

Baptist and Reflector

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STATEWIDE EDITION

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Oct. 12-13 in Memphis

MissionsFest to be 'foreign missions extravaganza'

By Wm. Fletcher Allen
MEMPHIS — MissionsFest Tennessee, a foreign missions extravaganza, takes over Memphis on Oct. 12-13, with participation by 42 career missionaries, nine Foreign Mission Board area directors, and a bevy of other FMB personnel.

Hundreds of Tennessee Baptists are

Parks dialogue set with Tennessee Baptists

Pastors and directors of missions, and their spouses, are invited to attend a dinner/dialogue with FMB President Keith Parks Friday evening at 5:30.

Associational leadership and spouses are invited for a prayer/dialogue breakfast with Parks at 7 Saturday morning. Both meals are at Eudora Church. Those planning to attend should notify Clarence Stewart at (615) 371-2064, or the Shelby County Association office at (901) 345-3820.

The Saturday lunch provided by the TBC Disaster Unit is \$4.50.

expected for the busy weekend. The two-day event, billed as a foreign missions experience, convenes at Eudora Church here with registration at 4 p.m. Friday. A "global walkaround" is scheduled at 5 to 7 p.m. in the church fellowship hall.

The walkaround gives Baptists from Tennessee, Arkansas, and Mississippi opportunity to experience sights and sounds of missions. Weekend participants will be able to meet missionaries and hear about their work.

Participants will also have hands-on experience with computers, hear languages of the world, see video segments, and photo displays.

The 7:30 session is a Celebration of Commitment, complete with flag procession. D. L. Lowrie, Tennessee Baptist Convention executive director; R. Keith Parks, Foreign Mission Board president; and Calvin T. Harvell, Eudora pastor, will lead off the



PARKS

meeting.

Bill O'Brien, FMB public affairs executive director, is the evening speaker. A time of commitment follows his message.

Saturday morning begins with another registration opportunity, followed by a convocation led by Parks.

Conferences dealing with a dozen foreign missions topics are scheduled beginning at 10:30. Included in this time frame is a dialogue with Keith Parks. Meanwhile, another global walkaround takes place from 10:15 till noon.

Lunch will be served by the Tennessee Baptist Brotherhood's disaster unit.

Conferences will be repeated at 1 p.m., with the addition of a session on "Exploring Career Missionary Service." More global walkarounds take place during the afternoon and some conferences will be repeated.

After the evening meal a commitment celebration is scheduled at 7 p.m. Several missionaries will give testimonies.

Churches from all across Tennessee are expected to be represented by in-

terested members at the MissionsFest, according to Clarence Stewart, TBC Partnership Missions director.

The mission weekend is sponsored by the Tennessee Baptist Convention and the Foreign Mission Board.

(MissionsFest, page 5)

SBTS trustees set faculty guidelines

By Marv Knox

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) — Southern Baptist Theological Seminary trustees have established new guidelines for hiring, promoting, and granting tenure to seminary faculty.

The new criteria — adherence to the Southern Baptist Convention's 1987 Peace Committee report — were approved during a called trustee meeting Sept. 24-25 in Louisville.

The Peace Committee report declares that "most Southern Baptists believe" people who say the Bible is true believe that "Adam and Eve were real persons." "named authors did indeed write the Biblical books attributed to them." miracles "did indeed occur as supernatural events in history," and "the historical narratives given by Biblical authors are indeed accurate and reliable."

Southern's board meeting had been called to deal with the conduct and concerns of trustee Jerry Johnson, pastor of Central Church, Aurora.

(Southern, page 5)

WMU affirms CP, rights of individuals, churches

RICHMOND (BP) — Woman's Missionary Union, Southern Baptist Convention, has affirmed the Cooperative Program's traditional role of giving, two national missions offerings, and approved the right of individuals, churches, and state conventions to choose other methods of giving to missions.

The WMU executive board issued a statement to Southern Baptists, home foreign missionaries, WMU members, and to critics of WMU. The statement also affirmed the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions.

In the Sept. 21-22 meeting, national WMU leaders spent nine hours tackling issues never dealt with before corporately, considering options, and discussing possibilities "so that we'll be ready," said one state leader.

The statement, which was approved unanimously by state WMU presidents

and state WMU executive directors, represents the first time the national WMU leadership has spoken to the controversial issues that have brought divisiveness within the Southern Baptist Convention.

The board members and state WMU executive directors acknowledged the historic nature of their action, calling the time "one of the most crucial and pivotal points in the 102-year history of Woman's Missionary Union and the 145-year history of the Southern Baptist Convention."

"We speak as national leaders of Woman's Missionary Union," the statement says. "As such, we speak together, honoring the perspective of history, recognizing the practicality of the present, and committing to the furtherance of missions into the future."

Noticeably absent from the statement were references to WMU's status as an auxiliary to the Southern Baptist Convention, although the leaders dis-

cussed the subject.

They agreed informally that their private understanding of the word

(WMU, page 3)



EDITORS HONORED — The Southern Baptist Press Association recognized Jackson Walls, West Virginia, seated, and Dan McGregor, Mississippi, second from right, for their long time service as state paper editors. J. B. Fowler, New Mexico, SBPA president, honored the two men, who will retire later this year, at an editors' meeting Sept. 18 in Nashville. Mrs. Fowler is seated.

— Photo by Wm. Fletcher Allen

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Editorials

Cooperating in pursuing the given task

By Herschel H. Hobbs

The New Testament says nothing about church membership. The word is "fellowship" (koinonia), having all things in common or sharing. This applies to any segment of our denomination (local church, association, conventions). The Southern Baptist Convention is a fellowship, not a membership of churches. This does not mean that everyone must dot every "i" and cross every "t" alike. As long as we accept the Bible as the divinely inspired, authoritative Word of God (and practically all Southern Baptists do), we allow for differences in interpretation.

Both before and after the New Orleans convention many called it a "watershed convention." If the past twelve years have proven anything it is that our problems cannot be solved by conflict. I have never been on either side. If you want to label me, call me an old-time Southern Baptist. Such have their differences, but they stay together in the fellowship.

As in all differences there are three sides: yours, mine, and the right one. The right one is God's side. We must find it as we speak the truth in love. Having served on the Peace Committee subcommittee on politics, I believe most of the stir in our convention is based on rumors unsupported by

documented facts. Neither side has all the truth; both sides have blame for which they must answer to God. All of us need to fall on our knees, confess our sins, pray for God's forgiveness, and then walk together in Christian love as brothers and sisters in Christ.

"Brother" comes from "adelphos" which comes from "adelphus" — which means "out of the same womb." We have the same source of salvation life in God through Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit. Let us act like it! There are no winners or losers for us in this on-going struggle. Only Satan is the winner; only God is the loser as His greatest force for evangelism-missions in our time dissipates its energy and loses sight of its God-given destiny.

This leads us to the Cooperative Program. It is a fellowship through which more than 37,000 churches cooperate in pursuing our task. M. E. Dodd and his committee which proposed this program were wise men, but not wise enough to have created the greatest program every seen for raising money for the Lord's work. In my soul I believe that it was revealed to them by God. It is 65 years old. We could destroy it in a day!

We need no new agency through which to channel our missionary giving. We need to use the one

we have and which has served kingdom causes so well. And this resolve faces every Southern Baptist church and each individual in them. No pastor is happy if his people designate their giving if the church votes contrary to their wishes. If it is wrong for individuals to do this, it is wrong for churches to do it! Such is contrary to fellowship.

I have Richard Jackson's permission to pass on what he told me last February. For three years in a row the North Phoenix Church did not pledge a percentage but \$1 million each year through the Cooperative Program. In 1989, each month when receipts did not provide enough for this pledge, the church borrowed from a bank enough to enable them to meet that month's pledge — for the year a total of \$85,000!

I have heard of churches borrowing money for new buildings and equipment and for renovation. But in over 62 years in the ministry never before have I known of a church borrowing money to give to missions. *That is fellowship!* Go thou, and do likewise!

Herschel Hobbs is pastor emeritus, First Church, Oklahoma City, Okla., and a longtime lesson writer for the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board. His column on Baptist beliefs appears regularly in the Baptist and Reflector.

To our family, thank you . . .

Though we are in this place in order to offer a service, the staff of the Baptist and Reflector feels a close affinity with our readers.

We are family.

Our relationship to you, the readers, is more than casual. The product we mail to you each week reaches into the home, and in one sense, it too becomes a family member.

Family members ought to appreciate one another — and we do appreciate each reader-subscriber. At times, when there are testy issues at stake, we may feel as though we have some alligators by the tail. But we believe our readers value our "friendship" and family relationship even though sometimes we don't all agree.

The staff is seasoned with a mixture of experience and acumen — and journalistic education. One staffer has been with the Baptist and Reflector 32 years. Another has worked in Baptist journalism for 30 years. The experience and education varies — but we are all dedicated to family interests.

That means we believe in producing the best possible newjournal. It means we have concern for our family. It means our reason for being is to help advance the cause of Christ in Tennessee. We are

also related to that larger family, the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

We appreciate each reader — those who have been reading the Baptist and Reflector for half a century, and those who have joined the family circle a week or so ago.

Thank you — readers. On August 26 many churches observed Baptist and Reflector Day with pulpit remarks, with mention in the church newsletter, and most importantly — in prayer.

Every reader is important to us. Every reader is a special member of an extraordinary family. We help each other see our worst and best — and we work together as Baptists who love the Risen Savior. — WFA

. . . room for more

Tulip Grove Church, Old Hickory, is testing the Baptist and Reflector.

We didn't offer the church a bonus — and the staff didn't clip a "guaranteed satisfaction or your money back" coupon.

Tulip Grove is trying the Baptist and Reflector

offer of subscriptions for all resident families on the Three Months Trial Plan — in conjunction with use of a page for the church weekly newsletter. They're saving money!

The church will send inhouse news to its members, as it has through its newsletter, by using a page in the Baptist and Reflector. And resident families will receive the paper each week for three months — at no charge.

We believe churches (and individuals) simply cannot make a qualified judgment on the Baptist and Reflector unless it is read regularly for several weeks.

The same offer is available to seven more churches willing to risk the strong probability of getting hooked on the paper. Regular reading of the paper, with a keen desire to know what's happening in Tennessee and around the Baptist world, usually results in a habit-forming decision.

For churches interested in a plan similar to the Tulip Grove "test," call us at (615) 371-2003, or inquire by mail to P. O. Box 728, Brentwood 37024.

The seven who sign on, as did the Old Hickory folks, will get firsthand reliable news for their church — and from Tennessee Baptists. Looking through that kind of window is a bargain. Don't you want to join a growing family of Baptists? — WFA

Iraqi church growing, according to Jordanian leader

AMMAN, Jordan (BP) — Evangelical Christians in Iraq are experiencing spiritual revival and growth, according to a Jordanian Christian leader who preached in Baghdad earlier this year.

The evangelical Protestant church in Baghdad, the Iraqi capital, has grown to about 600 members, Fawaz Ameish said in an interview in Amman, Jordan. Ameish, pastor of Amman Baptist Church, spent two weeks preaching in Iraq before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

"Iraqi evangelicals attend four churches in Baghdad and three other cities and have "many home meetings," Ameish said. Recent spiritual renewal at the Baghdad church began after a Lebanese Baptist preacher from the United States conducted services there and "the Lord moved mightily," Ameish reported.

"Many were converted and joined the church," the Jordanian pastor said. "All the week it is like a beehive, even now. I went there and many came and gave their lives to the Lord. There is true revival going on in that church."

Ameish said he became so excited during his visit that he considered beginning Baptist work in Iraq, but he was told new denominations could not be started there now. Instead, he strongly encouraged evangelicals there to seek permission to start more churches.

About 25 new Christians from Iraq attended a summer training conference in Amman just before the invasion and were stranded there for a time, Ameish said. Seventeen were baptized in Jordan before returning to Iraq in late August.

Christians in Iraq, a tiny minority in a nation that is 96 percent Muslim, were once persecuted by radical members of the ruling military council, Ameish said. Some believers were detained or imprisoned.

"But when Saddam Hussein got rid of those extreme people from his council and had power in his hand, he released (the Christians)," Ameish said. "He became very kind and nice to all the Christian groups. He even visited the homes of some Christians.

Imagine! After this persecution some revival took place in the church."

Other minority groups have not been as free to operate. Saddam's police state suppresses any internal groups it

opposes, including some Muslims, according to human rights groups.

Christianity came to what is now Iraq in the first century.

Baptist and Reflector

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WMU affirms Cooperative Program, rights of . . .

(Continued from page 1)

"auxiliary" included concepts of neutrality, independence, self-support, and self-governance. They also agreed informally that they have no intention of WMU becoming an agency of the Southern Baptist Convention. But the leaders chose to postpone further discussion until their next meeting in January 1991.

In the adopted statement, the leaders chose to speak first to home and foreign missionaries.

"We want you to know that we will continue to love you and to support you," Dellanna O'Brien, executive director of WMU, read aloud. "We will be your staying force when you fear all others might abandon you. We affirm you individually and collectively. We are here for you now, and we will be there for you in the future."

The leaders spoke next to the 1.2

million WMU membership. They called for WMU members to pray "like you've never prayed before," to pray "diligently and daily" for missionaries, and to pray "unselfishly for yourselves, that the Lord will use you as champions for missions in your homes, in your churches, and in your communities."

Later, during a brief executive session of the board, members interrupted their discussion of routine personnel and finance matters to announce a second call to prayer. They issued an "urgent, strong call" for every Southern Baptist individually to pray for unity within the denomination. This appeal adds the WMU board to the growing list of SBC agency trustees who have issued calls for prayer for the convention.

The national leaders also called upon the WMU membership to keep abreast

of the circumstances and events in state conventions that affect missions. "Be aware, be knowledgeable, and be ready to become involved in proactive planning for the future of missions," the statement says.

To WMU critics, the national leaders said: "We regret that our silence over the years might have been construed as consent or even support of the controversy. We further regret any suspicions that WMU might be politically involved in the denominational strife."

The leaders called upon the critics to "work with us for the cause of missions."

"We have always taught WMU women to be supportive of pastors, church staff, and others in places of leadership. We have encouraged women to be positively involved in their churches. We have hoped and prayed that eventually problems in our denomination would be worked out so that we could keep our sights on missions. We are grieved and gravely concerned over the negative impact of the controversy on missions."

The leaders said, "individual churches are withdrawing or drastically reducing their contributions through the Cooperative Program, which provides a vital lifeline of support for home and foreign missions endeavors."

"Several state conventions are considering plans that would allow for designation of money to specific denominational agencies or to specific causes, as an alternative to the cooperative method of supporting missions, educational, and evangelistic efforts."

Circumstances such as these, the statement says, are the ones that brought the WMU leaders to this "critical juncture in our history as missions leaders."

Even though Southern Baptist mission board leaders agreed on the history of the Cooperative Program, they did not agree on the current state of the funding program in their reports to Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union leaders Sept. 21.

The two missions leaders — Keith Parks, president of Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, and Larry Lewis, president of Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, agreed that the Cooperative Program traditionally has been an effective means of funding missions. Gifts from the Cooperative Program made up 38.5 percent of the 1990 FMB budget and 35 percent of the

1990 HMB budget.

"Certainly I concur that our Cooperative Program is the preferable plan," said Parks. "But the question I'm asking is, 'Will it remain intact?' Never in my experience has that question been as frequently asked and frequently discussed than in the last few months."

Parks questioned whether the Cooperative Program could be maintained as a dependable source of funding in its present state.

"We are in a desperate situation if those who are promoting the Cooperative Program most are supporting it the least," Parks said.

But Lewis was adamant in his appeal to the national WMU leaders for their endorsement of the Cooperative Program as the sole channel of missions funding for Southern Baptists.

Referring to action taken by HMB trustees regarding the Cooperative Program, Lewis said, "We do affirm the Cooperative Program . . . as the preferred method of missions funding. And we oppose efforts to circumvent the Cooperative Program."

However, Lewis said, even though the HMB opposes alternate funding plans, they do acknowledge the right of any state convention, church, or individual to support missions in any way they choose and will accept funds from those sources.

But, Lewis added, "We're not talking about THE right, but what IS right."

When asked if the FMB will accept money from alternate funding sources, Parks replied, "You've got to be kidding! We've never checked the orthodoxy of anyone wanting to send money to the FMB."

But Lewis urged caution, describing the impact of indefinite funding sources through alternate plans as "horrendous."

"When we begin to tip our hat toward any of these plans, we're opening Pandora's box, and it may well unravel the Southern Baptist Convention as we've known it," Lewis said. "We certainly don't need another issue to drive us further apart."

Both men reported that their budgeting and program planning processes are relatively buffered through 1991 from any impact from alternate funding or negative designations.

"We do not, at this point, anticipate significant negative impact on the 1991 budget," Parks said. "Beyond that, our crystal ball gets as murky as the one the Home Mission Board is using."

Convention presidents seek common ground

"Our key emphasis was that of peace and seeking common ground," said Murray Mathis, outgoing president of the State Baptist Convention Presidents' Fellowship which met here Sept. 18.

Mathis, president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention and pastor of Third Church, Murfreesboro, has led the group for the past year. He was succeeded by Eddie Hamilton, Mississippi. Hamilton is president of the Mississippi State Baptist Convention and is eligible to be re-elected by the Mississippi messengers in November.

"One of the high points of our meeting was a dialogue with Morris Chapman," said Mathis. He said the Southern Baptist Convention president discussed problems facing Southern Baptists and some possible solutions. Mathis said the presidents' group

has been meeting for several years during the sessions of the Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting, and the February and September meetings of the SBC Executive Committee in Nashville.

Attendance increased greatly during the past months, he said. SBC presidents have been invited to attend, but have not always been able to do so, he added.

Chapman asked the state presidents to "open your hearts to each other." Mathis said the group ended the meeting "with earnest prayer for healing in the Southern Baptist Convention — and that God would use each of us in that process."

Hamilton, the new president, is pastor of Oak Forest Church in Jackson, Miss.

Chairman asks for resolutions

The Committee on Resolutions for the 1990 Tennessee Baptist Convention, will meet Nov. 12 in Nashville.

Robert Orr, temporary chairman, asks messengers who plan to present resolutions Nov. 13-15, to mail a copy to the committee prior to the convention. Copies of proposed resolutions should be mailed to Orr at Box 1241, Dyersburg 38024.

Orr said that resolutions, even if submitted in advance, must be presented from the floor of the convention during one of three miscellaneous business periods to be

considered. The business periods are Tuesday morning, Tuesday afternoon, and Wednesday afternoon. Orr urges those presenting resolutions to present them at the Tuesday miscellaneous business sessions.

According to TBC bylaws, the Committee on Resolutions is to receive written resolutions from the floor and review, comment on, draft, and recommend "any memorials or resolutions it may deem wise from among those referred to it by the convention."

New Sunday School writers chosen

Three Tennessee Baptist pastors have been chosen to write commentaries about the October, November, and December Sunday School lessons for the Baptist and Reflector.

Dennis Lunsford, Carlos Peterson, and Richard Herrington II will write the lessons for the fall quarter.

Lunsford, pastor of Antioch Church, Humboldt, will write on the Bible Book series.

Lunsford has been pastor of the Humboldt church since 1983. He also has been pastor of churches in Illinois and Missouri.

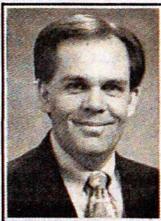
He is a graduate of McKendree College, Lebanon, Ill., and Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Mo. Lunsford is a doctor of ministry candidate at Luther Rice Seminary, Jacksonville, Fla. His projected graduation date is May 1991.

Lunsford has served at various levels of denominational life. He currently is a Southern Baptist Sunday School Board trustee and serves on the trustees' executive board.

Lunsford and his wife, Patricia, have two daughters.

Peterson, pastor of First Church, Athens, is set to write lessons for the Convention Uniform series.

A native of Erwin, Peterson is a graduate of Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City; Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C.; and Luther Rice Seminary,



LUNSFORD



PETERSON



HERRINGTON

Jacksonville, Fla. He has a doctor of ministry degree from Luther Rice.

Peterson joined the Athens church as pastor in 1989, coming from First Church, Tallahassee, Fla., where he served as associate and interim pastor. A former pastor of Greene Hills Church, Greeneville, Peterson also has been pastor of churches in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia.

Herrington, pastor of Hermitage Hills Church, Hermitage, will comment on the Life and Work series.

A native of Mississippi, Herrington has been pastor of the Hermitage church since 1978. He also has been pastor of churches in Mississippi and Kentucky.

He is a graduate of Mississippi College, Clinton, and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. He has a doctor of ministry degree from Southern.

Herrington has served in various denominational posts and is currently a trustee of Belmont College, Nashville.

Herrington and his wife, Sharon, have three daughters.

Our Readers Write

Baptists at our best

At 5:30 on a recent morning at the Nashville airport a group of Baptists said good-bye to a couple. In 27 hours they would be in Thailand and become part of the mission team of Baptists for two years as journeymen. Parents of the couple, Baptists from a small rural town church and a larger county seat church, were there. A younger sister of the husband completed the family circle which was made minutes before they boarded the plane. They bore witness to the covenant of the Christian family. It was Baptists at their best.

Why is this Baptists at their best? The covenant of the Christian family touches the lives of this couple at many places. Within their very different home churches they learned of God's love for all people through Sunday School and Missions Groups.

The larger Baptist family provided both ministry and mission during college via Baptist Student Union. Theological education for the husband came from one of the six Baptist seminaries of SBC where his sense of call increased. The younger sister has followed her brother to that same seminary where she seeks to prepare and follow the will of God.

These and many other ways the covenant of Baptists have touched this couple

and made it possible for their going. They in their own right have been part of others going by faithful covenant keeping with other Baptists. As they go they need to know that Baptists will keep the covenant they have made with them and with their God.

Yes, it was Baptists at their best in the airport . . . doing what Baptists were meant to do . . . keeping the covenant with one another and with Jesus Christ.

The occasion at the airport was the "beginning" of service for Scott and Valerie Payne as Southern Baptist journeymen. Members of Highland Church in Tullahoma, Scott's home church is First Church, Manchester, and Valerie's is Wartrace Church.

Their story is — Baptists at our best.

Donald Dixon, pastor
Highland Church
808 W. Hickory St.
Tullahoma 37388

Reading literally

In the Sept. 12 Baptist and Reflector, a writer disagreed with the inerrantists who interpreted Scripture literally. She says that denies God the use of figurative language to teach her.

She may not understand that a person who interprets Scripture literally also must admit to the use of allegory, parable, and figurative language.

Not to do so would be foolish indeed. When Jesus said, "I am the door" (John 10:7), the literalist would have to envision Jesus as having hinges and doorknobs. Knowing that this isn't true, and understanding the function of a door, and literalist realizes that Jesus is depicting Himself as a means of entrance into a condition of salvation.

This is a very important facet in study of the Bible. Error exists in many churches today because of the desire to allegorize, spiritualize, and force a figurative interpretation of Scripture. The safest way to interpret Scripture is to accept it literally unless it is obvious that it cannot be literal.

Trying to force an allegorical or figurative interpretation can destroy the

truth that the Scripture is trying to convey. Leaving the choice of what is figurative or spiritual up to the reader opens the way to as many interpretations as there may be readers.

The safest method is to accept it literally unless it is obvious that it cannot be literal. Even then caution should be taken. Consider the Revelation, admittedly there is much figurative language used but we haven't seen everything God has created and some of those seemingly impossible things may be very real. A good method of study involves comparing Scripture with Scripture. An old adage says, "The New (testament) is in the Old (testament) concealed, the Old is in the New revealed."

Herb Ralston
Second Church
1619 E. Main
Chattanooga 37404

Clear choices

I have been a Southern Baptist for ten years, and a member of Leawood Church for four and a half years. I have followed the fighting between "conservatives" and "moderates," and wondered who was right and who was wrong.

When I read recent articles about the Atlanta meeting of "moderates" to set up alternative funding, I came to understand where I stand.

It is a fact that "conservatives" are in control of the Southern Baptist Convention by a majority of messengers over the past 12 years. This gives them authority within the SBC. Romans 13:1-10 tells us that all authority is from God. This includes "conservative" SBC leadership.

It becomes the "moderates" obligation to submit to present leadership. If they don't think it fair, can they not make this known to God in prayer? Isn't God big enough to convict "conservatives" if they are wrong?

I would be considered a "conservative" but the label of Christian means more to me. I propose that if "moderates" cannot before God submit to and support present leadership, the two groups go the way of Paul and Barnabas (Acts 15:36-40).

After such a decision were made, the

resources could be divided accordingly, and they would wish each other God-speed. Remember that assignment of right and wrong ultimately did not matter in missionary journeys. God had two sets of missionaries instead of one.

We have clear choices. "Moderates," submit to leadership or form another convention. "Conservatives," make sure "moderates" get their fair share of assets if they leave. Churches, decide which group to stay with. Each of us has an individual choice.

Billy M. Murcheson Jr.
1912 McAuley Drive, South
West Memphis, Ark. 72301

Recognizes past leaders

The Baptist Press article concerning the meeting of "moderate" Southern Baptists in Atlanta (Sept. 5 issue) indicates news is already being swayed to please the "powers that be." In listing the names of the seven "at-large" members of the interim committee, the article failed to mention that Jimmy Allen also has served admirably our convention for two terms as president (1977-1978).

It was he who so ably kept the convention running smoothly in 1979 when the "takeover" began. Those of us who were in Houston for the Thursday morning session of that convention, remember well how President Allen cut off a heated discussion aimed toward one of the major figures in the "conservative" movement, and called the convention to prayer; stating, "My heart is grieved at the spirit that is pervading this session of our convention."

Perhaps also, Southern Baptists should notice the other names listed who for so many years have served our convention faithfully — Winfred Moore, Duke McCall, Grady Cothen, and Carolyn Weatherford Crumpler.

These, and others, now seem to agree that what once identified us as cooperative Southern Baptists is no longer who we are. At that, my heart is grieved.

J. Earl Stroup
1645 Joe Stephens Road
Morristown 37814

GUIDELINES: Opinions of Tennessee Baptists on pertinent subjects are welcomed. Letters should be concise, no more than 250 words. Writer's name may be withheld for sufficient reason. Only one letter from the same writer will be considered for publication per quarter. Letters must not make personal attacks on the character or integrity of anyone. Form letters and "open" letters will not be published. Writers should send original copy. Writers are encouraged to write in a positive, Christian manner. Address and phone number must be included. Letters not conforming to these guidelines will be returned.

Kuwait church meeting and feeding hungry, reports say

By Mary E. Speidel

RICHMOND (BP) — Lay leaders at the National Evangelical Church in Kuwait City have begun conducting worship services again and feeding the hungry, according to reports received by the church's pastors.

Several Philippine evacuees from Kuwait have reported to Jerry Zanstra, the church's pastor, that five Philippine lay leaders are conducting

Ministers' wives plan TBC meeting

The Ministers' Wives Fellowship, auxiliary to the Tennessee Baptist Pastors' Conference, will have its annual luncheon meeting Nov. 14 in Nashville.

Theme for the noon meeting is "Chosen." Alice Lowrie, wife of TBC Executive Director D. L. Lowrie, is the featured speaker.

Buses will pick up passengers in front of Belmont Heights Church at 11:30 a.m. for the trip to Belmont College. The luncheon will be in Neely Dining Room, Barbara Massey Hall.

Tickets are \$10, and checks should be made to TBC Ministers' Wives Fellowship. Contact auxiliary president, Loretta Mathis, 374 Columbia Ct., Murfreesboro 37129 or (615) 890-7308.

worship services at the church. The evacuees told Zanstra that Iraqi soldiers are attending services and are not disrupting worship. Zanstra and his family were in the United States for the summer when Iraq invaded Kuwait.

Other reports said Iraqi soldiers had asked a Catholic priest in Kuwait City if services could be conducted. A Catholic cathedral is located about two blocks from the evangelical church.

Reports from inside Kuwait indicate evangelical church members also are feeding hungry Asians.

"The church is busy ministering to the Asians who are going hungry," said one source Sept. 22. The food distribution reportedly began Sept. 17. "Food is available but (the cost) is two to three times higher," the report said.

Zanstra said he has not heard about the feeding project, but was not surprised such a ministry has begun. "It's just an extension of the ministry they were trained to do and have done in the past," Zanstra said of the lay leaders, who are members of the church board. Each summer they conduct services while he is away, Zanstra said.

Before Iraqi troops stormed into Kuwait City Aug. 2, the church had an "extensive ministry" to Filipinos who

work as domestics there, Zanstra said. The church provided food, shelter, and employment assistance to runaway and abused household workers.

Such workers were employed as servants and depended upon their employers for food, said Zanstra. Since many of their employers have probably fled the country, Zanstra explained, the Filipinos now have no resources. Since the invasion, "I'm sure the need (for the ministry) is even greater," he said.

About 500 Filipinos were a part of the English-language congregation at the evangelical church, he said. They also met for Friday worship services conducted in Tagalog, a Philippine language; some 250 people attended.

The English-language congregation is about one-third Philippines, one-third Indian, and one-third a mixture of other expatriates, Zanstra said. Before the invasion, about 10,000 people gathered for evangelical services held in numerous languages each Sunday and Friday, the Muslim holy day, he said.

One of the Filipinos who fled Kuwait reported earlier to Baptist Press that the church had been turned into an Iraqi military compound. The refugee, Flora Labuguen, a nurse who worked

at a Kuwait hospital for nearly six years, fled the country Aug. 26. She arrived with about 250 other Philippine refugees at the Amman Baptist School in Jordan Sept. 9. The Baptist school was providing food and shelter for refugees at the time.

Athens church calls Charles to pastorate

Mount Verd Church, Athens, called Kenneth Charles as pastor.

Charles was formerly pastor of Cottonford Church, Decatur. In addition, he has been pastor of Parkway Church, Athens.

The Athens native was ordained in 1983 at West End Church in his hometown. He and his wife, Nancy, have two sons.

Keith Dublin accepts Sharon pastorate

Keith Dublin recently joined the staff of Fellowship Church, Sharon, as pastor, after serving as pastor of West Union Church, Dresden.

He was ordained in 1983 at Westside Church, Trenton.

The Palmersville native and his wife, Kathy, have a son and a daughter.

Southern Baptist Theological Seminary trustees set . . .

(Continued from page 1)

Last spring, Johnson distributed a 16-page document, "The Cover-up at Southern Seminary," which was critical of seminary President Roy Honeycutt and five faculty members.

Trustees received the document at their April meeting, but deferred "the Jerry Johnson matter." Subsequently, faculty called for his resignation. A motion demanding his removal was presented to the SBC annual meeting this summer and referred to seminary trustees.

The trustees, who met in closed session for about five hours, decided to treat Johnson's conduct and concerns as two matters.

Their statement on his conduct noted they "accept Jerry Johnson's apology and forgive him and . . . affirm him as a member of the board with the hope that this will be the first step in the healing process, not only within this board but in the Southern Baptist Convention as a whole." It was approved with four dissenting votes.

MissionsFest to be foreign . . .

(Continued from page 1)

Missionaries on the program include:

Steve and Dottie Babcock, Tennesseans serving in Sierra Leone; Glenn and Patt Bien, Bangladesh; Charles Boudreaux, Guyana; Dwain and Kathy Brown, French Guiana, she is from Tennessee;

John and Martha Clement, Indonesia; Freeling and Betty Clower, Sierra Leone; Adney and Vel Cross, Tennesseans, Namibia; Vernon and Dorothy Dietrich, Thailand; Bill and Emilee Goff, Venezuela; Norman and Gunita Harrell, Portugal; Shirley Farley, Tennessean, Mali;

Jeni Hester, Colombia; Ben and Berlie Hope, South Brazil; Frank and Beverly Lewis, Indonesia; Steve and

Johnson's letter of apology notes some language in his document "was ill-chosen and too harsh" and concedes that he did not follow proper trustee procedure for expressing concerns.

"I caused unnecessary sorrow for many," the letter says. "I deeply regret this and wish to apologize at this time."

It adds, "Under no circumstances should this statement be construed to mean that the issues I addressed have ceased to be concerns in my mind and heart."

Those concerns were addressed by a second trustee recommendation, which was approved 36-14.

The first part of that recommendation declares "that the action of the 1986 board of trustees concerning the trustee report to the SBC Peace Committee not be revisited."

Almost all of Johnson's document deals with matters that were raised by an investigative subcommittee of the Peace Committee and handled by seminary trustees at the time.

Trustee Vice Chairman Wayne Allen,

pastor of Briarwood Church, Memphis, and moderator of the meeting, told reporters that trustees had "drawn a line" regarding the old matters and do not intend to consider them again.

The second part of the recommendation deals with the future. It says, "In addition to existing guidelines, the Peace Committee report — both findings and recommendations — serve as a guideline for the employment of temporary and permanent faculty, the promotion of existing faculty, and the granting of tenure."

The four illustrations of Biblical belief are included in the Peace Committee report's "findings" section. The "recommendations" section calls upon SBC institutions "to build their professional staffs and faculties from those who clearly reflect such dominant convictions and beliefs held by Southern Baptists at large."

"This is an instrument for the administration to use. It's for dealing with the future," Allen said. "We're not going to the faculty to say, 'Do you agree with the Peace Committee?'"

However, the new policy calls for use of the Peace Committee report when considering faculty promotion and tenure. For example, an assistant professor now on the faculty apparently would be questioned about the document when being considered for promotion to associate professor.

The trustees' action reflects a step toward peace and harmony, Allen said. It also should provide security for faculty by closing the books on past action and "establishing parameters" for future action, he added, noting he expects changes on the faculty to come through attrition, not firings.

A faculty member, however, said the new guidelines are "creedal."

"The trustee action in effect establishes a new creedalism at Southern Seminary that is the result of the Peace Committee action," said Bill J. Leonard, professor of church history and president of the SBTS faculty association.

"I remember poignantly when Charles Fuller (chairman of the Peace Committee) said this document would never be used as a creed. Charles Fuller's statement is proved absolutely false."

Samford program addresses SBC reconciliation

BIRMINGHAM — "The Southern Baptist Convention: Hope for Reconciliation" will be the topic of a discussion at Samford University Oct. 11.

Participants will be leaders of the "conservative" and "moderate" groups of the SBC. The event, open to the public, will be at 7 p.m. in Wright Center Concert Hall.

Speakers are "conservatives" Wayne Dorsett and Paul Pressler, and "moderates" Randy Fields and David Montoya.

Dorsett is pastor of Central Park Church in Birmingham. Pressler is justice, 14th Court of Appeals, Houston, Texas.

Fields is a San Antonio attorney, Baptist deacon, and Baylor University trustee.

Montoya is an ordained Baptist minister and student at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

The four speakers will be available for discussions with Samford students on Friday morning.

The overlay of the new guidelines bodes ill for the future, Leonard said: "This is for the moment — these specific statements are required. But given the change, we don't know what it will be next year."

"Is this the only test we'll have? You could pass this test and still be a poor teacher, a poor scholar."

The seminary's acting president, Willis Bennett, said the trustees' action provided "much cause for encouragement and continuing cause for concern."

"We have officially taken positions that will put some things behind us and allow us to move forward in a more productive manner without quite the kind of suspicion that has been existing for some considerable time," he said.

"I have no difficulty working with the . . . report. We will promise them our cooperation and try to implement the policies they have now put in place."

Ten trustees also filed a minority report concerning the Johnson matter. Julian Pentecost, editor of Virginia Baptists' Religious Herald newspaper, presented the four-point minority report.

First, the minority had asked that trustees' deliberations be conducted in open session, he said, noting closed meetings depart from Baptists' heritage and tradition. "We deeply regret the cover of darkness used for anonymity," he noted.

Second, the minority wanted to separate the trustees' action on not opening past grievances with the faculty from trustees' consideration of future hiring, promotion, and tenure decisions.

Third, they decried some trustees' repeated attempts to deal with past actions of faculty, noting those questions have been "already answered."

Fourth, the minority expressed concern about adding the Peace Committee report to the other faculty guidelines.

Trustee Ron Meredith, a federal judge from Louisville, moved that Pentecost be removed from the board, noting Pentecost had disclosed some actions of the private meeting. Chairman Sam H. McMahon Jr., a businessman from Charlotte, N.C., ruled the motion out of order.

Preston Creech accepts Charlotte pastorate

Preston Creech recently joined the staff of First Church, Charlotte, as pastor.

Creech was previously pastor of Enon Church, Oxford, N.C., and associate pastor of Brook Hollow Church, Nashville.

He was ordained in 1977 in North Carolina.

The Georgia native earned a bachelor's degree from Augusta (Ga.) College, and a master of divinity from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C.



NEW ASSOCIATIONAL BUILDING — Beech River Association dedicated a new Resource Center, photo above, Sept. 9. Jere Phillips, state missions director for the Tennessee Baptist Convention, was guest speaker. In photo below, from left are Doyle Neal, director of missions, Cletus Duke, Phillips, Hoyt Wilson, LaVaughn Moody, and Mike Rhodes.



Ordination of Nigerian 'good experience' for church

NASHVILLE — Abel Ige wants to thank Judson Church, Nashville, not only for ordaining him, but for accepting him.

When Ige (pronounced ee-gay) moved from Campbellsville (Ky.) College to Nashville to attend Vanderbilt University's Divinity School, one of the first churches he visited was Judson Church because a friend had recommended it.

Ige hesitated to join, because the church had no black members who regularly attended, he explained.

"Most black people have their own church. It's some people's choice," said Ige. Africans also have problems feeling accepted in American churches. For example, added Ige, if no one sits on their pew, they get the "psychological impression that they are not welcome."

But Ige and his wife, Victoria, and two sons felt welcome at Judson Church and joined. That was almost three years ago. In August Ige was ordained to the ministry by the church during an evening service.

It is an event that Ige has anticipated since he canceled his ordination plans in Nigeria five years ago to study in the United States.

It was an unusual and proud event for the church, confirmed Pastor Raymond Langlois, though it is a normal function of the church.

"It was a good experience because it was not long ago in Nashville when for a black person even to be allowed to come into our church was an unusual



IGE

experience," said Langlois. Ige is the first black and first international to be ordained to the ministry by Judson Church, reported Langlois.

And it was an unusual experience for most of the ministers who made up the ordination council. Ordained Baptist Nigerians from Washington D.C., Louisville, Ky., and Atlanta, Ga., were invited by Ige to participate.

Their questions seemed tough to some of the Americans, but not to Ige. One questioner sought his reaction to a report that a church member who held an office in a church where he was pastor was a polygamist.

"I would open the Scripture and let him understand the Biblical view," Ige said he responded. Other questions concerned his future plans and pantheism, the religion that equates God

with the forces of nature.

"This is an important step because they have to recommend me after they have examined me. . . . They handled it warmly," said Ige.

Rollin DeLap, a member of the church and ordination council as an ordained minister, noted the event was significant for the church because Ige is the product of Southern Baptist missionary work and because of the sacrifices Ige and his family have made to prepare themselves for their ministry.

Ige was born into a Muslim family but was raised by an uncle who was a Christian. The Southern Baptist missionaries leading a Baptist primary school and churches he attended also influenced him for Christ though he was tempted to follow Islam, he remembered.

The graduate of Vanderbilt University hopes to continue his education at a Southern Baptist seminary though he

... they get the 'psychological impression that they are not welcome.'

must struggle "to squeeze in everything." He works at a restaurant and studies full-time at the American Baptist College in Nashville, to retain his student status.

Ige also leads the African Christian Fellowship, a 50-member congregation which meets weekly. He is education minister for the congregation.

Victoria works outside the home and has attended school.

"I am preparing and equipping myself for the ministry back home," said Ige. — *Connie Davis*

Brotherhood Commission launches new magazines

MEMPHIS — Missions education for High School Baptist Young Men, Baptist Young Men, and Baptist Men takes on a new look beginning in October with three new magazines.

The Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission is changing these age-group publications from a tabloid format to 24-page magazines. The three publications, *Challenge for High School Baptist Young Men*, *Journey for Baptist Young Men*, and *Missions Today for Baptist Men*, replace the former *World Mission Journal*.

The new publication titles were introduced in April while the tabloid format continued. The transition began then to accommodate postal regulations, said Jack Childs, Brotherhood Commission vice president for support services. The October format changes complete the transition.

"You might say that this is a further refinement of the massive changes in our programs that were introduced in 1987," said James H. Smith, Brotherhood Commission president.

Making missions involvement more compelling for every age group is a primary goal of each new magazine, said Brotherhood officials.

Flea, no, free market hosted by Nashville church

By *Connie Davis, assistant editor*
NASHVILLE — The man, who wore dirty clothes and no expression, saw the crowds gathered at what appeared to be a flea market on a church's parking lot. As he walked by, someone walked over to him and asked him if he needed some free clothes.

Soon Howard Tudor, a member of Shelby Avenue Church, Nashville, had found several shirts and a pair of shoes for him.

Before the man left, he explained he lived in an abandoned house near the church. I'm a wino, he added, but I remember being saved in this church years ago.

Poverty is not uncommon to members of Shelby Avenue Church, located just east of downtown Nashville. The area is marked by housing projects and big homes which have been converted into apartments for several families. The annual free flea market or give-away, held Sept. 21, is one response of the church.

And the community has come to expect the annual event, which was held for the fourth year. Flyers delivered to businesses and posted signs helped spread the word though most people said they had heard about it from a friend. Also church member Doug Tudor announced it that day to startled motorists with the wave of a hat, a shout, and his sign which read, "FREE."

People started arriving as early as the workers -- about 7:00 a.m. The furniture and children's clothes went first. A sofa had been tied onto a car's trunk area. A young boy stood near another sofa which was almost covered with signs made from paper sacks reading, "Sold," and "Gone." Inside the church



PARKING LOT — The church parking lot was one site of the give-away.

in several rooms filled with items and clothing, children helped moms choose T-shirts and jackets.

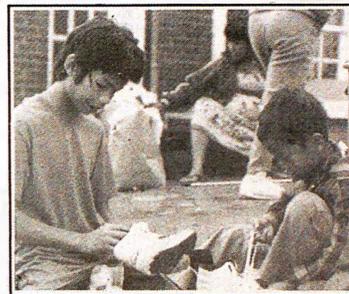
The 25 or so workers from Shelby Avenue Church assisted people, telling them where to find items. As they visited with people, the members also distributed schedules of church services.

The give-away was begun by the Woman's Missionary Union of the church, which sponsored a crisis closet, a program for providing items to the needy. Often items had to be distributed to social aid organizations because it was not being used, explained Carolyn Demonbreun.

Bigger churches can better help many of these people than Shelby Avenue Church, explained Demonbreun, but the give-away helps too.

It is held near the beginning of the school year to assist families with school children. No screening of people is conducted, she added.

"There are people who just can't afford these things," said Carl Martin,



NIKES OR — Boys size up shoes.



A LOAD — Girl carries two filled bags.



A FIND — Othy Moser, right, admires jacket being tried on by lady.



INVITATION — Carolyn Demonbreun, left, tells Soeun Chim about her church.

pastor.

The church also has benefitted from the event, stated Demonbreun. Each year members have been more generous. Non-perishable food is even donated.

"It does a lot for our church people. I don't mean materially, but spiritually. I'm so awed by it," said Demonbreun.

"We don't see them as greedy, we see them as needy."

Brainerd nursing homes ministry brings 'ray of hope' to residents

By Lonnie Wilkey, associate editor
CHATTANOOGA — A simple smile is worth a fortune to volunteers in the nursing homes ministry of Brainerd Church, Chattanooga.

"It does our hearts good to be able to lift the spirits of the residents," said William Luther, a Brainerd layman who directs the nursing homes activities.

The church currently ministers to three private nursing homes in the Chattanooga area, primarily through the efforts of about 45 senior adult volunteers.

One of the "ringleaders" of the nursing homes ministry is Dillon Gibbs, a retired Chattanooga newspaper employee.

Gibbs, who has been involved in the ministry for about ten years, cites two primary motives for his volunteer work.

"I see people (in the nursing home) who are sad and depressed and I try to make them happy," said Gibbs, still full of energy and enthusiasm at age 71.

Another important reason, Gibbs added, is "I have the opportunity to witness to non-Christians."

Gibbs is volunteer leader for Life Care of East Ridge. Other nursing homes served by the Brainerd teams include Parkwood, led by John Griffin, and Heritage Manor, led by Dorothea Taylor.

Each team has a staff which includes a pianist, music director, prayer chairman, and volunteers who help with the patients.

The teams hold weekly Bible studies at their respective homes followed by fellowship times which include music, games, and other "fun" activities.

Gibbs, an avid camper, once took his equipment to the nursing home, and held a camping demonstration for the residents.

"It helps the residents relive some of their happy times," Gibbs noted.

Philip Meyer, assistant administrator at Life Care, agreed with Gibbs. Meyer explained that the initial reaction of residents when they first come to the home is to become withdrawn and depressed.

He noted that many of them grew up in a church but can no longer attend. In addition, they are in a structured



BRAINERD VOLUNTEERS — Dillon Gibbs, center, and Dot Graner, right, visit with Evelyn Roark, left, and her mother, Dora Jones, who is a resident at Life Care of East Ridge.

routine at the nursing home and have no control over when they eat, bathe, etc.

Because the Bible study provided by Brainerd is optional, residents can choose to go or not go. This gives them a sense of autonomy, Meyer said, adding that "if they can't leave physically, they can leave mentally."

Meyer noted the nursing home staff is grateful for groups like Brainerd because they provide activities for the residents.

"This organization brings church to our residents and gives them a ray of hope."

And, at Brainerd, the ministry is not limited only to those who volunteer on a regular basis, Gibbs stressed.

He noted the church staff, including Pastor Frank Crumpler, occasionally lead the Bible studies and musical groups from the church perform whenever possible.

In addition, Sunday School classes "adopt" residents at the nursing homes as "secret pals" and send them cards on special occasions and keep them on prayer lists.

Also, Gibbs added, he enlists speakers and singers from other churches in Hamilton County Association who have expressed interest in the ministry.

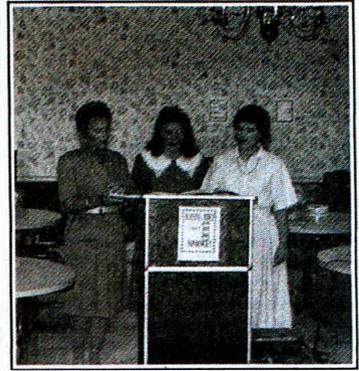
The bottom line, Gibbs noted, is finding out the needs of the residents —

whether physical or spiritual — and trying to meet those needs.

Volunteers in the nursing homes ministry admit it can be demanding emotionally, but those who stay with it say the rewards are numerous.

Gordon Lawrence, who has been involved with the ministry for several years, noted that at times he sees things that upset him, but emphasized he is blessed every time he helps.

"It lifts me to see Christian people who have everything in the world



CENTRAL SINGERS — A music trio from Central Church, Chattanooga, were recent guests at Life Care of East Ridge during a Bible study sponsored by the nursing homes ministry of Brainerd Church. From left, Charlotte Haddock, Tammy Long, and Pam Souther.

wrong with them, but have Jesus in their hearts," he said.

Dot Groner has worked in the ministry for about eight years. She, too, finds personal satisfaction.

She emphasized she does the ministry for the glory of the Lord. "If I can let the residents see the Lord Jesus radiate through me through a smile or word, I feel I have done something worthwhile," she said.

One Word More

By Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor

Here in my office, my home away from home, there is a collection of Native American artifacts on a shelf.

Just now I have yielded to the irresistible urge to reach out and pick up an exquisite piece of pottery — and hold it gently in my hand. It is not a large piece, only the breadth of two fingers and a width half that.

Smashed by a hasty departure from a campsite or a farmer's plow centuries later, a handmade pot was the source of this shard. Gingerly, with great care, I have put it back in its keeping place.

I have hundreds of pieces of broken pottery and bits of broken arrow points or portions of a tool.

Given time, I can take you to the uncommon place where I first found that prodigal of ancient civilization. As a boy on a Carolina farm, one afternoon I crossed a field and entered a glade where a small creek meandered.

I trod easily on soft creekside earth, passed through filtered rays of sunlight, and came to the stream. Wading across, I paused almost casually beside a sandbar. And just as casually, I bent and picked up a quartz arrow point — two inches long.

Even at that tender and young age, I was perplexed by this magnificence of man's own making. I was awed as if I were standing in the presence of the craftsman. I looked around in shade and shadow — to see if he were lingering there. I was not afraid — because I had seen the points of many makers — picked up and ensconced in safe places by my brothers.

But this was my first finding. From then til now, I have marveled at civilizations that preceded ours. Some were more "intelligent" though they

did not walk on the moon nor have the wit to invent computers. They didn't need them.

I had, and have, friends who would not know the difference between a piece of pottery of Native American vintage from a cracked plate thrown out from a farmhouse. And some would not recognize a smooth and carefully crafted spear or axe from one made yesterday by someone eager to make a buck.

I have given perhaps too long an illustration. But it occurs to me that many of us don't know things that are easy to learn, helpful to know, and which enhance our appreciation of God's creation — including mankind.

About a year ago a national survey revealed that a fourth of college seniors did not know when Columbus landed in the Americas and about the same percentage thought a phrase written by Karl Marx could be found in the Constitution.

Does it really matter? Yes. "Not knowing" does matter. America is unique because our shared history and culture is unique. We are people of the United States because of certain historical facts.

I want to know all I can about my nation and its heritage. That shard of pottery is important. I think it is important to know that a Native American made it — a person of skill and wisdom. And knowing that reminds me of God's value of man and the soul, helping me to remember that I am a witness for my Lord.



ALLEN

Prepare for aged: missionary

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP) — Issues facing older Americans will be key ministry areas as baby boomers age, a Southern Baptist home missionary claimed.

In the year 2011, the first of the baby boomers will be 65 years old, noted B. J. Dier, a national missionary based in Florida. The 77 million Americans born in the two decades after World War II "are going to be faced with a panic situation in the very near future," Dier said during the annual home missions conference at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center.

One of the greatest needs will be for adequate housing, Dier said. "There are plenty of houses for people who can afford them, but what about the widow who lives on \$500 a month?"

Dier acknowledged that providing housing is expensive, especially if medical care is needed. But he said, "If others can do it for profit, I think

churches can do it for love and break even."

As parents age, usually their oldest daughter becomes their care giver. However, Dier said an estimated 20 percent of baby boomers will have no children, leaving them without the typical care givers in their later years. Another 25 percent of baby boomers will have only one child, he said, basing his facts on a book titled, *Age Wave* by Ken Dychtwald.

Apart from housing, churches could be involved in other programs to help senior adults remain independent. For example, Dier suggested that churches participate in programs such as Meals on Wheels which provide a daily hot meal and communication.

Another program churches could provide is senior adult day care, he said. This is designed for senior citizens who live with their children or other adults. Social activities are provided during the day while care givers are at work.

Bisagno offers four-part plan for 'reform and renewal'

HOUSTON (BP)—Conservatives will "back off immediately" and the "battle will be over" in the Southern Baptist Convention if educators in the denomination admit theological problems exist in some things being taught at SBC institutions and "publicly commit to change it," Houston pastor John Bisagno said Sept. 20.

Bisagno, pastor of First Church, Houston, made the comments in follow-up to a Sept. 17 letter to Baptist state paper editors in which he suggested a four-point plan for "reform and renewal" in the SBC, including a call for a nationwide "solemn assembly" to be held in Dallas or Atlanta before the 1991 annual meeting in Atlanta.

The plan is broken down into four areas, summarized as follows:

- **Semantical:** both sides in the SBC controversy dislike labels attached to them; let President Morris Chapman

appoint an ad hoc committee to recommend mutually satisfying names;

- **Scriptural:** "Let every Southern Baptist seminary and university president, agency, institution and board head and president acknowledge the truth of the Bible is not negotiable, that any discrepancies in Scripture are discrepancies in appearance only;" that the effort in the SBC over the past 12 years to bring about doctrinal reform was born of valid and sincere theological concern, which was affirmed by the Peace Committee, particularly in four areas — miracles, stated authorship, historical accuracy, and Bible characters; and that these views be upheld, taught, and reflected now and in all future hirings of denominational employees and professors;

- **Statistical:** call on "every conservative church" to raise its Cooperative

Program giving by at least one percent while recognizing the right of individuals or churches to give to mission causes in any way they see fit; and recognize the denomination historically has promoted direct mission giving; and recognize, respect, and report all mission gifts for Southern Baptist causes;

- **Spiritual:** messengers to state conventions make every human effort possible to depoliticize and defuse controversy in upcoming state meetings; that each Southern Baptist ask God's forgiveness for mistakes of the past and cease any and all name calling and political organizing; and finally that Chapman join with Daniel Vestal, whom he defeated for the SBC presidency, and Henry Blackaby of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board to plan and lead in a nationwide solemn assembly "in order to seek God's power, healing and blessing."

Bisagno told the Baptist Standard (Texas) the key to the plan is the admission of theological problems and a commitment to deal with them.

"I truly believe the only concerns "conservatives" have ever really had are the four theological points. In their frustration they knew that they could not find any way (to deal with it) but the appointment process."

"All we want is for it (theology) to be acknowledged as a problem," Bisagno said. "The Peace Committee found it to be true.

"All we want from leadership is an acknowledgement of what the committee found is a problem, that it is out of sync with what Baptists believe, and they will move to correct it."

"Once it is acknowledged the whole thing will be defused," he added. "Nobody is going to be interested in using the presidential appointment process" when that is done.

Baylor University trustees change school's charter

By Toby Druin

WACO, Texas (BP)—Moving to free the school from the perceived threat of a "conservative" takeover, Baylor University's trustees voted Sept. 21 to change its charter to put distance between the university and control by the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

By a vote of 30 to seven with one abstention, according to trustee Chairman W. Winfred Moore, the trustees moved to change the university charter to replace the current 48-member board of trustees with a 24-member board of regents who will have "sole governance" of the institution.

The charter change was filed with the Texas secretary of state and is effective immediately, said Moore.

The Baptist General Convention of Texas heretofore has elected trustees of the university. Under the new arrangement, if it stands, the convention still will elect 48 trustees, but their responsibility will be only to elect one-fourth of the regents — eight of whom will be chosen annually — and to serve as "liaisons" between the convention and the university and help in fund raising.

Belmont sets Parents' Day

The traditional Parents' Day at Belmont College will be held Oct. 6 from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Designed for students and parents to spend time together and to learn more about the college, Parents' Day will begin with a "Welcome Home" program and breakfast buffet.

New for this year are nine different classes for parents to sample, scheduled in two sessions at 10:45 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. Included in the sampling is the process of registering for a class.

"We want to give the parents the real feeling of college," said Parents' Day Committee Chairman Daphne Minkin.

Belmont Mansion will be open as well as the campus bookstore. A tour of the Wellness Center will follow lunch in the Kitty Bugg West Amphitheater. The cashier's and financial aid offices will be open, and staff will be available to answer questions.

All parents of students under 23 have been invited to this special day. For more information, contact the admissions office at 385-6785.

Three-fourths of the board of regents would be elected by the regents themselves. They would have to be Baptists but only six of them would be required to be Texas Baptists.

Implementing the switch immediately, the trustees elected nine of their number to serve as regents for three-year terms and seven new regents. All are Texas Baptists, including two pastors, Roger McDonald of First Church, Gariand, and Max Brown of First Church, Galveston. Two others who have been prominent in denominational affairs recently also were elected. They are W. Dewey Presley of Dallas, former chairman of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee; and John Baugh of Houston, who has been active in Baptists Committed to the Southern Baptist Convention.

The charter change by the trustees without approval of the Baptist General Convention of Texas is in violation of the convention constitution.

Article VIII, Section 4 of the constitution states that any changes or amendments to an institution charter be submitted to the convention for approval at the annual meeting and any such changes require the prior approval of the executive board in the meeting just prior to the annual meeting.

To follow that provision, the Baylor trustees would have had to apprise the executive board at its Sept. 11 meeting of the proposed change. No notice was given.

Mike Bishop, assistant to Baylor President Herbert H. Reynolds, said

Prospect Church calls Chris Russell as pastor

Prospect Church, Walland, recently called Chris Russell, Hartford City, Ind., as pastor.

Russell came to Tennessee after serving as pastor of Hartford City Chapel. He has also served as minister of music and youth in Indiana.

The Maryville native was ordained in 1987 at Mount Lebanon Church, Maryville. He earned a bachelor's degree from University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and a master of divinity degree from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

He and his wife, Nancy, have a son and a daughter.

that under Texas law and provisions of Baylor's charter, which was granted by the Republic of Texas and pre-dates the BGCT charter, the university trustees have exclusive right to amend the charter.

No notice was given to the BGCT that the change was to be considered, although Bishop said it had been under study for two years.

Texas Baptist Executive Director William M. Pinson Jr., was not told about the proposed change and in fact learned of it first when called for comment by the Baptist Standard, newjournal of the Texas convention.

Pinson declined comment until he has time to confer with Reynolds and Moore.

"It would be premature for me to elaborate on the situation," before consulting with them, he said. "I do hope that Baylor will maintain its historic relationship with the Baptist General Convention of Texas."

Established in 1845, Baylor is the oldest and largest of the eight univer-

sities affiliated with the Texas convention. It has a record enrollment of 12,019 students this fall and is scheduled to receive a \$6,048,219 allocation from state convention funds in the 1991 budget to be considered at the state convention in Houston, Nov. 13-14.

Both Reynolds and Moore said the university intends to maintain its "close affiliation with Texas Baptists." Both also cited the threat of a "conservative" takeover of the university board of trustees such as has happened to Southern Baptist seminaries as having prompted the action.

The university has been mentioned frequently, especially by Reynolds, as a takeover target of "conservatives."

"I think taking Baylor out of the eye of the political storm, not only in Texas but also in the SBC, will make it much easier for us to get on with our missions involvement in this state and other places," Moore told the Baptist Standard.

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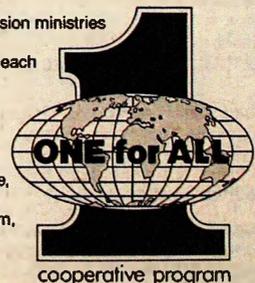
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TenneScene

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Churches ...

Members of First Church, Big Sandy, will celebrate homecoming Oct. 14. A noon meal will be held, followed by music from the Melody Makers Quarter.

Homecoming will be held Oct. 14 at Kensington Church, Memphis.

The congregation of Faxon Mission Church, Big Sandy, will celebrate homecoming and the church's 11th anniversary Oct. 14 with a special dinner and music.

Members of Unity Church, Allardt, recently dedicated a new fellowship hall and celebrated homecoming.

On Sept. 9, the congregation of First Church, Cookeville, celebrated the early retirement of the building debt by burning the note.

Watauga Association reported Harmony Church, Elizabethton, and Walnut Grove Church, Mountain City, held homecoming celebrations recently.

Homecoming was held recently at New Hope Church, Palmersville.

The membership of Hulen Church, Erwin, celebrated homecoming recently with former pastor Robert English as special guest.

Leclair Church calls Mason to pastorate

Leclair Church, Memphis, recently called Mel Mason as pastor.

Mason was formerly pastor of South Fulton Church, South Fulton, for 13 years. In addition, he served Havenview Church, Memphis, and churches in Georgia, Florida, and Louisiana.

He graduated from Blue Mountain (Miss.) College with a bachelor's degree; New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary with master's and specialists degrees; and Luther Rice Seminary, Jacksonville, Fla., with a doctorate.

A native of Tupelo, Miss., Mason and his wife, Delores, have five children and five grandchildren.

Homecoming was held recently at Flag Pond Church, Flag Pond. Former pastor Bill Powell spoke.

The congregation of Mary's Chapel Church, Ripley, recently burned the note on their gymnasium and educational space.

Members of Halls Church, Westside, and Bogota Church, Bogota, both in Dyer Association, celebrated homecoming in their churches Sept. 9.

A note burning service was held recently at Mount Gilead Church, Cedar Grove, to celebrate final payment of the church parsonage debt.

Haywood Association reported Shaw's Chapel and Allen Church, both in Brownsville, recently held homecoming services.

The 100th anniversary of First Church, Parsons, was celebrated Sept. 23. Wade Carver, who was pastor of the church in the late 1940s, and Paul Shell delivered messages.

Leadership ...

John David Laida has been called as interim pastor to Brentwood Church, Brentwood.

First Church, Michie, called Paul E. Wallace as minister of music and youth. He formerly served churches in west Tennessee and Mississippi.

Bill Coleman recently joined the staff of Fellowship Church, Milan, as pastor. He most recently served at Friendship Church, Beech Bluff.

West Jackson Church, Jackson, called Chris Blair as activities assistant. He is a youth ministry student at Union University, Jackson.

Meadowbrook Church, Maryville, recently called Allen Quiett as pastor.

The Vietnamese Mission of Emmanuel Church, Nashville, called Ngoc Ha as pastor.

John Carvalho has been called as

pastor of the Portuguese Mission of Brainerd Church, Chattanooga.

Stephen Williams, pastor of Fairview Church, Newbern, resigned Sept. 23 to accept the pastorate of a church in Missouri.

Revivals ...

George Hill will lead revival Oct. 7-11 at First Church, Camden. Evelyn Atkins will lead music.

First Church, Englewood, will hold revival services Oct. 14-21 with evangelist Bill Watson, Kenosha, Wis.

Jim Lindsay will lead revival Oct. 14-17 at First Church, Dandridge.

Salem Association Director of Missions Thurman Seber recently led revival at Center Hill Church, Woodbury.

Members of Beech Grove Church, Lawrenceburg, recently held homecoming and revival led by Thomas Mattox.

Dyer Association reported the following churches held revivals recently: Macedonia Church, Ripley; Halls Church, Westside; Enon Church, Halls; Lenox Church, Lenox; Fowlkes Church, Fowlkes; Mary's Chapel Church, Ripley; Mt. Tirzah Church, Newbern; and Springhill Church, Dyersburg.

Weakley County reported Sidonia Church, Sharon, and West Union Church, Dresden, held revival recently.

Calvary Church, Mooresburg, and Mount Eager Church, Washburn, both in Grainger Association, held revival recently.

One person made a profession of faith at youth revival held recently at Crossroads Church, Parsons.

Cletus Duke led revival in August at Luray Church, Luray.

Robert McIlwain led revival recently at Calvary Church, Pulaski.

Salem Church, Liberty, held revival recently led by Pierce Dodson.

Hickory Hills Church, Mt. Juliet, will hold revival Oct. 7-10 in a tent on the church property on Nonaville Road. Pastor Sam Crouch will lead the services and Fes Robertson will lead music. Church members recently celebrated the church's first anniversary.

Midway Church, Whiteville, held a tent revival recently led by Benny Jackson, Billy Joe Stewart, Fred Clifft, John Ed Watkins, and Kenneth Culver. The Calvary Crusaders provided special music.

Shiloh Association reported Morris Chapel Church, Morris Chapel, and New Harmony Church, Savannah, both held revival recently.

Claude Kelley will lead revival Oct. 7-10 at Knob Creek Church, Columbia. Homecoming will be Oct. 7.

Revival was held recently at Zion Church, Waynesboro. Harold King led services.

Bill George will lead revival Oct. 7-10 at Lake Road Church, Union City. Dennis Johnson will lead music.

First Church, Woodland Mills, will hold revival Oct. 7-10 led by Chuck Williams.

Thirteen churches are sponsoring an interdenominational community revival at South Central School, Chuckey, Oct. 7-13. Bill Hazlewood, director of missions. Cumberland Gap Association, will be the evangelist and a community choir will be featured.

Ordinations ...

First Church, Ridgetop, ordained Freddie Birdwell and Ronnie Freeman as deacons Sept. 23.

First Church, Lawrenceburg, ordained Royal Dickson, John Walton, and Hugh White Sr. as deacons.

Jimmy Peters, Mike Aaron, Bim Dial and Phillip Giles were recently ordained to the deacon ministry at Macedonia Church, Lawrenceburg.

Teddy Sneed was ordained as deacon Sept. 23 at Highland Park Church, Lawrenceburg.

New Bethany Church, Sweetwater, ordained L. C. McConkey and Jimmy Small as deacons Sept. 9.



CONSTRUCTION TO BEGIN — Members of Buffalo Trail Church, Morristown, recently broke ground for a new 11,000-square-foot sanctuary. The church, established in the late 1940s, has grown to about 740 members with a Sunday School enrollment of 515. Participating in the service were, from left, (front row) James Williams, director of missions, Nolachucky Association; Paul Ashley, chairman of the building committee; and Pastor Benny Keck; (back row) Aria Stansberry, Helen Trent, Peggy Litz, Mary Fine, Myrtle Davis, Jerry Davis, Wanda Diamond, Mary McCarroll, Grace Morgan, and Judy Johnson, all charter members.



TENNESSEE RECIPIENTS — Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary President Milton Ferguson congratulates three Tennesseans who received scholarships for the 1990-91 academic year. From left, Eric Taylor, Nashville; Ferguson; Tim West, Jackson; and Mark Mangrum, Fairview. All three students are graduates of Union University. Nashville native Joe Smith, a graduate of Belmont College, also received a scholarship.

Christians need 'fresh glimpses of God,' says SWBTS professor

FORT WORTH (BP) — Believers must have a "fresh glimpse of God" before revival can become the "real thing," an evangelism professor told students, faculty, and staff at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary there during the school's annual revival.

"The meaning of revival is more

Middle Tennessee pastors plan meeting

The Middle Tennessee Baptist Ministers' Conference will meet Oct. 4, 11 a.m. at Belmont Heights Church in Nashville.

TBC President F. Murray Mathis, pastor of Third Church, Murfreesboro, will be guest speaker.

Lunch will be provided at noon by Belmont College.

than a series of services set aside to meet the Lord," Roy Fish, professor of evangelism at the Fort Worth, Texas, seminary said. "Revival comes when there are times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord."

Fish was the revival preacher for the six meetings held on the seminary campus. Bob Hatfield, minister of music at Dawson Memorial Church in Birmingham, Ala., was the musician for the week.

Using Joel 2:12 as the key Bible verse, the 1990 revival theme was "Return to the Lord With All Your Heart." Students packed Truett Auditorium, with many of them standing along the aisles. During an invitation time in the last service of the revival, more than 225 students made deci-

sions.

Fish defined what he called the "three R's" of revival — repentance, reconciliation, and restitution. These three factors are vital in any real revival among God's people, he said.

"Repentance is not a one-time experience in the life of a believer," Fish said. "It is an ongoing process."

Fish compared revival to a "spiritual surgery," explaining that "before it can become heaven on earth, it sometimes has to become a lot like Judgment Day."

In the first service of the revival, Fish told students and faculty Christians must become honest and specific in their confession of sin in order to "obtain restoration of fellowship with

Fish said Christians also must become sensitive to the needs of others. "We can't be satisfied with a perfunctory kind of witness," he said.

Speaking on the work of the Holy Spirit, Fish said Christians "are poor because of our lack of acknowledging the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. It is every believers privilege and responsibility to be filled with the Holy Spirit."

"I don't hesitate to talk with you about the Holy Spirit because my Bible tells me the Spirit points you to Jesus Christ," Fish said.

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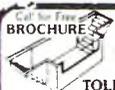
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Events surrounding Jesus' birth

By Dennis P. Lunsford, pastor; Antioch Church, Humboldt

Throughout history, Satan has accomplished his purpose through people. He worked through the lives of Herod the Great, Nero, Hitler, and Stalin. It is important to note that God has accomplished His redemptive purpose through a remnant of faithful people. Our lesson evolves around those whose lives counted for God — Zechariah, Elizabeth, Joseph, and Mary.

Have you ever experienced a time when it appeared God was silent, and was unaware of you and your needs? Such was the case as described by Luke. A span of 400 years had elapsed without hearing a prophetic voice of God.

This was soon changed. The long awaited Messiah was to come. Jesus, fully God and man, the only one qualified to be the "one mediator between God and men" (1 Timothy 2:5), was to come and change the destiny of the world.



LUNSFORD

God works through people (1:5-38)

Two couples are depicted, one unsuspecting, one diligently praying. Zechariah and Elizabeth desperately prayed for a son. Joseph and Mary, engaged, were about to begin their lives as "one."

Zechariah served God in the Temple. Elizabeth was patient, yet concerned. Her child-bearing years were long passed. The normalcy of their lives was interrupted by a "fear not. You shall deliver a son and his name shall be called John, meaning 'Yahweh is gracious.'" John would be the forerunner for the Messiah. Here we find an excited couple whose needs God met.

Now we turn our attention to Mary and Joseph. The angel announced the news to Mary; fear gripped her heart; questions came to her mind. The angel calmed her fears and shared the details of Jesus' conception.

We find two couples, one overjoyed, the other couple perplexed. Yet, in both instances, it was the comfort and reassurance from God's messenger and His Word that caused fear to be replaced by trust and joy.

God's gifts to the world (1:57-2:38)

Two sons were delivered to the world, joy and gladness were expressed. Zechariah, a typical father, was overwhelmed. His voice was restored and he was able to name the baby. Zechariah delivered a speech concerning his son which clearly stated the redemptive purpose his son was to carry out.

Jesus was born! The sky was enveloped by the glory of the Lord as represented by the angels. The shepherds knew this was not to be an ordinary

BIBLE BOOK October 7 Lesson

Basic Passage: Luke 1 to 2:52

night of tending sheep. Their fear would be replaced by the tranquility of the spoken word: "Fear not" (Luke 2:10). Why should they not fear? Jesus was born!

Our attention turns to two others, Simeon and Anna. Luke introduced these witnesses to Jesus' Messianic role (2:22-38). Simeon, in the waning years of his life, rejoiced to see prophecy fulfilled in his lifetime. Moved

with compassion, he fully understood the true meaning of worship. Like Isaiah, Simeon had seen and given himself to the Lord.

The same was true for Anna. She was a faithful servant of God, devoted to prayer and worship. She too understood the full meaning of worship. She entered the temple to worship, but departed to serve. She told others about Jesus.

Both Anna and Simeon were filled with praise and thanksgiving, for salvation had come to people just as the prophets declared.

God works through people! Within the lives of those involved in this narrative, a hunger existed for the will of God to be fulfilled. God's Word will always remain true. Just as Zechariah, Elizabeth, Joseph, Mary, Simeon, and Anna looked forward to the fulfillment of prophecy, so can we. Each Christian today ought to possess a hunger for the Word of God, His will to be revealed.

Simeon and Anna rejoiced. John, while still in the womb of his mother, rejoiced when he was in the presence of Christ. May we too, rejoice, knowing Jesus was born. Thus we can sing, "Hallelujah, what a Savior!"

Elisha and Jehu

By Carlos R. Peterson, pastor; First Church, Athens

Several years ago, Time ran an article about a Japanese doctor who had lived through the terrible bombing of Hiroshima. When the blast occurred, Numio Shigeto was waiting for a treetcar only one mile away. He survived because he was sheltered by the corner of a reinforced concrete building. Within seconds after the explosion, his ears were filled with the screams of helpless victims all around him. Not knowing or sure what had happened, he stood there for a moment, bewildered.

... one doctor wondering how he could ever handle his "mountain" of patients. Then, still stunned and shocked by the tragedy of



PETERSON

the past moments, Dr. Shigeto knelt, opened his black bag, and began treating the person lying at his feet.

Do you ever wonder what you can do for the Lord? The work may seem immense and your abilities inadequate, but the opportunity is undeniable. The only possible answer is obedience to the call: do what is asked.

This week's Scripture passage revolves around working God's purposes through individuals who are available to Him, even those who may seem unlikely candidates for a particular ministry.

Prophet's instruction (2 Kings 9:1-3)
The prophet Elisha performed his last public act as commissioned by God through his predecessor, Elijah, when he transferred the authority over Israel from the reign of Omri to the house of Jehu. To carry out this task, Elisha chose a young student from one

of the prophetic schools he oversaw. This young prophet then became the unsuspecting instrument of God. He was instructed to go to Jehu, proclaim him King of Israel, anoint him with oil, and deliver the message of his responsibility as the new king.

Prophet's obedience (9:4-10)
The young prophet immediately responded to Elisha and obediently followed the command of the aged mentor. Nothing about the young student is known beyond the fact of his obedience to the assigned responsibility given by Elisha. He did not question the reason, the source, or the eventual outcome of his call to service. He did not analyze his abilities, complain about the dangers inherently involved, or hesitate for fear of uncertain details. He simply responded in obedience.

The young prophet approached Jehu and requested a private audience with the new ruler. God indicated that Jehu was to be His instrument of justice against Ahab and Jezebel. Jehu, too,

was to be God's unlikely tool to put an end to Ahab's rule, even though his actions were far from innocent.

Israel's new king (9:11-13)
Questioned about the private audience with the prophet, Jehu conceded the news that he had been anointed as Israel's new king. The hosts with Jehu acknowledged their respect for the prophet's message by proclaiming Jehu as King and then following him in his assault on the house of Ahab.

CONVENTION UNIFORM October 7 Lesson Basic Passage: 2 Kings 9:1-13

Conclusion:
We may not always understand why God chooses us for a particular task, but our response should parallel that of the young prophet. We are not called to do everything, but to do what is requested, recognizing our limitations and to do it to the very best of our abilities, for our Lord.

God's redemptive purpose

By Richard Herrington, pastor; Hermitage Hills Church, Hermitage

An older minister once told a group of younger ministers that we must look at all our difficulties as opportunities. I remember thinking at that time how alive that sounded. Through the years I have found this is the way Christians must look at difficult times.

The children of Israel had a good life in Egypt which ended sour when new rulers, who viewed the Hebrews as a threat instead of helpers, came to power. The Hebrews went from favored status to slavery. Their lives went from comfort to misery. God seemed far away, but was really working His purpose in them.



HERRINGTON

In the ancient days it was the slave who not only made the bricks, but also

LIFE AND WORK October 7 Lesson Basic Passage: Exodus 1-2

designed and built the structures of civilization. It was the slave who did the reading and writing, bookkeeping, and other skilled work. God was preparing His people to be capable of developing as a new nation. The labor of skill and the physical hardship surely made a great foundation for the wilderness and later settling of a new land.

In their despair, the children of Israel cried out to God. God heard. It is important to note that in their trial, a time when people often feel God has deserted them, God heard. Not only did God hear, He remembered the

covenant He had made with their forefathers. God now begins the next phase of His plan, the redemption of His own.

When we sit on this side of the Exodus, it is easy for us to see how the children of Israel should have been stronger in their faith. We become a little disgusted with them for their failures in this story and wonder at their weakness. However, when we look at our own lives more closely, we may relate to these groans from ancient Egypt more sympathetically.

There is a new covenant with the whole world through Jesus Christ. We have the greatest hope of the future because of the cross. We are promised an inheritance that makes us children of the King. Adversity steps in and we wonder where God has gone. Then we need to pray that He will teach us what there is to learn from our struggles. We may wish to hide or run away. Some may even wish to ignore the problem. But to seek God's direc-

tion through the hardship is to learn and grow. When we have learned from the Father, then we will see a purpose that He has for us on the other side, and we can grow as His child and disciple.

God's purpose for the children of Israel was for a more abundant life through redemption from the Egyptians and a land of their own flowing with milk and honey. Even when the times are tough for us, God wants it to become better, often using that tough time to teach or train us for the best.

When I think of today's bondage, it comes in terms of loneliness, divorce, AIDS, homelessness, joblessness, and more. These are "dead end" situations for many in our world today. They are in real bondage to the powers of this world. God and the covenant promise of Jesus Christ need to be brought into these situations so the redemption He has for all mankind can work in their lives.

Jordan's Christians, Muslims find some common ground

By Erich Bridges

AMMAN, Jordan (BP) — For the first time in a long while, most Christians and Muslims in Jordan seem to be united.

The majority Muslims and minority Christians, who comprise about five percent of Jordan's four million people, apparently agree on two things: helping refugees pouring into the country from Kuwait and opposing the Western military buildup in the Mideast.

Both responses have helped Christians gain new recognition and respect from Muslims and the Jordanian public, at least for the moment. But Christianity's association with the West in the Arab mind could create new problems for Christians in Jordan and throughout the Middle East if U.S. and Western forces stay in the region very long.

Jordanian churches and mosques are helping lead a countrywide effort to assist tens of thousands of refugees flooding into Jordan from Iraqi-occupied Kuwait. For example, Jordanian Baptists, the largest evangelical denomination, are housing Philippine refugees at the Amman Baptist School and delivering thousands of sandwiches to other refugee centers.

The effort not only is aiding the

refugees, but is giving Baptists new opportunities to spread their faith among Jordanians.

"You are different," a refugee camp official told one Baptist volunteer. The Baptist had delivered clean, neatly wrapped meals to the camp, in contrast to unsanitary boxes of food brought by some other groups. Another Baptist took food to refugees staying in Muslim mosques. One religious leader received the aid with enthusiasm; several others reacted with open-mouthed amazement.

The refugee ministry is a humanitarian and religious impulse everyone can agree upon. To understand the Jordanians' unified stand against the West's reaction to Saddam Hussein, however, calls for a short course in the tangled politics of the region.

Half of Jordan's people are Palestinians, displaced from their homeland by the state of Israel. They have fought (and lost) several wars with Israel. They bitterly resent U.S. support of Israel — which they often call "the 51st state" — and they support the Intifada, the uprising of Palestinians in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza.

Jordanians, many of whom live in poverty, also dislike the oil-rich Kuwaitis and Saudis and remember that Western powers carved the present-day borders of the region in the first place. Jordan has close economic and cultural ties to Iraq, and many Jordanians admire Saddam Hussein's audacious move into Kuwait, which was once part of Iraq. They consider the West's response as yet another move to dominate the region and its oil, and to protect Israel. What's more, Western sanctions against Iraq could cost the already-strapped Jordanian economy \$2 billion a year.

Thus Saddam's call for the "Arab Nation" to rise up in a holy war and drive Western interests out of the

region evokes powerful feelings from Jordanians on emotional, religious, political, and economic levels. Their response even outweighs their fear of the devastation war could bring, particularly if Iraq and Israel attack each other on Jordanian soil.

Jordanian Christians don't want a holy war, to be sure, but they join the chorus of voices angry at Western actions in the gulf.

"This is Arab land, it is Arab oil, and it is the Arabian gulf," said Speer Matalka, a prominent Baptist businessman. The gulf crisis should be solved by Arabs without outside interference, he insisted.

"We must show our loyalty to this area," said Fawaz Ameish, pastor of Amman Baptist Church. "The way we look at it, there were mistakes and unwise decisions taken in the West, like we sometimes have unwise decisions here. Some people may go to hating, but we Christians try to be loving in all situations."

Ameish said he is working hard to keep hatred out of the church.

As for Christian-Muslim relations, Ameish reported "there is a little change — to the better. Before this crisis we had a current of Muslim fanaticism. . . . But this is a time of unity between all groups. We come

nearer to each other, so fanaticism is less a little bit."

Another Christian minister reported that some Muslims even seem more open to listening to the Gospel. They are disappointed and confused that Saudi Arabia, the center of Islam's holy shrines of Mecca and Medina, has allowed the "Christian nation" of America to send forces to its soil, he said.

In the long run, however, Christianity's association with the West in Muslims' eyes could work against the church, Christians acknowledge. Some radical Muslim leaders are joining Saddam in calling for "Jihad," or holy war, to drive out Western Christians and "crusaders" (the Arabic word for crusader means "follower of the cross").

"It may make it more difficult (for Christians), because Muslims consider everything coming from the West as Christian," Ameish explained. "They don't separate the state from religion." Ameish added that Christians could possibly face difficulties because Muslims may say "Look, you're Christians; they came to take the oil and the land from outside."

For now, the biggest anti-Western demonstrations in Jordan begin at the mosques. Time will tell whether they will end at the churches.

Union alumni to meet

The Union University Alumni Association will sponsor an evening of dining and entertainment Oct. 12 at the Peabody Hotel in Memphis.

The fall gathering, co-sponsored by the Greater Memphis Alumni Chapter of the college, is open to alumni and friends of the university.

Reservations for the event must be made by Oct. 10 to guarantee seating in the hotel's Skyway Room.

Tickets can be purchased by calling the college alumni office at (901) 668-1818.

RTVC approves \$8.9 million budget

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission trustees, holding their fall meeting in Fort Worth, approved an \$8.9 million operating budget for the 1990-91 fiscal year — an \$800,000 increase over the 1989-90 budget.

RTVC President Jack B. Johnson and trustees also expressed concern about stability of Southern Baptists' Cooperative Program, the denomination's unified budget that finances the convention's missionary and education endeavors.

Trustees adopted a resolution encouraging each state convention to continue to utilize the Cooperative Program as the primary means of support for missions at home and around the world and encouraging local churches to give regularly a portion of their undesignated income to missions through the Cooperative Program.

Sixty percent of the RTVC's funding comes through the Cooperative Program, with the second largest amount — 22 percent — coming from advertising on the RTVC-owned American Christian Television System (ACTS) network, executive vice president Richard T. McCartney, who made the budget presentation, told trustees.

The remainder comes from gifts from individuals, foundations, and corporations. The RTVC makes no appeals for funds on any of its radio or television programs.

Trustees approved a year-long capital fund-raising campaign for the Fort Worth area, with a goal of \$1 million to \$1.5 million. Cargill and Associates of Fort Worth was employed as consultant. Trustees at their April meeting had employed Cargill and Associates to test the feasibility of such a campaign in Fort Worth. Funds raised in the campaign will be used to purchase field and studio production equipment, update the commission's computer systems, fund endowment, and refurbish the

building.

Trustees also approved a resolution stating that an investigation indicated the commission has not been used to support either side of the current controversy in the SBC and resolving to inform all employees that such action by any employee is forbidden.

Johnson said his job is to shun politics and concentrate on expanding the Baptist satellite network, which he said is in its best financial condition in many years.

Economic situation worsens in Romania

BUCHAREST, ROMANIA — The economic situation in Romania is worsening "dramatically," according to Karl-Heinz Walter, general secretary of the European Baptist Federation (EBF), after a tour of Romania and Bulgaria.

"Basic food necessities such as sugar, oil, margarine, flour, rice, and coffee are simply not available," said Walter. The whole country is dry after a summer without rainfall. "The situation is so bad that political leaders in Romania have warned of a winter with no heat or electricity."

Walter met with Baptist Union leaders in Romania to discuss how to provide special support to Baptist families in the country, especially to help them over the winter months. This help would be made available to them through Baptist Response-Europe (BR-E), the assistance fund which was created last February for aid in Eastern Europe.

"The Romanians strongly urged that we in the West not begin again to send truckloads of mixed goods. These are too difficult to distribute with equity," Walter explained. Instead, there must be good coordination of what is sent through the BR-E (EBF) office in Hamburg.

One Woman's View

By June McEwen

As members of a family we need to stand together. Families must be a "haven in a heartless world." When we see family members making mistakes, our response should be concern, not criticism. To truly love is to nurture spiritual growth as Scott Peck

observes. Judging and pointing out faults and failures hardly qualifies as loving actions or nurturing attitudes.

In the circle of family, one does not talk about a sister or brother; one talks with the person in an effort to help the person grow. It takes courage to confront in a loving manner.

I understand that a pastor called upon his congregation to covenant together to act in a loving, nurturing, Christian manner in matters of controversy. He asked them to do three things: 1) to refrain from making remarks about fellow church members and leaders in the controversy which one would not make to that person's face; 2) to accept the fact that there

will be different views within the membership; and 3) to accept the fact that some members may decide to leave the church and to wish them godspeed once they make that decision.

It is important to keep yourself true to your highest values. When you act in ways contrary to these standards in response to what another person says or does, then you are allowing the other person to determine who you are and what your standards are. You are not making these decisions for yourself; it is reaction rather than action. We are responsible to God for what we do, not for what others do. If we react in unbecoming ways, we have allowed another person to determine our actions.

I suppose we have all behaved badly when someone irritated or frustrated us unbearably. Upon reflection, we regret that we let that person "pull our strings." With prayer, concentration, self-discipline, careful thought, and constant effort, we can act toward others, especially members of our families, in nurturing and loving ways. Not only will the other person have a chance to grow, we will make strides in spiritual maturity.



McEWEN