truth in the mind, compassion in the spirit, and trust in the heart. Legalism is the graft of men. The love of God is the Gospel of God. One is the prejudice of men; the other is the power of God.

It is time that leaders and laity alike let the power of God come again.

As long as we let our legalistic ideas control, good men will still be hurt, good churches will still be hindered, and our great convention will still be handicapped.

It is time that we repent of our Pharisaism that has paralyzed our convention, and let the power of God fall in our hearts.

This Bible-believing Southern Baptist pastor and preacher will still carry the sword of the Spirit in his heart, but I will abide under the banner of His love. SELAH.

Ray W. Fullilove  
Poplar Avenue Church  
3295 Poplar Avenue  
Memphis 38111

## Berlin homecoming

Berlin Baptist Church, an English-speaking congregation in West Berlin, Germany, will celebrate its 25th anniversary March 4, 1990. All friends and former members of the congregation are invited to share in the festivities.

Send us your memories and greetings

## Funnyside up

Balancing your budget gets worse each year. These days you just can't reconcile your net income with your gross habits.

\*\*\*

The pastor was outlining the service to the organist. "And when I get through with my sermon, I'll ask those of the congregation who want to contribute to the mortgage to stand up. At this time, you play the appropriate music."

"What do you mean, 'appropriate music?'" asked the organist.

"The 'Star Spangled Banner,' of course," the pastor replied.

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Tal D. Bonham, *The Treasury of Clean Jokes* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1981). All rights reserved. Used by permission.

in letters or pictures or videos. We would be pleased to have you attend! We will do all we can to accommodate any able to travel to Berlin.

God has blessed us over the years, and you would be enriched to see the changes and growth in our congregation. Contact Neil Thompson at the address below.

Eleanor Witcher  
Berlin Baptist Church  
13a Rothenburgstr.  
1000 Berlin 41  
West Germany

## Abortion denounced

I wholeheartedly agree with Ben Mitchell's letter (Sept. 13, Baptist and Reflector) concerning the need of every Southern Baptist in Tennessee to boldly take a stand in denouncing the holocaust of abortion.

In the sight of the Lord God, who is the Great Creator and Sustainer of every life, abortion is murder. Abortion is the shedding of innocent blood, and the Lord God tells each of us that He hates "the hands that shed innocent blood" Proverbs 6:16-17.

Therefore every person who stands back and says "I did not know about it" and refuses to get involved in the protecting of all unborn babies will certainly have to give "full account" to the Lord God much sooner than they may realize. Every baby deserves the right to live and become a special child of God's for His glory.

Mrs. Meredith A. Alred  
Rt. 3, Box 258C  
Rockwood 37854

## Pastor for New Hampshire

Mountain View Church, Lancaster, N.H., needs a bivocational pastor or a pastor who has an income.

Mountain View Church was begun in 1983 and has acquired five acres with a small building. Our church draws its 24 resident members from the towns of Lancaster, Whitefield, and Groveton in northern New Hampshire. We minister to a population of approximately 5000. Job possibilities are limited since there is little industry in the area.

Send resume and preaching tape.

Ron Holden, chairman  
Pastor Selection Committee  
Mountain View Baptist Church  
P. O. Box 530  
Lancaster, N.H. 03582

## Supporting Scripture

The people that say, "I have been called by God to preach," do not give one Scripture to support their thoughts and imaginations when they write to the Baptist and Reflector. "For many are called but few are chosen," Matthew 22:14, John 15:15-20.

They say we need to be Baptist, and women to be ordained deacons and preachers. Where is all this coming from? "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death," Proverbs 14:12 and 16:25.

The true Baptists believed the Word of God and know the Holy Spirit is the writer of God's Word, and He wrote through holy men that were on speaking terms with Him.

Thomas E. Gwynn  
114 Ragan St.  
Tullahoma 37388

## Scripture on women

I'm responding to Rev. G. E. Snell's letter (Baptist and Reflector, Sept. 20) concerning women preachers.

I have not found any Scripture forbidding women to preach - including the three references in the letter (1 Corinthians 14:34, Philippians 1:1, and 1 Timothy 2:11 and 12), unless that Scripture is lited out of context.

First Corinthians 14:34 says for the women to keep silent in the church - not merely the sanctuary. If a woman should not speak in the church, neither should she teach a Sunday School class or even sing in the choir. Yet, many classes have women teachers. We remember - Paul was in Corinth at this time.

Philippians 1:1 speaks of all God's people. What does Galatians 3:28 mean when it says there is no difference between men and women?

First Timothy 3:1 is speaking of a man seeking the office as pastor. Were women seeking the office?

How does the preacher interpret Miriam being a prophetess in Exodus 15:20? There are other examples:

Isaiah's wife - Isaiah 8:3? Deborah - Judges 4:4? Huldah - 2 Kings 22:14? 2 Chronicles 34:22? Noadiah - Nehemiah 6:14? Priscilla - Romans 16:3? Acts 18:26? Philip's four daughters - Acts 21:9?

"Your sons and daughters shall prophesy" Acts 2:17?

Mary M. Cannon  
#F1, Village Square Condos  
Bristol 37620

**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.**

## Preaching, teaching

Rev. G. E. Snell selected verses from the Bible to prove his point that women are forbidden to preach (Baptist and Reflector, Sept. 20).

One of those verses is 1 Corinthians 14:34. "Let your women keep silence in the churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak."

My question is: Why would this silence mean preaching only? Women teach, pray, sing. A thousand other ways are not silence.

My opinion is that this silence has to do with the tongue issue, which is what the rest of the chapter is about.

There should be some correlation between the verse you select and its real meaning.

I have pastored churches for 40 years. I would hate to think that during that time the women I've known were forbidden to speak.

Joseph H. Scalp  
Apt. 23, Chowan Garden  
Edenton, N.C. 27932

## Bavaria calling

East Bavaria Southern Baptist Church in Grafenwoehr, West Germany, 70 miles Northeast of Nurnberg, is seeking a volunteer retired pastor or chaplain to pastor a growing English language congregation ministering to military personnel.

There is great potential with 8000 new troops and families scheduled for arrival in 1990. Comfortably furnished three bedroom parsonage is provided, also utilities, car, and expenses, plus stipend. If interested, send resume to contact person, Doyle Lumpkin, Box R 12, APO NY 09114.

Doyle L. Lumpkin  
Box R 12  
APO NY 09114

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# SWBTS trustees consider executive session — on Dilday

By Dan Martin

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — Trustees of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary will be asked to go into executive session Oct. 17 to discuss the "whole problem of political activity" by President Russell Dilday.

The request for an executive session was introduced in an 85-page memorandum mailed to trustees in late September by Chairman Ken Lilly, a physician from Fort Smith, Ark. Lilly told Baptist Press "a number of the trustees are going to ask" for the closed-door meeting. "They, themselves, will decide whether they want an executive session," he added.

Lilly said he "really wanted a special meeting because this is not the kind of thing which should be discussed in an annual or semi-annual meeting."

Dilday met with the three trustees' officers — Lilly, Damon Shook, a pastor from Houston, and John McNaughton, a businessman from Fort Worth, Texas — in mid-August to discuss the possibility of a special called meeting to discuss Dilday's "political activities," particularly a May 2 speech before a moderate political group and an article he wrote prior to the 1989 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Lilly said "some of the guys (trustees) wrote me letters" complaining about Dilday's appearance at a rally of Baptists Committed to the Southern Baptist Convention May 2 in Nashville, which brought about the mid-August meeting.

"I tried to be as nice about it as I can," Lilly said. "I went to Russell (Dilday) to try to solve some of the problems. I think they could be a lot less if they were handled in a quiet way rather than in the press, but Russell's attitude is that if you get it all in the press, it will make a big difference.

"Well, it's not going to change anything; the guys still want to talk to him about all of this."

All participants in the Aug. 15 meeting agreed not to talk to the news media about the meeting. In his memo, Lilly wrote: "You will note the usual activity of the president to 'try the case' in the liberal media even before we have time to act on it. This seems to happen every time we try to solve problems quietly."

Lilly added he has "no malice in my heart, no axe to grind. I want to believe we can meet with the president (Dilday) and come to an understanding. I want for the trustees and the president to meet together."

Lilly's memo to trustees, he said, is a reaction to a mailing Dilday sent out which included a manuscript of the May 2 speech on denominational unity and the May president's column in *Southwestern News*, the seminary's newsletter.

In the memo, Lilly thanked Dilday for "sending us part of the information we may need. . . . I am sending you more information which may be helpful."

The memo includes minutes from the Aug. 15 meeting; a copy of the statement issued to the media about the meeting; both the manuscript and a transcript of the May 2 speech; nine pages of quotes from Dilday, ranging to 1984 and citing 55 entries from newspapers, magazines and newsletters; 56 photocopied news articles; and programs of the Baptists Committed meeting.

The cover letter notes trustees "will want to hear his (Dilday's) fascinating explanation as to how his political speech was not political."

Dilday said he opposes the call for an executive session. "When I came 11 years ago, all of the meetings of the trustees were closed. I insisted they be open to anyone wanting to attend, and an executive session should only be called in matters where it might embarrass the person about whom we were talking," he said.

"Executive sessions should never be

a way of avoiding public awareness of what the board was doing or to keep the press, faculty, staff or interested constituents from being informed about what is happening.

"I would not be embarrassed if this (political activities) is discussed. I hope the board will not vote to make it a closed session, because I think Baptists have every right to be fully informed about the work of their institutions." Neither Dilday nor Lilly would speculate about what the trustees will do.

"I don't even want to speculate on that," Lilly said. "I do know that trustees are going to insist on discussing with him what they feel are political activities on his part."

Dilday added: "I trust the integrity and genuineness of these board members. I cannot believe they will come in with their minds made up or

with a view of taking any strong action.

"I am a staunch conservative, and the only things I have spoken out against — even as I reflect on this (Lilly's mailing) — is that which was destructive, divisive, un-Christlike, contrary to the Gospel, and contrary to our Southern Baptist heritage."

He added he did not receive a copy of the memo from Lilly but received it "indirectly from one of the board members. I am sure that was an over-sight."

Dilday also noted he has been "reluctant to initiate any news or press on this, but I have always been open to answer questions and respond. After the meeting with the officers, we agreed we had no reason to share information with the press, but I had to respond because there was a lot of disinformation."

## Committee sets parameters for 'memorial'

NASHVILLE (BP) — A "memorial" sent from Virginia Baptists to the Southern Baptist Convention could be addressed next February in a meeting between Virginia Baptist leaders and members of the SBC Executive Committee.

However, the scope of the discussion has been limited to "matters related to the funding of cooperative ministries," by a Liaison Committee named to receive the "memorial." The committee, appointed by the Executive Committee, adopted a purpose statement, historical background and set of parameters during their initial meeting Sept. 18.

The Virginia memorial was sent to messengers at the 1989 SBC annual meeting, who referred the matter to the Executive Committee. The seven-member Liaison Committee was established by the Executive Committee last February to deal with such matters. Four Virginia representatives met briefly with the liaison committee

Sept. 18 to request a formal dialogue. The liaison committee has invited members of Virginia's Task Force on the Denominational Crisis to meet with them in Nashville Feb. 19, 1990.

"We're happy to receive their proposal and will give consideration to their proposal," said Reginald McDonough, executive director of the Baptist General Association of Virginia. "We are disappointed that their schedule would not permit a meeting prior to our general association meeting, but we look forward to meeting with them in February."

The Virginia memorial asks to open a continuing dialogue between the Baptist General Association of Virginia and the SBC. It raises five major issues for consideration: (1) continuing support of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, (2) allowing for "negative designation" of Cooperative Program funds, (3) the nature of SBC theological education, (4) allowing the Virginia Association to nominate its two representatives for the SBC Committee on Committees, and (5) developing a "new style of relating" between the state and national bodies.

Parameters set by the liaison committee will likely eliminate some of those issues from consideration. The parameters state that the committee may:

- Receive formal communications from Southern Baptist bodies when referred by the SBC Executive Committee;
- Engage in dialogue "only concerning matters which relate specifically to the joint efforts of Southern Baptist bodies in cooperative ministries;"
- Receive as information any instruments of communication from ad hoc Southern Baptist bodies or groups without obligation to respond;
- Not respond to charges or attacks against itself or against others, nor engage in questioning the actions and impugning the motives or character of any Southern Baptist.

The parameters were prepared in advance of the meeting by liaison committee chairman Julian Motley of Durham, N.C. The committee adopted the parameters without change.

Based upon those parameters, Motley also presented a purpose statement which the committee adopted.

Motley also presented a six-page document outlining a historical perspective of the committee's task.

## Pressler still candidate for ethics post

HOUSTON (BP) — The status of the possible nomination of Paul Pressler to head the federal Office of Government Ethics is unchanged, despite conflicting reports about the possible nomination by President Bush.

Reports have circulated the nomination has been dropped, but they have been countered by other rumors he still is in the running for the federal post.

Pressler told Baptist Press Sept. 29: "The status (of the nomination) is that I have not been offered the job, and I

have not decided to accept it if it is offered.

"The status has not changed but has become a little muddier with the reported leaks."

In late July, newspapers reported Pressler, a Houston appeals court judge and vice chairman of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, was being considered for the top government ethics post.

Other reports began to surface about a month later, saying Pressler was too controversial for the job because of the

## Local church neglected, says Leavell

DALLAS (BP) — Southern Baptists have spent too much time on what "the other guy believes" while turning their backs on the health and growth of the local church, according to Landrum P. Leavell II, president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Speaking to almost 5000 participants at the Texas Baptist State Sunday School Convention at Prestonwood Church in Dallas, Leavell said, that during the last ten years Southern Baptists have "neglected the body and the bride of Christ, . . . and I believe that has eternal consequences."

"If we spent the same time that we've spent in letter writing, in phone

calling, in attending caucuses to get somebody elected, or to get an appointment ourselves, we could have won thousands to our Savior," he said. "Brother, when you get that kind of swap out, you can't tell me that Jesus is pleased with it."

Leavell also called on pastors to take the responsibility for not providing adequate leadership for the more than 37,000 churches in the Southern Baptist Convention. Sixty-eight percent of Southern Baptist churches have either "plateaued or are declining," he said, adding "One out of every six did not baptize one person last year."

role he has played in the conservative resurgence in the SBC. The reports have been countered by White House comments that he still is being considered.

The FBI talked to a number of Southern Baptists, and reports were made concerning the controversial judge. However, the FBI declined to disclose the contents of its findings.

"The only way we will release information, outside of press releases on major stories, is when the subject is deceased or a privacy waiver has been obtained," said Chris Glenn of the FBI's freedom of information office.

Pressler told Baptist Press, "I have been disappointed with the obvious ugliness of those in the convention who have been engaged in rumor and innuendo."

Presidential personnel director Chase Untermeyer did not return calls from Baptist Press when the SBC news service called seeking a conclusive report on Pressler's status.

Likewise, the White House press secretary's office declined comment, referring calls to the office of the executive clerk of the White House. The clerk's staff members said no paperwork had been filed regarding the nomination of Pressler.

## Memphis couple stay in shape through Senior Olympics

By *Connie J. Umstead, news assistant*  
 Poplar Avenue Church, Memphis, has an Olympic medalist on staff — 79-year-old Minister of Music Ozy Blumberg.

Blumberg and his wife, Ann, have been competing in the Senior Olympics since its inception seven years ago.

They competed with approximately 400 other senior adults (55 and older) in the Tennessee competition in Chattanooga in August, where Blumberg won one gold medal in the 100 meter backstroke, four silver medals in other swimming events, and one bronze medal in discus and shotput. Ann won a gold medal in horseshoes and came in fourth in golf.

The Blumbergs were invited to participate in the National Senior Olympics in St. Louis this year, but were unable to attend. However, they did attend two years ago and Blumberg won two sixth place ribbons in swimming.

During the past seven years, he has also competed in the running broad jump, tennis, basketball throw, and

*In Philippines*

baseball throw, while his wife has competed in the basketball throw, shot put, and table tennis.

Between the two of them, the Blumbergs have won over 150 medals, weighing a total of 15 pounds.

Blumberg said they have a "goal of achievement" to participate in the Senior Olympics.

"Our incentive to participate is to keep in shape physically and mentally and to meet people from all over. There is great fellowship," he said.

He related an experience that occurred at the National Senior Olympics in St. Louis.

Blumberg attended a banquet where approximately 4000 people were present. He noticed the man sitting next to him spoke with a foreign accent. He discovered the man was Latvian and lived in Michigan. The man told Blumberg he was probably the only Latvian out of the 4000 people.

Blumberg then asked the man how he felt — in Latvian. His parents were



**SENIOR OLYMPIANS** — Ann and Ozy Blumberg have participated in the Senior Olympics for seven years. They have won more than 150 medals. Blumberg is minister of music at Poplar Avenue Church, Memphis.

Latvian and he speaks the language.

The two men struck up a friendship and still correspond.

Next year, Blumberg will enter the 80 and older category of Senior Olympics and still plans to compete. The

Blumbergs are both hoping to attend the national competition in Syracuse in 1991. In the meantime, they will keep practicing in their back yard and working out at the spa at Memphis State.

## Tennessee Baptist presence: An answer to prayer

By *Barry Wood*

At the Tennessee Baptist Convention in Jackson in November, 1988, I voted along with 1500 other Tennessee Baptists to embrace a partnership with the Philippine Baptist Convention. I had no idea that I would be one of 47 people who would comprise the first team to go to the Philippines from Tennessee.

I had the privilege of working ten days alongside Pastor Carlito Dadula, president of the Mindanao/Visayas Convention. When I first met Pastor Dadula, he made the statement that the "Tennessee/Philippine Partnership was the result of years of prayer on

the part of the people of the Philippines."

God was in this trip from the orientation in Brentwood, to the commissioning service in my church, to the 30-hour trip from Memphis to Manila and the orientation in Manila itself, to the actual work on the fields.

The Philippines Islands is a nation composed of 7100 islands with a total land area the size of Arizona. The population is 58 million, and there are two Baptist Conventions there: Luzon in the North, and Mindanao/Visayas in the South.

Tennessee Baptist fielded 19 teams

while on mission in the Philippines. The work ranged from evangelistic crusades, home Bible studies and door-to-door witnessing and revival services, to church-wide fellowships.

The Filipino people are among the most receptive people in the world. Predominantly Catholic in religious background, they have a hunger for the Gospel which exceeded anything I had ever experienced. Many Tennesseans were able to share the Gospel with people who were hearing it for the first time. When challenged to respond to the claims of Christ, many Filipinos were open in their willingness to receive Jesus. Altogether, we saw 651 people profess faith in Jesus Christ.

The Tennessee/Philippine Partnership group arrived in Manila July 27 for a stay of 15 days. Thirteen teams served in Mindanao, while six teams served in Luzon. Strengths of the trip included:

- Teams staying in the homes of the

Filipinos.

- Working alongside nationals in the churches.
- Witnessing the work of our foreign missionaries.
- Dramatic personal spiritual growth.
- Seeing the results of Cooperative Program monies.
- Experiencing the deep commitment of the Filipino Christians.
- The ability of the Gospel to transcend cultural barriers.
- Experiencing the insatiable desire of the Filipino people to hear the Gospel, become disciples, and to start new churches.
- Witnessing a hungering and thirsting for the Word of God.
- Being amazed at the ultimate use of limited material resources in a severely depressed economy. — Wood is pastor of East Ridge Church, Chattanooga

## TeamTalk

By *D. L. Lowrie*

The Fork of the River Church was organized while George Washington was president of the United States in 1789. This frontier church has

withstood many trials, moved a couple of times, and changed its name. But it is still proclaiming the Gospel of our Lord. Today it is called First Baptist Church of Sevierville.



**LOWRIE**

It was my joy to share in the celebration of the church's 200th anniversary. They know how to do it right. They have written special music, written a book, written and produced a special pageant, and built a new building. Under the capable leadership of Joe Wren they have let Sevier County know that they are grateful for the goodness of the Lord.

As I shared with them in celebration, I was impressed with two things. The adaptability required to minister for 200 years impressed me. You do not change your message, but you do change your methods. Their charter members would have been flabbergasted at their new family life

center, but it will be a useful tool for ministry in 1989. The church of our Lord must always be ready to change its methods while holding to the faith.

I also was impressed with their debt to bivocational ministers. Several of their early pastors supported the Gospel on the Lord's Day. They are the unsung heroes of our Baptist denomination. Most of our older churches have benefited from the dedication of such men.

Almost one third of our Tennessee Baptist churches are still served by bivocational pastors. They teach school, practice law, farm, drive trucks, and do varied kinds of work. Their evenings and weekends are given to the people of God. Where would we be without the sacrifice of these men?

If Tennessee Baptists are to penetrate our state fully, their tribe will have to increase. Many of the new churches that need to be started in Tennessee will never be able to afford a pastor. If you know someone involved in bivocational ministry, speak a word of encouragement to them.

To the Fork of the River Church, Happy Anniversary from all your younger sisters.



**CHURCH BURNS NOTE** — North Johnson City Church, Johnson City, celebrated Sept. 24 the building mortgage "burning," completing payments on its loan. In the last 18 months, the church experienced 21 percent increase in Sunday School attendance and 23 percent increase in enrollment. Cooperative Program giving has increased to 30 percent, with gifts to the Holston Association up to 23 percent. From left: Ray Bowman, minister of music; Hamilton Thomas, building committee chairman; Mike Livingston, deacons' chairman; Joe Phillips, treasurer when note was initiated; and Mike Madewell, pastor. The church was constituted in 1962 when the first unit was begun. — Photo by Wm. Fletcher Allen

# Tennessee Baptists continue Hugo relief . . .



**EXTREMES** — The amount of damage inflicted by Hurricane Hugo varied from location to location. The demolished mobile home, above, was only a few miles from the house, at left, which sustained minor damage. — Photos by Ben Bagwell

(Continued from page 1)

a heart monitor, Fowler said. Inquiries about the generator may be directed to the church at 615-565-3945, Fowler added.

**Water available**

By repairing the water pipes at the church's well, the relief team was able to distribute water with the warm meals. A generator brought by the relief unit made it possible to pump the water. Infant needs such as diapers and formula were also distributed. Most food was provided by the Red Cross, operating from a warehousing

operation established at the Baptist College at Charleston gym. Ice was also distributed by the relief team. The Southern Baptist Convention has a continuing agreement with the American Red Cross to secure food during disasters. The assignment of the Tennesseans to Macedonia was a joint decision by S. C. Baptist Convention leaders and the Red Cross, Byler said. Averaging less than five hours of sleep nightly, the relief team continued their ministry to the rural people. "You see hungry people and you can't

harden your heart," said Curt Fowler. "In 20 years of disaster work this is the most widespread regarding massive damage to power and utilities," said Byler. Tennesseans have responded over the years to Hurricane Gilbert in Jamaica, a tornado in Marion, Ind., and floods in Louisiana, Missouri, and Kentucky. **Pastor helps** Tennessee relief volunteers praised the work of Michael Caison, pastor of Providence Church.

Nashville, Lebanon, Humboldt, Smithville, Jamestown, and other areas within the state. Many of the volunteers took time off from their jobs without pay to help with the relief effort, Fowler observed. In addition to the out-of-state efforts, many people from local communities have been assisting in the efforts. "We have some wonderful volunteers here," Fowler said. Many churches throughout Tennessee have been gathering items to send for hurricane relief and some already have sent teams and supplies to the Charleston area.

Caison is a volunteer fireman and was involved in disaster assistance from the first gust of wind. As the storm moved in early Friday morning, Sept. 22, he began getting people out of their homes and taking them to shelter. At one point, the pastor had to abandon his vehicle and take refuge in the community shelter himself.

"When it got daylight, I just couldn't believe what I was seeing," Caison recounted. "It was total destruction."

The pastor immediately called Ben Connell, Brotherhood director for the South Carolina Baptist Convention, to request assistance. Within 24 hours, the Tennessee disaster relief unit — the first on the scene — had arrived and begun serving hot meals.

After watching the pastor's ministry in the community night and day after the storm, one Tennessee volunteer who is a veteran disaster worker described what he had seen. "He's not just a minister, he's a humanitarian. He preaches seven days a week by his service," said Jack Valentine from Knoxville.

Byler, who previously was disaster relief coordinator for the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission and has worked disasters for 21 years, agreed. "If it hadn't been for this pastor, I don't know what these people would have done," he said.

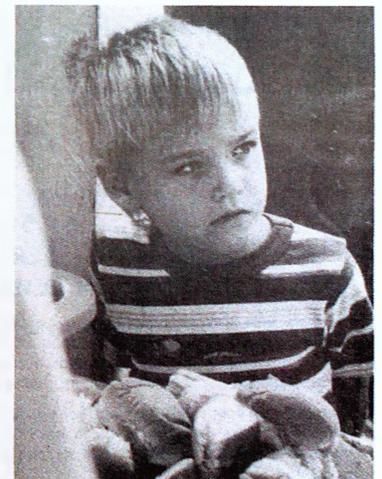
Though weary from the work, Caison said he is overwhelmed by the change the disaster relief efforts have brought about in his church. Individuals to whom he has told about Christ for years have been at the church working and plan to attend worship for the first time. Church members who seldom shared their faith are doing just that.

"Our people are just elated to be part of such a ministry," he said. "I hope our witness will be more credible in the eyes of people because they have felt love expressed," he said.

**Volunteers respond**

Fowler told the Baptist and Reflector numerous disaster relief volunteers had come to the area from Oak Ridge, Clinton, Jefferson City, Knoxville,

Volunteers and churches interested in helping are encouraged to coordinate their efforts through the Tennessee Baptist Brotherhood Department. Contact Cameron Byler at Providence Church (803) 565-3945 or 565-3295. — Bagwell, a veteran South Carolina journalist, is director of public relations at Baptist College at Charleston. Lonnie Wilkey, associate editor, and Mark Wingfield, Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, also contributed to this article.



**HUNGRY** — A youngster from the Macedonia community in South Carolina awaits food provided by Tennessee Baptist relief volunteers.

## One Word More

By Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor

Tennessee Baptists, like all Christians, are people gifted by the Holy Spirit of God. Given assignments, and are expected to be faithful to use those gifts in accomplishing the tasks assigned.

One of the great nuisances encountered on farms and gardens is weeds — unwanted grass, both healthy deterrents to good crop production.

Farms and gardens are much like houses, homes where we live. We have to work in order to keep the place at its best, with clean and beautiful appearance inside and out.

On the farm, the watchword is to destroy and eliminate any foreign entity that invades the farmland. I learned that from my father. He did not allow any itinerant weed take up its abode in a field where crops were growing.

He believed in keeping the ditch banks clear of brush. We were taught to keep the boundaries of the fields free of grass and weeds.

It is strange how weeds thrive on the same healthy rain-watered soil that produces fine crops. And stranger still, weeds and grass can remain stable in poor soil, rocky and unfertilized, dry, hard.

Many times my father would make a circuit around the fields with one or more of us boys — stop his pickup truck, and point to a single weed standing tall in the middle of a "good stand" of cotton, corn, wheat.

We knew what to do. Yank up the weed from the fertile soil with no care taken for the safety of the good plants? Never.

The proper method is to step firmly on the soil at the base of the weed stalk, pull firmly and gently. Get the root, my father had instructed, always get the root, and pull until you get it all.

We could do that without disturbing the cotton or corn. It amazed us at the vision our dad had for spotting those weeds. And when there was rain, we knew the weeds would flourish, hastily drinking up more than their share of the water, and growing much faster than the crops.

I am thinking about the parable of the wheat and tares told in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Christ's lesson there is that tares do grow among the wheat.

That kind of companionship cannot go on. It will destroy, or at least greatly debilitate the wheat. The Lord of the harvest, the landowner, is the one who determines harvest time — and the eternal worth of wheat and tare. The laborers must hear him say that "an enemy" puts the tares there.

And another application comes to mind. The tares perhaps can be compared to influences planted in our minds and hearts by The Evil One, thus affecting our witness and lifestyle.

Is it not true that tares, weeds, often find fertile soil in our hearts, where wheat should be flourishing? And is it not true that we sometimes fail to pluck them out? That kind of plucking is good farming, and does not endanger the crop.

Tennessee Baptists, like all Christians, are people gifted and we are given assignments. To succeed, we are disciples willing to give up the tares and let the wheat grow in our hearts. The Lord who is the sower calls us to participate in the harvest.



ALLEN

### Seminar cancelled

The "Communications and the Local Church" seminar, scheduled for Oct. 10 at the Baptist Center in Brentwood, has been cancelled. Contact the TBC public relations office (615) 371-2015 for additional information.

# Missionaries get Venezuelan visas after lengthy delay

RICHMOND (BP) — Venezuela granted work visas in mid-September to two Southern Baptist missionary couples after a wait of more than a year.

That opens the way for missionaries Calvin and Devra Morris of Atlanta to enter Venezuela. But it comes too late for Mike and Sondra McGinnis of Chattanooga who resigned in July to join an independent mission agency.

Bryan Brasington, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's director for Spanish South America, said he believes work visas will come through soon for missionaries Richard and Susan Hutchens of St. Louis, Mo., and Aiken, S.C., respectively, who applied along with the Morrises last year.

"A lot of people have prayed that the visas would come through," said Betty Law, associate director for the area. Venezuelan work visas, last approved for Southern Baptist missionaries in May 1988, have been difficult to obtain over the years.

Brasington requested cancellation of the McGinnises' visas. Board officials said he did so because the McGinnises have accepted a job with the Atlanta-based agency Ambassadors for Christ International and begun soliciting support funds as that organization requires.

The McGinnises began the visa application process before starting a year of language study in December 1987. They still had not received visas by

April of this year. The McGinnises declined to accept assignments the Foreign Mission Board offered in four other countries when hope for Venezuelan visas looked slim.

Another couple who had been on hold, Charles and Karen Oak, accepted an assignment in Spain, but the McGinnises said they "did not feel led of God to accept the options offered." The mission board rejected McGinnis'

request to work in Venezuela on tourist visas because Venezuelan lawyers indicated that approach is not legal in their country.

Brasington continued the McGinnises on salary through Sept. 30 for the normal two-month period following resignation, although they announced they would join Ambassadors for Christ International to conduct leader-

ship training seminars in Venezuela and possibly other South American countries. Normally, support ends after a resigned missionary finds another position.

McGinnis was out of the country and unavailable for comment on the latest developments. Mrs. McGinnis said she felt no further comment was necessary.

## Conference center attendance decreases slightly

Combined summer conference center attendance at Glorieta (N.M.) and Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist conference centers registered a slight decrease in 1989 from the previous year, according to statistics compiled at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

Combined attendance this summer at both conference centers was 53,165, compared to 54,371 in 1988, according to the board's conference center section, which compiles the statistics. Attendance at Ridgecrest was up by 302 over 1988, while Glorieta attendance was down by 1508.

Offerings given by summer conference participants, which are designated to the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program unified budget, totaled \$57,418.

Combined attendance at six Sunday School leadership conferences at

Glorieta and Ridgecrest was up by 240 from the previous year: 12,054 attended this summer, while 11,814 registered in 1988. A small-Sunday School leadership conference at Glorieta drew 1268, an increase from 1219 in 1988.

Centrifuge youth camp attendance at Glorieta and Ridgecrest totaled 11,157, a gain of 401 over 1988 attendance of 10,756. Centrifuge camps also were held at other locations during the summer.

Jericho missions festivals held for the first time this summer at Glorieta and Ridgecrest drew 3214 participants. Jericho, which will be offered again in 1990, is sponsored by the Southern Bap-

tist Home Mission Board, Foreign Mission Board, Sunday School Board, Brotherhood Commission and Woman's Missionary Union.

Bible preaching-administration attendance registered a gain of 263 — 2912 in 1989, compared to 2649 last year. Church (discipleship) training Summer Youth Celebration attendance at both conference centers increased by 173, from 3838 in 1988 to 4011 in 1989.

Registration at church music conferences was relatively unchanged — 5188 attended in 1989, and 5169 attended in 1988. Student conferences also attracted almost the same number of participants. — BP

## Barry Capps accepts Public Well pastorate

Barry Capps accepted the pastorate of Public Well Church, Martin.

A native of Greenfield, Capps was most recently youth director at Adam's Chapel, Dresden, where he was ordained in August.

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## Baptist Beliefs

By Herschel Hobbs

### Without Excuse

"They are without excuse." — Romans 1:20b

Paul wrote Romans while in Corinth, a city unparalleled in evil in the Roman empire. To describe one who had sunk to the lowest moral depths he was said "to Corinthianize."

So it seems that in Romans 1:19-32 Paul simply described the pagan life of that city. Man is without excuse before God because He gave him enough revelation in nature for man to acknowledge God (vv. 19-20). Man began by worshipping the true



HOBBS

God, but he degenerated to worship idols (vv. 21-23). Thus, he worshipped creatures, not the Creator (v. 24). This involved illicit sex (v. 24), including homosexuality (vv. 26-27). A "reprobate mind" is one incapable of discerning between right and wrong (v. 28). Note the terrible list of sins in verses 29-32.

Note also "God gave them up" (vv. 24, 26) and "God gave them over" (v. 28). These translate the same Greek words. A. T. Robertson says these are like clods of dirt falling on a coffin.

Yet, as terrible as these sins are, if one repents of them and believes in Christ, he can be saved by grace through faith in Jesus. If one does not do so, he is without excuse before God at the final judgment.

"Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to Thy cross I cling."

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## Churches ...

**Boyd's Creek Church**, Sevierville, will observe homecoming Oct. 8. Lunch will be served at 12:30. There will be an afternoon service at 1:45.

**George D. DeRousse**, pastor of First Church, Middleton, began the **Maranatha Radio Ministry** on WLRC radio station in Walnut, Miss., Sept. 3. The church also added another worship service on Sunday mornings. Services are held at 8:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

**Shelby Avenue Church**, Nashville, held its third annual **Neighborhood Give-Away** Sept. 16. More than 200 people came to the church to get clothes, household items, and furniture free of charge. Church members donate items throughout the year.

**Parkview Church**, Jackson, celebrated homecoming Oct. 1. The church recently completed building additions to house a new music and youth department and a new fellowship hall.

Members of **Tremont Church**, Chattanooga, will celebrate homecoming Oct. 8. Former pastor **Bill Stockton** will be guest speaker during the morning worship service.

Homecoming will be celebrated Oct. 8 at **Speedway Terrace Church**, Memphis.

The congregation of **Kensington Church**, Memphis, will celebrate the church's 32nd anniversary Oct. 8.

**First Church**, Covington, will celebrate its 150th anniversary Oct. 15. **Darrell W. Robinson**, vice president of evangelism for the SBC Home Mission Board, will deliver the sesquicentennial sermon at the 11:00 a.m. worship service. An old-fashioned day, dinner, and other special activities are planned for the afternoon.

The congregation of **Trinity Church**, Manchester, will hold a 25th anniversary celebration Oct. 22.

The congregation of **Sanford Church**, Riceville, will dedicate their new building Oct. 8. The new building includes Sunday School rooms, a library, and a fellowship hall.

## Ordinations ...

**First Church**, Lenoir City, recently ordained **Ronnie Green** as deacon.

**Carlton Gerrell** and **Steve Webb** were ordained as deacons Sept. 24 by **Calvary Church**, Jackson.

**First Church**, Martin, ordained **Darrell Finney** and **Emery Gathers** as deacons Sept. 24.

**Shores Church**, Goodspring, ordained **J. D. Nave** and **Jerry Nave** as deacons Aug. 20.

**Kenneth Brown**, **Joe Lamb Jr.**, and **Jesse Plemens** were ordained as deacons Sept. 17 by **Pleasant Grove Church**, Chattanooga.

**John Henry Arms** was ordained as deacon Sept. 17 by **Pleasant View Church**, Clarksville.

**First Church**, Shelbyville, ordained **Kenny Jamison** as deacon Sept. 10.

## Leadership ...

**Bob Fleming** joined the staff of **Virginia Avenue Church**, Bristol, as minister of music.

**Jerry Vittatue** was recently called as pastor of **Clear Springs Church**, Corryton.

**First Church**, Goodlettsville, honored **Bill Vance** and his family Oct. 1 for service as minister of education for eight years. He resigned to accept a similar position at **Hillcrest Church**, Dallas, Texas.

**Michael Ketterer** joined the staff of **Central Church**, Crossville, as associate pastor, minister of music and education. He was minister of music at the church from 1983 to 1985 and has served at other churches in Tennessee, Kentucky, and Virginia.

**Union Church**, Knoxville, recently called **Gary Vandergriff** as pastor.

**David Steele** has been called as minister of music and youth to **First Church**, Bruceton.

**Jeffrey L. McReynolds** accepted the call of **Bethlehem Church**, Oneida, to serve as minister of music and youth.

**Jim Holloman** has been called to **Idlewild Church**, Idlewild, as pastor.

**First Church**, Donelson, called **Paul Turner** as minister of youth education and recreation.

**Lantana Road Church**, Crossville, called **Wayne Markham** as interim pastor.

**Rick Mason** has been called to **First Church**, Collierville, as minister of Christian recreation. He comes from **First Church**, Dallas, where he served as recreation minister for six years.

**Pleasant View Church**, Clarksville, has called **Jim Graves** as minister of music and youth.

## Missions ...

Thirteen people from **Lincoln Park Church**, Knoxville, traveled to **Gallup, N. M.**, in July to conduct **Backyard Bible Clubs** on the **Navaho Indian Reservation**. Forty-three adults and children from the reservation participated.

## Revivals ...

Evangelist **Phil Glisson**, Memphis, led a community tent crusade Aug. 27-31 in **Old Hickory** sponsored by **Temple Church**, **Rayon City Church**, and **First Church**. Music was led by **R. L. and Beth Sigrest** of **Yazoo City, Miss.**

**Memorial Church**, Hixson, will hold revival Oct. 8-11 with **H. Franklin Paschall** speaking and **Ron Alley** leading music.

**Leon Kilbreth** will speak at **Central Church**, **Oak Ridge**, Oct. 8-11.

**Harold Stephens** will speak at revival services Oct. 15-18 at **El Bethel Church**, **Shelbyville**.

**Rugby Hills Church**, Memphis, will hold revival Oct. 8-11 led by evangelist **John Bramlett**.

**Wallace Memorial Church**, Knoxville, will hold revival Oct. 8-11. **Harvey Stewart** will lead the services.

**First Church**, Rockwood, will hold revival Oct. 7-11 with evangelist **Jerry Drape** and music directors **Ken and Lois Holland**.

**First Church**, Lenoir City, will hold revival Oct. 8-12 with evangelist **John Sullivan**, executive-director of the **Florida Baptist Convention**. **Terry Shannon**, **First Church**, **Hixson**, will lead music.

Evangelist **Henry Linginfelter** will lead revival at **White Oak Church**, **Chattanooga**, Oct. 8-12.

**Gladeville Church**, **Gladeville**, will hold revival Oct. 8-15 with evangelist **Jerry Songer**. **Douglas Burr** will lead music.

Evangelist **Allen Buhler** will speak at revival services at **First Church**, **Alexandria**, Oct. 8-14. **Wayne Ray** will direct music.

**Verble Church**, **Monterey**, will hold revival Oct. 14-16. **Pastor Benton Flatt** will lead services.

**First Church**, **Kenton**, held revival Sept. 17-20 with **Kyle Rudd** leading services.

**John Bramlett** led revival services Sept. 17-20 at **First Church**, **Milan**.

**Dave Shorter** recently led revival at **Hunter Memorial Church**, **Elizabethton**.

**Stone Association** reported several revivals held recently in member churches. Churches and leaders follow: **Dodson Branch**, **Cookeville**, **Russell Flatt**; **Macedonia Church**, **Cookeville**, **Alton Garrad** and **Kenneth Blaylock**; **Silver Point Church**, **Silver Point**, **Henry Roberson**; and **Nash Grove Church**, **Baxter**, **Everett Hooper**.

**First Church**, **Parsons**, will hold revival services Oct. 8-13 with evangelist **Benny Jackson**.

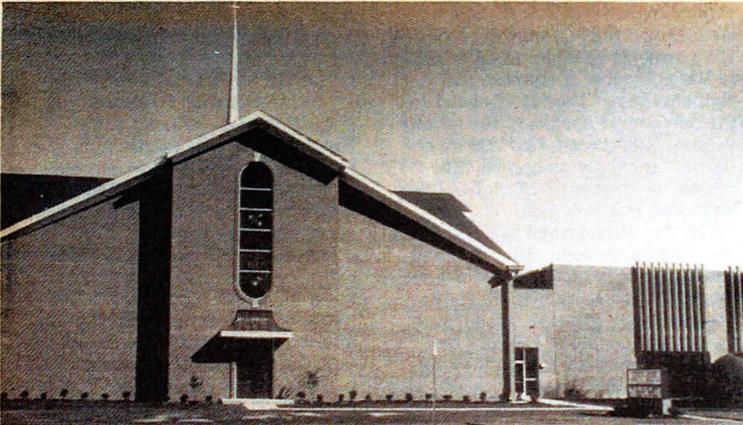
## Sherman withdraws

**Bill Sherman**, a Nashville pastor, withdrew his name from an appointment to the state's newly created ethics panel, saying he feared the post would leave him without a "free pulpit," reported **The Nashville Banner** on Sept. 30.

The pastor of **Woodmont Church** was appointed by **Gov. Ned McWherter** to the **Registry of Election Finance**.

**Sherman** said state attorneys could not assure him he would be free to preach on political issues.

**Sherman**, who has been an active opponent of horse-racing referendums in **Davidson County**, would have been restricted for two years under the law creating the ethics panel which prohibits members of the registry from holding public office, working for a political party, contributing to a campaign, or lobbying.



**MEMPHIS DEDICATION** — Members of **Parkway Village Church** in Memphis dedicated their new facility Sept. 24. The 16,000-square-foot addition includes a sanctuary, music suite, and preschool area, and was constructed at a cost of \$1.3 million. Members dedicated the facility for worship, evangelism, Christian education, worldwide programs of the church, and fellowship. Joining in the occasion were, from left, below, **John McBride**, director of missions, **Shelby County Association**; **Pastor Robert C. Hensley**; and **Curtis McDaniel**, building committee chairman.



— Photos by **Lonnie Wilkey**

# Paul's concern for the Thessalonians

By Deryl G. Watson, director of missions; Hardeman County Association

Our lesson last week expressed true thankfulness for other Christians, 1 Thessalonians 1:2-4. Our attitude of thankfulness seems generally to be intertwined with how much we care for others. Certain things are evident when we care for the welfare of others. We want to be with them and sustain loss when away from them. We feel a sense of being taken away or orphaned from them (2:17). When not with them physically, we are with them emotionally, in heart (2:17). Such was the case with Paul and with us as well.



WATSON

**The power of Satan (2:18 and 3:5)**  
Paul refers to the evil one twice in this lesson (2:18 and 3:5). Paul obviously took the work of Satan seriously. Satan has the power to destroy solid relationships, like that of Paul, through the opposition to Christ and the Gospel in lives (1:6 and 3:3-4), or through a temptation to give up because of suffering (3:5). Satan still has the power to affect all kinds of relationships — interpersonal, theological, or physical.

The term for the evil one here is Satan and means adversary. He is against us, and wants to destroy relationships and lives if possible. The term tempter (3:5) describes the

devil's character. He tried in every way possible to tempt the Thessalonians to doubt their Christian experience.

**Alleviating concern (3:1-5)**  
Paul was concerned about the spiritual condition of the Thessalonians. When concern is present, information helps dispel that concern.

Paul sent Timothy to Thessalonica to obtain information. It is important to note that Paul trusted Timothy. It is sometimes difficult to trust someone else with a task or opportunity you would like to complete yourself.

Timothy, though younger than Paul, was reliable. His qualifications for the mission are found in chapter 3:2. He was a brother. Brother here also means fellow laborer, and fellow Christians. They were bound together as servants or attendants for Jesus. They did the work of Jesus without any particular reference to the character of the work they did. If it had to be done, they did it.

The purpose of his mission is found in chapter 3:2-4. He was to establish the Thessalonians. He was to confirm them, assure them. He was to set them in the concrete of the Christian Gospel under the leadership of the Lord Jesus.

He was also to comfort them, stand beside them, and exhort them or console them, whichever was necessary regarding their faith (3:2-3).

Timothy was further to aid them in their sufferings (3:4). Suffering and affliction here seems to refer to the

pressure of circumstances or suffering which comes from the antagonism of others against you. Timothy was entrusted by Paul with a somewhat difficult and possibly dangerous task. Paul assured them in chapter 3:5 of his anxiety for them.

## BIBLE BOOK SERIES

October 8 Lesson

Basic Passage: 1 Thessalonians 1-3

Focal Passages: 1 Thessalonians 1:2-4, 2:17-18, 3:2-13

## The rewards of concern (3:6-8)

Timothy brought back good news from his journey to Thessalonica. Good tidings (3:6) is the same word used for preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This is the only New Testament reference where it has any other meaning than to preach about Christ. Paul was elated about Timothy's news of the Thessalonians. Their faith was strong, their love deep. The term charity, love, used here is agape. They were saturated with the agape love of Jesus Christ in the midst of affliction. A bonus for Paul's concern for them was the reward of knowing that they remembered him (3:6). Paul drew strength from them as a result of their solid faith in Christ. Concern for others sometimes results in encouragement and strength being returned. As was the case with Paul and these other missionaries (vv. 7-8).

## Rejoicing because of concern (3:7-13)

Concern for others often causes the concerned Christian to rejoice themselves. This rejoicing on the part of Paul here evidenced itself in several ways. Paul thanked God who was the true source of the Thessalonians' faith. True Christian concern often results in thanksgiving for the work of Jesus in the lives of others (3:9). His prayer life was blessed because of their faith and his concern for them (3:10).

As we add people to our prayer list, we are also the recipients of the blessings of answered prayers in their lives.

Paul's concern led to more concern. He wanted to help them with their faith, to perfect, or help make their faith whole (3:10). Paul also expressed a prayer of concern that he would be able to be directed by God to them and that they would love each other and unbelievers also (3:11-12). Above all, he wanted them to be ready for the return of Christ and be holy, or set aside, as Christians (3:13).

When we have true Christian concern for others, we can be certain that Satan will try to block or hinder our concern. Christian concern for others is not limited by time or space. No parameters are set. Though separated from the Thessalonians, Paul could still be concerned for them. God often gives us others to help in alleviating our concern, as was the case with Paul and Timothy. God does honor Christian concern for others, and our concern often results in spiritual blessings from God for ourselves.

# God acts to deliver Judah

By Charles E. Gibbs Jr., pastor; Trace Creek Church, New Johnsonville

The first part of Daniel, chapters 1-6, is narrative. The second part of Daniel, chapters 7-12, is prophetic. In chapter 2, the dream is Nebuchadnezzar's. In chapter 7, the vision is Daniel's.



GIBBS

The book of Daniel is a book of prophecy. The purpose of prophecy is to give confidence and victory for those who believe in God. God sets Himself forth as the only God who is able to predict the future. Why cannot man predict the future? Because he cannot control the flow of events. Why is there not prophecy in other religions? Had they done this, they would have been proven false.

God says to His people today, since all the prophecies concerning Christ's birth and death were true, so are my prophecies concerning the events to come.

In every generation mankind has sought to know what the future holds. It is true today. We have fortune tellers and astrologers trying to tell the future. One of the most famous fortune tellers today is Jeane Dixon.

The Bible has warned man not to seek to know the future from astrology, a witch, or a fortune teller, but to seek to know the future from God Himself.

Prophecy tells us that the future of the world is in the hands of a

sovereign, all powerful God. Someone has said, "I know not what the future holds, but I know who holds the future and I know He cares for me."

God reveals the future to Daniel in a vision. The four parts of Nebuchadnezzar's statue, and the four beasts seen by Daniel, stand for the same four earthly powers. The four beasts are a lion, a bear, a leopard, and a "fourth beast, dreadful and terrible." All attention is directed to the fourth beast and, particularly, to the "little horn." The "little horn" is the Antichrist, the sinful man of 2 Thessalonians 2:3 and 4. The "little horn" comes to power by subduing three of the ten kings, which will give him the balance of power.

In verses 8 and 25, Daniel tells us the nature of the "little horn." In this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man. This phrase tells us he had human intelligence. In verse 25, "he shall speak great words against the Most High." This tells us of blasphemies against God. The phrase "shall wear out the saints of the Most High" means to afflict and persecute the saints.

But God steps in and says enough is enough. In verse 9, the thrones were cast down and now "The Ancient of

Days" appears. This is the eternal God. Daniel tells us what He looks like. His garments as white as snow refers to His attributes of holiness and righteousness. "Hair of His head like the pure wool" speaks of His infinite wisdom. His throne, like "the fiery flame," speaks of judgment. His wheels as "burning fire" tells of the unlimited power of God.

The day of judgment had come and the books were open. The surviving beast was held accountable for his misdeeds. He was slain, his body destroyed and given to the burning flame. The people of Daniel's day could be sure that, though they suffered under the rule of a heathen king, right would prevail.

Daniel had another vision. In this vision, he saw one like the Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven. The Son of God in heaven is here invested with the authority to take the kingdoms of this world from the Gentiles and establish His kingdom. It is a kingdom of all people, nations, and languages, and they serve Him. Jesus's kingdom is an everlasting kingdom which shall not be destroyed.

What a great day it will be when the King of Kings and Lord of Lords comes and takes the kingdom away

from the Antichrist (the little horn) and gives it to the saints of the Most

## UNIFORM LESSON SERIES

October 8 Lesson

Basic Passage: Daniel 7

Focal Passages: Daniel 7:13, 21-27

High. What is better than this? God's kingdom will last forever and all shall serve and obey Him.

Why does God allow such agony and suffering? This is the mystery of iniquity that Paul refers to in 2 Thessalonians 2:7. We are not told why God allows this. But some day, some glad day, the kingdom of this world shall become the kingdom of our God and He shall reign forever and ever. Every Christian is looking for that day.

We cannot fully understand all the details of God's plan for the ages but four things are certain:

1. God allows evil rulers to reign.
2. God's people do not escape the effect of evil.
3. No person will escape God's judgment.
4. God will establish His kingdom forever.

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# The scope of missions

By Mattie Carrol Mullins, layperson; Gray Church, Gray

My first attendance in a missions organization was when I was two weeks old and was taken to a Royal Ambassador meeting by three older brothers and my mother who was the RA leader. Of course I do not remember that day; however, as I grew I continued to be toled to R.A. meetings until I was old enough to go to my own Sunbeam Band.

Things began to make lasting impressions on me concerning missions. I remember the large world globe that was used at each meeting to point out mission fields and countries around the world where Southern Baptists had missionaries. I soon had my turn holding the globe and finding places like the United States, China,



MULLINS

and Africa, and reading the names of missionaries who were celebrating their birthday. This enabled me to see the scope of missions at a very early age.

My missionary education continued through junior Girls Auxiliary or GA's. A great part of our meetings was spent reading, quoting, and memorizing Bible verses, such as "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." We sang every word of every verse of the missionary hymn, "We've a Story to Tell To The Nations."

All of this early missions instruction instilled in my early years the message of Psalm 96, which is one of the first missionary hymns of the Bible. The priest was leading the Jews to sing unto the Lord a new song.

What did they sing about? They declared His glory among heathens. They left their gathering and scattered to all the world.

What radius does the scope of mis-

sions cover? It was to be the same area covered by the globe I used as a GA.

In Isaiah 49:5, the Lord told Israel to reach out to all people who were different from themselves. Another great commission is found in verse 6. The specific task was to be a light to the Gentiles, extending from home to the end of the earth.

### LIFE AND WORK LESSON SERIES October 8 Lesson

Basic Passages: Psalm 96; Isaiah 49:1-7; Luke 24:36-49  
Focal Passage: Psalm 96:1-3, 10; Isaiah 49:5-6; Luke 24:45-48

I remember a popular tune which soared to the top of the music list several years ago. It is entitled "Faraway Places" and could be sung as a missionary hymn today. It speaks of faraway places with strange sounding names, far across the sea. The idea was that people of different backgrounds, cultures, and needs are calling for you and me. It presents a clear picture of the scope of missions.

On May 9, 1963, the Southern Baptist Convention, meeting in San Francisco, Calif., adopted a report of the committee on Baptist Faith and Message. One important area in the document was Evangelism and Missions.

Every committed Southern Baptist should be aware of these truths, which state it is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and every church to try to make disciples of all nations. It further emphasizes it is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ.

Southern Baptists are committed to spreading the Gospel to the entire world.

What is the scope of missions? All nations.

Because Southern Baptists believed this, a Missions Challenge Committee was appointed in 1974. This committee reported to the SBC meeting in Norfolk, Va., in 1976. The proposal was for the convention to set a goal to ensure that every person in the world hear the Gospel of Christ by the year 2000.

To implement this, the term "Bold Mission Thrust" was applied to a long-term emphasis. We have been constantly reminded of this challenge throughout all phases of programs, goals, and plans for Southern Baptists.

We can recall many who experienced the boldness of taking the message to the world. God called men and women such as Luther Rice, Lottie Moon, Adoniram Judson, Martha Franks, Bertha Smith, Annie Armstrong, and hundreds more. These people recognized the scope of missions and confronted the world so that all of it's people could come to the truth of God, as the GA hymn says.

Luke 24:45-47 emphatically presents the scope of Missions. After the resurrection, Jesus spoke to the eleven remaining disciples, reminding them that repentance and forgiveness were to be proclaimed to all nations. Where? Verse 47 tells us to begin in Jerusalem - right where we are. Verse 48 states, "Ye are witnesses."

How much more personal could it be? We are to be witnesses of His death, burial, and resurrection to everyone.

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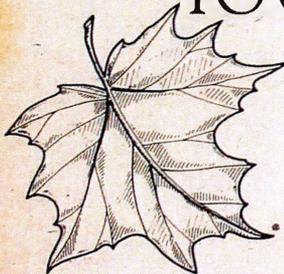


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**(BP) BRIEFLY**

Compiled from Baptist Press, news service  
of the Southern Baptist Convention

**Hurricane Hugo destroys churches in Virgin Isles**

CHRISTIANSTED, St. Croix — Like the pirates who haunted the Caribbean centuries ago, Hurricane Hugo pillaged the Virgin Islands, demolishing all four of the Southern Baptist churches on St. Croix and St. Thomas.

Officials estimated that 80 percent of the buildings on the island of St. Croix were destroyed or severely damaged. In the wake of the hurricane, Southern Baptists were slow to respond to the needs, hampered by poor communications and transportation between the islands and the mainland.

Grace Central Church on St. Croix, the largest Baptist church in the U.S. Virgin Islands, was gutted by winds of up to 200 miles per hour. Most of the church's roof was blown away, and the concrete walls exploded, dumping tons of water on the concrete floor. Grace Golden Rock Church, located in the Harbor View section of St. Croix just north of Christiansted, was the hardest-hit church. Only the concrete block walls were standing. The roof disappeared completely, flooding and destroying the furnishings inside.

American Red Cross officials estimated electrical power and telephone service might not be restored on St. Croix for three or four months. They predicted long-range problems of providing food, housing and medical care for the island's 60,000 residents.

Representatives of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board and Brotherhood Commission issued an appeal for Baptist volunteers to build and operate mobile food kitchens on St. Croix and for nurses to help provide health-care services in the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. Construction teams are also needed to help rebuild churches and homes of hurricane victims who lost everything.

Ed Richardson, executive secretary of the Puerto Rico Baptist Association, estimated total damage to Baptist churches on Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands at more than \$750,000, including \$300,000 damage on St. Croix and \$200,000 on St. Thomas.

**Sunday School Board offers help to churches impacted by Hugo**

NASHVILLE — Replacement literature and discount prices for signs, steeples, furniture, audiovisual equipment, and other items for Southern Baptist churches damaged by Hurricane Hugo which ravaged Charleston, S.C., and surrounding areas Sept. 22 is being offered by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

Also, a three-member team from the board's church architecture department will travel to Charleston in October to assist church leaders in making plans for repairs or rebuilding. An architect and two consultants are expected to

spend several days assisting churches as part of an effort being coordinated by the South Carolina Baptist Convention.

With a new quarter beginning Oct. 1, new dated periodical literature probably already was on hand in most churches and may have been destroyed in the hurricane, said Sunday School Board President Lloyd Elder. As long as supplies last, the board will replace dated literature, Elder said. Where inventory is limited, churches will be provided sample copies of pupil and leadership materials and one-time permission granted for them to make copies.

Also, the board will provide 25 free Baptist Hymnals to any church whose hymnals were destroyed in the hurricane, he added. Additional hymnals will be sold at \$3.15 each, including postage, a \$2 discount. Also, discounts will be offered on the Broadman and Christian Praise hymnals, as well as Christmas cantatas.

**FBC, Charleston, cuts services, expands ministry following disaster**

CHARLESTON, S.C. — The congregation of historic First Church of Charleston, S.C., hopes to return to its storm-damaged sanctuary in about three weeks if repairs are adequate to allow services to be held. Until then, the congregation plans to worship in the church gymnasium.

The 167-year-old structure, the oldest Baptist church in the South, is the mother church of the Southern Baptist Convention. The congregation has met on its current site since 1699 in what is now the Charleston Historic District. The sanctuary was heavily damaged Sept. 22 when winds from Hurricane Hugo ripped the tin roofing from the structure. Rain then poured into the exposed rafters and soaked the sanctuary below.

The congregation cancelled Sunday School and the second worship service for Oct. 1, with only one service. The extra time "will give members an opportunity to have fellowship at the church and share their feelings about the disaster," said Pastor Scott Walker. The sanctuary, which seats about 650 people, has had two services for several years.

The congregation expects to resume the normal schedule Oct. 8, using the gym for worship services. "Even if we return to the sanctuary by Oct. 22, a lot of work will remain to restore the building," Walker said. "We will be uncomfortable, but we will be home."

In the midst of its own problems, the congregation has managed to reach out to the storm-ravaged community. A new disaster relief fund will benefit any needy individuals, whether or not they are members of the church. A second fund will be used to help repair and restore the building as close as possible to its original condition.

**One Baptist killed, two injured in bus tragedy**

DALLAS — One Texas Baptist died and two were injured when a Mission, Texas, school bus collided with a delivery truck and plunged into a waterfilled gravel pit Sept. 21. Twenty children died as a result of the wreck, the worst school bus accident in Texas history.

**More than 2000 received****Letters concerning new hymnal deluge BSSB**

By Charles Willis

NASHVILLE (BP) — More than 2000 letters offering suggestions, admonitions and support have filled the church music department's mailbox at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board since a new Baptist hymnal was announced for 1991 publication.

Wesley L. Forbis, editor of *The Baptist Hymnal*, and Terry W. York, hymnal project coordinator, say the volume of correspondence has been both gratifying and overwhelming since the new hymnal was announced in 1987. Between them, Forbis and York have answered every piece of correspondence without resorting to form letters.

The number and, in some cases, length of opinions may prove that the hymnal is second only to the Bible in importance in the hearts of Southern Baptists. And, like helping the person who wants a "large-print, pocket-sized Bible," meeting all the customer's needs may be an impossibility.

For every need and opinion, correspondence would indicate, there is a directly opposing need and opinion. While some want only Victorian hymns, others prefer only 1980s compositions. Some wrote to offer goodwill and prayers for success, while others wrote to say something on the order of, "If you do (or don't) use this specific hymn, we won't buy the new hymnal."

Members of the hymnal committee surely could only conclude Southern Baptists are anything but apathetic when they consider congregational singing.

"I am a seventh-generation Southern Baptist," one wrote. "my roots too deep to change easily to something else. . . I prefer 'thee' and 'thou' and 'ye' in songs, in certain contexts.

There is a grace, a reverence, and purpose in these that is just gentler and more palatable than the harsh stripped and peeled 'you.' (Has anyone ever used 'y'all' in a hymn?)"

While many expressed support for newer works in the *Baptist Hymnal*, 1975 edition, a few hymns came under criticism for failure to stand even a short test of time. One early 1970s hymn in particular, which shall remain nameless, was singled out by several correspondents as already dated.

"Maybe it's just me," observed one church leader, "but can anyone really sing that song with a straight face?"

Others expressed frustration over missing verses or texts altered from earlier hymnals.

"I would like for you, Wesley Forbis, and members of the committee to please add to the hymn 'Were You There.' 'Were you there when he rose up from the grave,' the most important and effective verse of that song," declared one writer. "I cannot imagine serving on a committee of this type and failing to include this verse."

Others have not forgiven previous hymnal committees for removing the word "worm" from Isaac Watts' "At the Cross."

One indignant Southern Baptist argued, "If the Lord Jesus, speaking prophetically in the 22nd Psalm could say, 'I am a worm, and no man,' sure-

ly I can say with the great poet Isaac Watts, 'such a worm as I.'"

Many letters included lists of desired hymns from the *Broadman Hymnal* of 1940 and the *Baptist Hymnal*, 1956 edition. And more than one writer devoted multiple pages to single-spaced, typewritten lists of hymns to exclude.

Some with fewer needs wrote one-sentence letters, such as, "I would very much like to see 'Are Ye Able' put back in our hymnal."

The need for hymns in certain subject areas troubled some Southern Baptists.

"We need more tuneful hymns on the Christian home," one minister of music wrote. "We are singing, 'God, Give Us Christian Homes' to death!"

Hymns and choruses aside, the range of topics covered by interested parties included technical musical matters, indexes, page layout, book bindings and worship aids.

A director of missions expressed himself briefly and clearly when he asked that responsive readings be made longer: "In the last hymnal they were sawed off to almost nothing," he observed.

At the end of a long letter filled with specific suggestions, a music minister acknowledged: "While I know your job in determining the merit of the innumerable suggestions . . . will be difficult, I still envy you the task."

"The task" has included countless meetings, as subcommittee members have considered not only letters but also survey forms distributed across the Southern Baptist Convention.

With 17 months remaining until the final product is delivered, the fact 12 large churches have ordered hymnals, sight unseen, indicates anticipation is high.

No doubt many Southern Baptists will find their requests granted when the hymnal debuts in March 1991. Realistically, everyone won't get every wish fulfilled. But as one Southern Baptist concluded a list of preferences: "This is probably more information than you wanted; however, it is just like our U.S. democracy — at least I have voted."

**California college gets largest pledge**

RIVERSIDE, Calif. (BP) California Baptist College has received the largest financial pledge in its 40-year history.

An anonymous donor has pledged \$1 million in a commitment toward the school's Partners in Progress Campaign, said President Russell Tuck.

The donor has pledged the \$1 million toward construction of a proposed science building, which will house classrooms, faculty offices, and laboratories. The facility also will include a student center.

The pledge pushed the Partners in Progress Campaign closer to its \$5.2 million goal, with a campaign total of \$4.7 million in gifts and pledges.

The pledge is to be paid in three annual installments, the first installment, of \$300,000, has been received by the college.